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in Asia and the Pacific

# Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogues on Culture of Peace and Human Dignity





**Asian-Arab  
Philosophical Dialogues on  
Culture of Peace and Human Dignity**

**Editor: Darryl R. J. Macer**

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# CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	vi
Reflections on Philosophy and Human Dignity .....	1
<i>Pierre Sané, Senegal</i>	
A Creative Cultural and Philosophical Tradition of India.....	3
<i>Sivanandam Panneerselvam, India</i>	
Peace and a Decent Society .....	6
<i>Soumaya Mestiri, Tunisia</i>	
Hybridity and the Culture of Peace in the Age of Globalization .....	10
<i>Rainier Ibana, Philippines</i>	
Looking for the Truth Wherever It Comes from: A Step Towards Peace .....	15
<i>Naima Hadj Abderrahma, Algeria</i>	
The Blanket of Peace, the Blips of Violence: How Does Philosophy Pitch In? .....	21
<i>Jasdev Raj, England</i>	
Elements for a Culture of Peace in the Early Arabic Conception of Government .....	30
<i>Syrine Snoussi, Tunisia</i>	
Just War Thesis: An Ethical Challenge .....	37
<i>Ravichandran Moorthy, Malaysia</i>	
Criticism of Jihad by Contemporary Muslim Lawyers.....	45
<i>Makram Abbes, Tunisia</i>	
Philosophical Methods of the Insurgent and Counter-Insurgent.....	49
<i>Jonathan H. Kougl, United Kingdom</i>	
The 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War: A Discussion of the Processes and Changes in Conditions that fostered De-Escalation to a Peaceful Stalemate .....	50
<i>Leonard Henry Le Blanc III, USA</i>	
What has the A-bomb Dome Symbolized Over Time? .....	56
<i>Hideki Fuchinoue, Japan</i>	
Building a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East .....	72
<i>Laura Vittet-Adamson, France</i>	
Some Examples of the Failure to Observe Cultural Values and Human Dignity during the U.S. Occupation of Iraq after Gulf War II .....	78
<i>Lana Issa Le Blanc, Iraq</i>	
Democracy of One World .....	84
<i>Jitendra Nath Sarker, Bangladesh</i>	
Three Ways of Conceptualizing the Global: The Universal, the Holistic and the Macrocosmic .....	89
<i>Philip Cam, Australia</i>	
Goals of Education of Philosophy and the Culture of Peace .....	99
<i>Darryl Macer, UNESCO Bangkok</i>	

# CONTENTS

Conceptual Maps of the Goals of Teaching Philosophy and Human Dignity.....	106
<i>Arthur Wolf and Darryl Macer, UNESCO Bangkok</i>	
The Creation of Public Reason.....	111
<i>Zosimo Lee, Philippines</i>	
Nurturing the Culture of Peace.....	118
<i>Issa Abyad and Alexander Abyad, Jordan</i>	
Moral Education for Global Society.....	125
<i>Jinwhan Park, Eun-Jeong Kim and Gyunyul Park, Republic of Korea</i>	
No 'Me' or 'Mine' or Religion: Buddhadasa's Contribution to a Cosmopolitan Planetary Life and Culture of Peace: Some Notes.....	130
<i>Tim Rackett, Thailand</i>	
Reviving the Pedagogy of Philosophical Inquiry in Muslim Curriculum for Effective Civilizational Dialogue.....	138
<i>Rosnani Hashim, Malaysia</i>	
Peace Education for Common Future: Indonesian Experience.....	149
<i>Habib Chirzin, Indonesia</i>	
Mundialization of Home: Enabling a Consciousness of Multi-Identity.....	156
<i>In-Suk Cha, Republic of Korea</i>	
Human Dignity as a Tool to Improve Transcultural Dialogue: The Example of Bioethics.....	161
<i>Sadek Beloucif, Algeria</i>	
The Moral Status of Human Embryos and Fetuses.....	167
<i>Sawa Kato, Japan</i>	
UN Metanarratives and Contemporary Incredulity.....	174
<i>Phinith Chantalangsy, Lao PDR</i>	
Meditation for Peace and Happiness in this Globalized World.....	182
<i>Chutatip Umavijani, Thailand</i>	
Climate Change, Culture, Peace and Human Dignity.....	188
<i>Johan Hattingh, South Africa</i>	
Sustainable Development in the Spiritual Context as a Denominator for an Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogue.....	194
<i>Azizan Baharuddin, Malaysia</i>	
Human Dignity and Environmental Integrity.....	204
<i>Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh, Jordan</i>	
A World and The World: The Problem of Demarcation.....	211
<i>Amarbayasgalan Dorjderem, Mongolia</i>	
Using Karl Marx's Dialectical Materialism in Developing an Environmental Ethics Education Curriculum.....	216
<i>Ngo Thi Tuyen, Viet Nam</i>	

Friday Offerings: On the Uses of Political Theology .....	222
<i>John Giordano, Thailand</i>	
The State of Human Dignity in Cambodia .....	228
<i>Piseth Thunchhay, Cambodia</i>	
Human Dignity as an Ethical Process .....	235
<i>Arthur Wolf, Netherlands</i>	
Dignity and Peace of Mind of the Elderly .....	237
<i>Balambal Ramaswamy, India</i>	
Making Mount Merapi a Friend .....	245
<i>Samsul Ma'arif Mujiharto, Indonesia</i>	
Reflections on the Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogues .....	253
<i>Zosimo Lee, Philippines</i>	
The Necessity of an Interregional Dialogue between Asia and the Arab World .....	255
<i>Souria Saad-Zoy, UNESCO Rabat</i>	
List of Contributors .....	258

## List of Tables

Table 1: Ongoing UN Peacekeeping Operations .....	41
Table 2: Results of the 1949 Referendum Concerning the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law .....	60
Table 3: Annual Revenue of Hiroshima City, 1947–1950.....	60
Table 4: Number of Nuclear Weapons (in weapon units) per Nuclear Weapon State.....	76
Table 4: Goals in the APPPTAP .....	107
Table 5: Types of Sentences .....	129
Table 6: Behaviours of the Community of Inquiry and its Individual Internalization .....	146

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Atlas presenting the NWFZs around the world .....	72
Figure 2: Master Conceptual Framework of Goals in Education .....	108
Figure 3: The New Zealand Curriculum .....	109
Figure 4: Diagram Illustrating the Social and Physical Domains of Human Civilization .....	195

## PREFACE

This is the third volume of papers coming from the Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogues that have been organized by UNESCO to stimulate philosophical reflection on contemporary themes. As we emerged from the Decade of the Culture of Peace in 2011 we have seen a rise in the culture of violence in North Africa and the Arab world, counter to the culture of peace. Most of the papers in this volume stem from a dialogue of philosophers from the Asian and Arab region convened in Thistle Resort, Port Dickson, Malaysia from 14-17 May 2010.

Dialogue is essential for developing a better understanding of not only others, but also ourselves. Dialogue is an exchange between different people, communities, and entities. The papers in this volume are written by individuals expressing their own opinions in the context of dialogues between philosophers in the Asia-Pacific and Arab regions. In many cases a paper is followed by a commentary by another philosopher. The general discussion that ensued after each paper is not recorded in this volume. The publication of the papers and commentaries is aimed to broaden intercultural communication, to strengthen the role of philosophy in public policy, and to promote the teaching of non-Western philosophies around the world.

These dialogues have been held over the past seven years in Seoul, Rabat, Hiroshima, Paris, Bangkok and Port Dickson. These dialogues occurred with the coordination of the Regional Unit in Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP) at UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Rabat, and UNESCO Paris, and the efforts of academics throughout the world. As people in many countries of the world express dismay at the directions that society is pursuing some are reminded of the former important roles of philosophers as navigators of the courses that societies should take.

This volume was edited by Darryl Macer, and we especially thank Professor Azizan Baharuddin, Director, Centre for Civilisational Dialogue, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Ms. Souria Saad-Zoy, UNESCO Rabat; Mrs. Moufida Goucha, UNESCO Paris; Dr. Pierre Sane, Imagine Africa; and Ms. Anniken Celina Grinvoll, Thailand. For assistance with the editing of the text we thank Leonard LeBlanc III, Laura Brodie-Ballantyne, and Marco Antonio Zamboni Zalamena. For interest in further dialogues please contact Ms. Souria Saad-Zoy, UNESCO Rabat (Email: [s.saad-zoy@unesco.org](mailto:s.saad-zoy@unesco.org)) and Dr. Darryl Macer, Regional Unit in Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP), UNESCO Bangkok (email: [rushsap.bgk@unesco.org](mailto:rushsap.bgk@unesco.org)).



Gwang-Jo Kim  
*Director*  
*UNESCO Bangkok*



# Reflections on Philosophy and Human Dignity

*Pierre Sané, Senegal*

It is my pleasure to be in Malaysia, and I thank the Centre for Civilisational Dialogue for its collaboration with the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and Pacific in UNESCO Bangkok. We appreciate the academic vigour of the University of Malaya. UNESCO has a very active and successful history of collaboration with the Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO, and we also saw interregional and global dialogues in 2009 at the Sixth Ordinary Session of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), kindly hosted by Malaysia. The UNESCO interregional Asia-Arab Philosophical Dialogues started in 2003, and the theme of this meeting is the culture of peace and human dignity.

The purpose of my brief reflections on this theme is to provide some of the reasons why UNESCO has been so much engaged in promoting philosophy teaching and philosophical dialogues around the world. To do so, I will take the “human dignity” concept and examine this concept philosophically. I would start my reflection by saying that both the concepts of “human dignity” and “philosophy” have something to do with the universal: indeed both lie on the foundation that there must be something beyond the singular or the limited particularity.

To philosophize means to engage in an enquiry on some object in order to bring out from it and to disclose a “universal characteristic” contained therein. This universal characteristic is not a unilateral point of view that would exclude debate; on the contrary, it indicates the element that can be the basis for further dialogues between different partners, because all singularities on the periphery have been discarded. In a word, to philosophize means consciously discriminating between the essential and the un-essential, in order to allow in-depth and objective dialogues.

In parallel, the “Human Dignity” concept is necessarily founded on the belief that there is a universal essence of being human, and that it is this essence that requires unconditional respect. In other words, in accordance with the Kantian concept, human dignity is precisely different from a mere dignity. In this sense, it goes beyond the “phenomenal” realm and appeals to a “noumenal” realm where human beings have intuitions about the ethical dimensions of their being human.

After this preliminary definition, it is easy for us to understand why, historically, it is meaningful that the idea of human dignity was given a rise from the realm of the philosophical reflections. Be it within the Greco-roman philosophical heritage, within Brahmanism and Buddhism, or within Islamic philosophical thought, the emergence of the idea of human dignity has required something more than mere religious belief or mere enquiries about phenomenal physics. Every intellectual tradition has once needed philosophical questionings on the essence, the meanings and the directions of Mankind before it reaches the intuition of dignity that is due to all human beings.

But here appears a paradox: the philosophical enquiries do indeed trigger indispensable questionings as to the nature of humankind, yet they do not give answers to the questions that they raise. While it allows the intuition of human dignity to arise in our minds, philosophy does not have the mandate, nor the objective, to tell us what precisely this concept must or must not entail. Philosophy does not have the mission to *dictate* our behaviours.

As Kant wrote in *Critique of Practical Reason*, philosophy indicates the categorical imperative of a moral conduct that requires us to “Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means”.

In other words, philosophy is not meant to be an authority that would institute a definitive meaning and requirement of human dignity. It awakens our intuition of human essence beyond the phenomenal realm, requiring respect. And here is the turning point of my reflections: while the intuition of the idea of human dignity requires philosophical enquiries, this concept also needs philosophy to avoid becoming mere dogma. Philosophical thought indeed constantly needs to be nourished in our minds to keep us alert and away from some discourse that would impose unilateral views on what must be done in

the name of human dignity. The relationship between the philosophical and the human is therefore essentially critical. Like any positive concepts, the “human dignity” concept runs the risk of becoming an ideology that does not tolerate dialogue. Facing this danger, the solution is to enquire towards the universal, i.e. the fundamental characteristics that would allow sensible and fully aware dialogues between men. Philosophical enquiry is therefore the indispensable condition for the concept of “human dignity” to be operational in informing our actions, because philosophy does not provide us knowledge, but intuition of what is the essence of humankind.

You all know of UNESCO’s Constitution, which was drafted out of a terrible war. It states in particular that “the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern” (UNESCO, Constitution §4).

The question now is the following: What is the tool that would allow us to achieve such a mission? What does imply an “education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace”? Is mere literacy sufficient? It is useless to say that the sense of justice, of liberty and of peace requires more than basic education. It requires us to build our fellows’ capacity to think and to think critically about the discourse and the opinions that are surrounding them. We need to give them not the answers to their existential questions, but rather the intuition that there are questions to be raised before they can be just, free and live in a peaceful society. Education for human dignity is therefore about lighting a fire, not about filling up a jar.

This is the reason why philosophy, as a critical reflection and dialogue based on some fundamental intuitions, is instrumental in achieving UNESCO’s mission. Through the informed dialogues that it triggers and nourishes, philosophy instills a democratic culture where disagreement can be peacefully addressed.

Therefore, in order to help all men and women and our youth to debate and enhance their capacity to question and to enquire constantly into the meanings and implications of human dignity, we need to give them the opportunities to experiment with democratic practices. And I would suggest that between philosophy and democracy, there are four fundamental elements that make both of them essential in operationalising human dignity:

1. Both philosophy and democracy use language to expose, explain and discuss arguments in a dialectic way. The free and responsible use of language constitutes the fundamental ground for a healthy democracy and an authentic philosophical dialogue.
2. Both philosophy and democracy rely on the principle of equality in the debates they engage between men and women. None of them would ask: “By what right do you speak?” They would just say: “Speak and give us your arguments.”
3. Both philosophy and democracy are stirred by doubt, for if the quest for truth and the joint discussion of the just are to be undertaken, the immediate certainties must be able to vacillate, to allow enquiries.
4. Both philosophy and democracy need Self-institution: neither the philosophical approach nor the democratic community can be created by external decisions or legitimated by authority from the outside (Roger-Pol Droit. 1995. *Philosophy and Democracy in the World*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.).

Both founded on the quest of the universal, philosophy and the concept of human dignity are intimately linked to democratic culture. It is through a democratic debate that UNESCO contributes to keep alert our common intuition of human dignity.

Through a solid cross-cultural understanding of human dignity, and a clearer philosophical definition that emerged from this meeting, we can more effectively promote a lasting culture of peace, as we emerge from the UN Decade of the Culture of Peace. Although it may be the end of the decade this year, we pray for the beginning of a century of the culture of peace.

# A Creative Cultural and Philosophical Tradition of India

*Sivanandam Panneerselvam, India*

India is built from a rich tradition of ethical values and cultural background, which always sees the means and the ends together. India is a country where there is a plurality of cultures. It always appreciates each and every culture, whether it is small or big, sharing good points from each culture. Culture adapts itself to the situation. It takes into account the changes that are taking place outside. It is a slow but steady process. Culture unites people into one cultural group. The development of many cultures is subject to various causes like physical habitations and resources, which are external and cause a range of possibilities inherent in various areas of activity, which are internal forces.

All cultures exist because they have some essential elements in common. These essential elements common to all cultures will constitute the universal world culture analogous to the universal grammar in the sphere of language. A world culture is yet to be developed. But this does not mean that the many cultures are opposed to one another. Their plurality is real and their unity is unreal. Cultural sustainability, like the sustainability of economic activities, must concentrate on both individual elements as well as on the community. The individual values and the values of the community or the cultural group must be safeguarded. Though a community integrates its values with the individual, it should be understood that the individual's values cannot be sacrificed. Moreover, a culture carries its values to future generations; thus, the values of it must be preserved. Individual as well as social values constitute what we call culture. Commenting on the individuality as well as the universality of human nature culture is the guardian of the people. It reacts whenever there is a threat to it. When the rights of a cultural group are affected or violated, there is always protest.

We always find different conceptions of culture. The culture of people takes into account their language, ideas, customs, taboos and other related components. One must always consider the following aspects with regards to culture: (1) culture unifies people into one cultural group, and (2) the development of many cultures is due to various external causes, like physical habitats and resources, and inner causes, including various areas of activity. If conflict among cultures follows from the very concept of culture, then there emerges a theory wherein there is a relationship between culture and rationality. The difference between culture and rationality is that a culture unifies all those who belong to that culture, whereas rationality unites all people who share this essential feature. Culture endows people with their identity. Scholars like Professor G. C. Pande emphasize that there are three approaches to culture - namely the scientific, the historical and the metaphysical. According to Pande, the scientific approach is essentially modern, whereas the historical is both modern and traditional, depending on one's approach to history. The metaphysical approach is basically traditional and it has two varieties. The first one is identified with orthodoxy, while the second one is identified with the content of mystical revelation or intuition.

The understanding of culture is ever new and always creative. This must be done to preserve the culture to which we belong. This is possible by a participatory understanding of the tradition and culture. "When people understand meanings by participating in a life-form, their participation can never be complete or total ensuring unanimity in their understanding of the concerned cluster of meanings," says D. P. Chattopadhyaya.<sup>1</sup> This is also supported by Professor Margaret Chatterjee who wrote: "The participation-understanding of a live tradition may be partial; it may show differences from the participant understanding of an earlier generation, but it would illustrate neither 'distancing' nor fusion of horizons, but a continuity which would accommodate both change and encapsulation of the experience of earlier generations."<sup>2</sup> In my dialogue with others, I take the responsibility for rational persuasion, by

1 Chattopadhyaya, D. P. 1992. "Reflections on Papers." In D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree and J. N. Mohanty (eds.). 1988. *Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, p. 364.

2 Chatterjee, M. 1992 "Towards a Hermeneutic of Centrality. In D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree and J. N. Mohanty (eds.). 1988, op. cit., p. 337.

which I try to understand and interact with others. In other words, in my dialogue with others, two things are taking place: (1) I persuade others, and (2) I am also persuaded by others. Therefore while dialoguing with others, I make certain claims and they become not only my claims but are claims made for the sake of others. Schutz very rightly points out that the intersubjective experience involves the bodily presence of the other. This implies that in intersubjectivity there is always life-worldly presence of the other. Husserl's approach to this is interesting. This world is there for me not only as a world of mere things, but also with the same immediacy as a world of objects with values, a world of goods, a practical world [...] All that which holds me for myself holds, as I know, for all other human beings whom I find present in my surrounding world [...] the surrounding world and mine are objectively one and the same world of which we are all conscious."<sup>3</sup>

The life-world is the basic structure of understanding. It is that by which the social, political and cultural gain their meaning. It is that which relates the individual to the society and vice-versa. "The private and the public are united by culture. The universal culture of man is not constituted simply by science and humanism but even more deeply by spiritual wisdom without which man would not be a moral being and humanism will prove a mirage," says Professor G. C. Pande.<sup>4</sup> The uniqueness of Indian cultural tradition is that in it we find the synthesis of spirit and matter.

The study of philosophy in Indian universities and colleges has dwindled over the years after independence, like other subjects within the Humanities. This is mainly because philosophy does not lead to any specialized profession (except the teaching of philosophy), though it could lead, like any other subject, to a general administrative job. At the same time, we find society waking up to a sense of values at the sight of increasing impropriety among individuals. We hear of demands for value-based social activities like politics, economic management, education, medicine, and so on. Yet it is rarely realized that the special study of values belongs to the realm of philosophy.

Philosophy is not necessarily allied to religion, though a school or tradition may choose to be so. But to be independent of religion does not necessarily mean that a philosophy is against religion. Philosophy is a matter of speculation; religion is based on faith and practice. So there is a distinction between the two without any necessary contradiction. But whether or not it is allied to religion, philosophy (like religion) is closely related to life through a discussion of values. The search into reality and knowledge is finally bound to come up against the question, "What is the meaning of life?" The fact that even a layman would raise this question only shows that philosophy is latent in every human being.

Philosophers differ in the solutions they offer to questions in all three areas. Which solutions are to be accepted is a matter of choice for individuals. In any case, the general impact of philosophy on the pursuer is a widening of his perspective. So far as values are concerned, one gets to compare the different types of values and assess their relative importance. There are material values, cultural values and spiritual values. Are all these of the same importance? Can we afford to pursue one type of values and disregard other types? Such an enlargement of perspective would make our judgments safer. In the present period of rapid material development, the philosophical question facing society is the moral impact of development on the character and well-being of human society, on the lives of other organisms, and even on the security of inanimate nature. Our moral circle is extremely wide, and we cannot afford to be indifferent to it.

This paper suggests that there might be two types of courses in philosophy. One should be a special intensive course for those who desire to teach and do research in philosophy. The other course should be a general one offered as an additional option to students undergoing any course of study and for the sake of earning extra credit. This course should focus on values, keeping metaphysics and epistemology in the background. In the case of Indian universities, an all-India commission could work out the details and modalities of these two courses. It is desirable that the Indian Philosophical Congress makes a move in this direction.

3 Husserl, E. 1983. *Ideas Towards a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*. Trans by F. Kersten. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, pp. 51-52.

4 Pande, G. C. 1988. In D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Lester Embree and J. N. Mohanty (eds.) *Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy*. New Delhi, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, p. 156.

Many contemporary Indian philosophers have shown the need and the methods to evolve a truly modern way of doing philosophy. There are philosophers who talk about establishing a creative philosophical tradition in India, for a national philosophical identity. The University Grants Commission (UGC) Report (1978) also sought the need for an independent Indian identity in philosophy. Indian philosophy, like its Western counterpart, must allow different philosophical methods. No philosophy is inferior or superior. Philosophies are common. Philosophizing must be autonomous. The authority of our own tradition, or of the West, should not curb its freedom. No philosophical idea is the property of a nation alone. We philosophers have to allow different methods. Here the question of East or West should not be important.

Philosophy consists of reflection on human experience in relation to ourselves. But a reflection on one's experience is based on what type of philosophy one is subscribing to. By "type of philosophy", we mean whether one is rooted in one's own tradition, or rooted in a "borrowed tradition" of the West. If a person develops his reflection on a borrowed tradition, then one must also see how far this will help. Can we simply ignore our own tradition and adopt their tradition, which is completely alien to us? Professor K. C. Bhattacharyya's remarks on this must be taken seriously. His article entitled "Svaraj in Ideas" deals with the distinction between cultural subjection and cultural assimilation.<sup>5</sup> He explains the dangers of cultural subjection, which he defines as the suppression of one's traditional cast of ideas and sentiments without comparison or competition by a new cast representing an alien culture. In this article, he stresses the need to make our own distinctive estimates and evaluations of foreign philosophy. He also rejects the "hybridization of ideas" and the "patchwork of ideas of different cultures", and suggests that one need not accept the foreign valuations or appraisals of our culture. He strongly supports the need for a translation of all foreign ideas into our native ideas, and for thinking "in our own concepts" to be able to "think productively on our own account." He writes: "We can think effectively only when we think in terms of indigenous ideas that pulsate in the life and mind of the masses."

The need to return to the cultural stratum of the real Indian people and to evolve a culture along with them suited to the times was emphasized by K. C. Bhattacharyya. Sri Aurobindo and S. Radhakrishnan have expressed the same idea. "We cannot cut ourselves off from the springs of our life," says Radhakrishnan.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, he says that there is nothing wrong in observing the culture of other peoples; however we must enhance, raise and purify the elements we take over, and fuse them with the best in our own. Our philosophical tradition should be the basis for our present philosophical approach. We must think in our own concepts and stick to our own ideas. It is clear from the above passages that there has been a call by some of our philosophers to retain Indian identity and to make philosophy more indigenous. But let us see whether it reflects the views of the majority of philosophers in India, and also whether there is any real need for it.

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5 Bhattacharyya, K. C. 1954. "Svaraj in Ideas." In *Viva-Bharathi Journal*. Vol. 20, pp. 103-114.

6 Radhakrishnan, S. 2009. *Indian Philosophy, Vol. II*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, p. 779.

# Peace and a Decent Society

## *Soumaya Mestiri, Tunisia*

Raising the question of human dignity comes down to dealing with the conditions of a decent society understood as the central vector to peace. My purpose in this paper is to frame the concept of decency at four levels: the individual level, the local (or group) level, the regional level and finally the global level. This study will be divided into two particular parts: using the very specific method of social philosophy, I will first make a diagnosis with the aim of clearly presenting the obvious lack of decency one can notice regarding the four levels that I have just mentioned. I will then sketch very briefly what I consider to be the remedies to this fundamental disease.

Let's start with a mere observation: the concept of decent society has never been granted the attention it should have deserved. The only philosopher who explored it was Avishai Margalit in his eponymous book *The Decent Society* (1996). But unfortunately his study was undermined by a double problem: first, he was the hostage of a theoretical provincialism, to the extent that he never dealt with the regional and the global side of the question. He focused instead on the lack of decency at the local level - that is to say the lack of decency faced by western liberal democracies. Second, the vision of decency he promoted was quite dubious. "A decent society," he said, "is one whose institutions do not humiliate people." (p. 1). But such a negative approach can never hold a constructive project, not only because people can experiment injustice and harm without being humiliated *stricto sensu*, but also because it seems to be quite difficult to evaluate the sentiment of humiliation in order to define a kind of threshold from which one can actually talk of disgrace. One must recognize, moreover, that the simple will to establish a sort of ladder of harm appears to be suspicious in itself.

Going beyond Margalit's conception of decency implies beginning with the circumscription and the description of the "lack of decency" corresponding to each of the four levels. Let's start with the individual level. By individual level, I mean the situation of the individual subject as a man or a woman. Our belonging to one specific sex makes us deal with some particular injustices and harms. Obviously, it is women who undergo the worst sufferings all over the world: more than seventy per cent of the poor on this planet are women and, needless to say, I think, poverty is the cause of the biggest pains and hurts one can imagine.

Let's move now to the local level. By local level, I mean the cultural, religious and sexual memberships that are strictly considered from the traditional point of view of the nation-state, which shape us as a person. Here it is also obvious that a huge number of persons are submitted to injustice and are clearly humiliated in their convictions and faith. Consider, for example, the case of the homosexual community, whose members want to adopt children and who are prevented from this right by the national institutions.

This identity problem exists both at the regional and global levels. Concerning the regional one, Arabic identity may be taken as an interesting case. The fundamental question arising here is this: to what extent can we consider that Tunisian, Moroccan, Lebanese and Middle Eastern people are "the same"? The only way to answer this huge and intricate question is to reshape it, so that one can formulate it in the following way: To what extent is the struggle you are personally engaged in also my struggle? It seems that the only sign of an Arabic identity today is the consensus regarding the Palestinian question since most of the Arabs consider the Palestinian struggle as their struggle. And inasmuch as this common interest exists, a decent society must find a solution to this problem as a regional one.

I turn finally to the global level. It's commonplace to say that globalisation has induced new problems by articulating the three other levels: every state must nowadays deal with new questions since the easiness of mobility, whatever this may be, (mobility of populations, information or goods) creates an unprecedented configuration, especially in terms of identity, belonging and membership. The demands of minority groups often conflict with the interests of the majority population. Unfortunately, this is a recurrent problem minorities are faced with all over the world since every claim they make is understood by the majority community as a threat to its historical identity. The question of the veil and the emerging

problem of the burqa in Europe and all the controversies it has created about the so-called national identity demonstrate clearly the acuteness of this point.

This leads to another pertinent question: To what extent is this diagnosis able to help us reconsider the concept of decent society? It seems to me that we must examine the concept of decency that actually takes into account the harm, suffering and pain of people at the four levels just mentioned. That's why I propose the following alternative definition: a decent society is a society that takes into account and undertakes the vulnerability of people. Before engaging in the details of this point, let us face a potential critical objection. Indeed, one may wonder here if there is any difference between preventing people from being humiliated by institutions and taking the vulnerability of persons into account. There is actually a big difference: vulnerability is inherently and organically related to freedom, and what makes this special connection between the two essential is the notion of responsibility. Vulnerable people are not free because they can never be considered as responsible for their acts. Yet, a decent society is a society wherein the essential aim is to make people free (i.e. responsible for themselves). It becomes now obvious that the notion of vulnerability supports a genuine project of society, while this is not at all the case with the notion of humiliation. I propose to reconsider this problematic issue by referring to it hereafter as the "vulnerability project".

Before turning back to the four levels to explain how the "vulnerability project" is able to cope with the lack of decency as described in the first part of my study, let me mention, in order to clarify my purpose, that I will follow in Amartya Sen's footsteps. I think that we need to dismiss a particular conception of justice inherited from the social contract tradition - represented nowadays by John Rawls. By working on and defining the abstract rules and principles that support just institutions in an ideal world, this conception neglects the concrete experience of injustice and harm. Our thesis is that we should get over the liberal paradigm and replace its traditional and obviously ineffective tools with a kind of variegated arsenal.

This arsenal consists of three fundamental tools, which, to my view, constitute a concrete and alternative vision of what decency should be: (1) compromise versus consensus, (2) strategic essentialism versus the ideology of catho-secularity, and (3) empowerment versus emancipation.

Regarding the idea of compromise, the question one must ask here is: What is a good compromise? A good compromise is neither a balanced one (that is to say a fair one) nor an honourable agreement for the different parties. Rather, a good compromise is an agreement which ensures an *ex post* improvement over the *status quo ante*, so that each side would enjoy a better situation than the situation experienced during the *status quo*. What does this mean exactly? Such a conception of what a good compromise should be implies that each party will be able to evaluate the benefits of the agreement only after a certain time, in a more or less near future. One should then understand compromise as something to come and not as a present result of an agreement reached by the parties *hic et nunc*. Compromise, as we conceive it, implies that time will do its work so that what seems today hardly acceptable will probably be considered the best solution one can claim in the future.

What are the benefits of the kind of compromise I've just described? In such a conception, the parties don't have to see the balanced compromise as a fair one, in the sense that it leads to the least unjust solution. They don't have to adopt, then, an overhanging conception of justice to which they will refer so as to decide how to manage and obtain the maximum, as it is the case with the tradition of social contract. Good compromise doesn't rest on this kind of meta-value because it presupposes that such an agreement about such transcendental principles is, by definition, impossible. On the contrary, consensus takes its *raison d'être* from the possibility of a mutual consent about norms and rules. Moreover, and more importantly, compromise totally dismisses the idea of surrender, which lies at the core of consensus. Indeed, the kind of agreement which defines the consensus is an exclusive one since it entails that one of the two parties recognizes the essential weakness in, or limitations of, the values it tries to promote.

Now, a decent society is a society that takes the vulnerability of people seriously - in other words, a society that refuses to consider the democratic debate as a struggle between a winner and a loser. It is, therefore, a society that replaces the liberal consensus by the humanist compromise.

The second point to examine is the notion of strategic essentialism as the second tool of the decent society understood as a society which takes into account people's vulnerability. Let us consider the work of Gayatri Spivak on strategic essentialism. For Spivak, people should be able to gradually jettison the metaphysical burdens under the weight of which they collapse. But this process, which by definition requires time, also requires a particular institutional flexibility. In a nutshell, institutions must be able to accompany people on their way to freedom. Such a task presupposes that individuals will be allowed the right to claim their substantial identity. I think that the best way to take seriously the vulnerability of human beings is to accept that some of them need to express materially their deep convictions and that a decent society must grant them with this "right to substantiality", conceived as a first step to identities that prevent people from living together in peace. I would insist here on the fact that this process is neither utopian nor magic: it is simply the consequence of what I call the "culture of compromise" in which a time dimension is essential. Indeed, just as the results of the compromise appear in the future, and implying that individual values can and do change in the process of decision-making, the consequences of strategic essentialism as a process will be evident over the course of time.

I will end this contribution with the notion of empowerment, as the cornerstone of a new path of development, which emerged in the early 1990's. It refers to both individual and collective disposition to autonomy - i.e. the disposition to make one's voice heard at the national level by being an active member of discursive assemblies. What seems to be essential here is the priority given to expression and deliberation as the crucial vectors to development. Let me mention that Amartya Sen stated that political liberties are as important as what is traditionally considered as basic, material or even social rights.

The link between such a conception of development and our "vulnerability project" is, to my view, the fact that the concept of agency represents the tie we're seeking. Indeed, the empowerment strategy works on making people responsible for themselves: to be free is to be one's own master at all levels. This is what we mean by agency, and this is what the "vulnerability project" supports. Indeed, a decent society, as we conceive it, should take into account the vulnerability of people understood as a whole, and not only try to resolve material problems since, in this case, development would concern solely basic needs. The vulnerability project is an ambitious one: it doesn't aim at helping people to emancipate themselves from loyalties and values that constitute them as individuals, as liberal ideology wants them to do. On the contrary, it works on making them able to become the subjects they really want to be, even if this doesn't please us.



## Commentary

*Jitendra Nath Sarker, Bangladesh*

The paper entitled "Peace and a Decent Society" is brief but well written. The author, Soumaya Mestiri, investigates the problematic very carefully and finds a lack of decency in our individual, local, regional and global lives. She considers this lack of decency as a fundamental disease of humankind and suggests certain remedies. First, Soumaya critically examines a definition of a decent society. "A decent society," according to A. Margalit, "is one whose institutions do not humiliate people." Soumaya does not accept this definition, because people can suffer injustice and harm without being humiliated, and because "it seems to be quite difficult to evaluate the sentiment of humiliation." I do agree with Soumaya in this respect.

Now let us examine her own definition of a decent society. "A decent society," she says, "is a society that takes into account and undertakes the vulnerability of people." She also writes that the essential aim of such a society is to make people free and thereby make them responsible. Thus, according to Soumaya, a decent society undertakes a "vulnerability project" to make its people free and responsible. In order to attain success and to make this project effective, Soumaya, as I have understood her, prefers and emphasizes "good compromise" rather than "liberal consensus",



because “compromise totally dismisses the idea of surrender, which lies at the core of consensus.” However, what she means by good compromise is not clear. She says that it is different from both a “balanced one” as well as an “honourable agreement”. She also explains, “Good compromise implies that each party will be able to evaluate the benefits of the agreement only after a certain time.” Here she explicitly admits that good compromise is a kind of agreement. If so, then logically she cannot distinguish it from an honourable agreement of the parties concerned. Is there any better form of agreement than an honourable one? Certainly not. In this way, the author of the article could confuse readers.

A vulnerable project, according to the author, enables society to make its people equally free rather than emancipate them from loyalties. And it is political liberty which makes a person free and the master of him or herself in a decent society; yet here the author does not seem to tell us how this political liberty can be achieved. Finally, let us examine what Soumaya calls the “right to substantial identity”. This is a very important and wonderful assertion to which she attracts our attention. The glory of this paper, I believe, lies in the realization of this truth. Substantially no person is different from any other; all people are not only equal but also one and identical. This spiritual realization is a wonderful achievement for a person, which enables him to behold others in himself and himself in all others. A man who attains this mental property becomes a global citizen and lives in an inexhaustible stream of peace.

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# Hybridity and the Culture of Peace in the Age of Globalization

*Rainier Ibana, Philippines*

The historical origins of the advent of globalization have been widely contested among theories that range from the imperial conquests of ancient kingdoms to the contemporary economic integration facilitated by the new wave of information technologies.

From a Malayan perspective, however, the age of globalization began with the circumnavigation of the globe when Ferdinand Magellan's fleet landed in Philippines on March 16, 1521. Since Magellan and his slave Enrique previously sailed eastward to the Moluccas islands from Portugal in previous expeditions, they were technically the ones who first crossed all the longitudinal points around the globe.<sup>7</sup> This world historical event inaugurated the circulation of goods, peoples and technologies that paved the way for the expansion of Europe's colonial empires.

## Hybridity

The processes of colonization, however, did not merely export new ideas, peoples and artifacts unilaterally from Europe; it also significantly imported much coveted spices and exotic stories about foreign lands to the continent. The galleon trade from Acapulco to Manila, for example, brought the famous Manila hemp and tobacco to Mexico, while Mexican silver coins and European products found their way back to Manila.

These objects were later adapted to the ecological niche and sensibilities of the recipient cultures and led to the transformation of new identities that were inseparable but distinct from their original components. Hybrid identities, therefore, are found in the mixture itself of the elements that constituted them, in the same manner that the identity of water is distinct, yet inseparable, from the elements of hydrogen and oxygen. More complex entities, such as a brand of coffee for example, are constituted by the proportionate mixture of water, ground coffee beans, milk and sugar. These examples can be extended by way of analogy to the identity of human beings and cultural circles. Therefore as a general rule, identity is not an unchangeable essential characteristic, but rather is produced by ongoing processes of receiving and integrating the social and natural forces that impinge on the individual's life experiences.

Hybrid identities can thus be construed as a transcendental category that can be used as an explanatory principle to comprehend all beings, whether native or foreign, because every entity, as Alfred North Whitehead puts it, is constituted of its actual and potential relationships with others. Even so-called native populations, such as Philippines, had a distinctive cultural identity prior to its supposed "discovery" by Magellan under the aegis of the Spanish monarch, because they were already dealing with the more ancient Sri Vijayan and Majapahit blood lines and were actively trading with Moslem merchants prior to the arrival of Spanish colonization.

The history of ideas likewise demonstrates how significant insights were bred by the combination of previous ideas. Anaximander's apeiron, for example, was inspired by Thales' claim that everything is water and Anaximenes' experiments with air. Saint Thomas Aquinas' participatory structure of *esse* was derived from the structure of the Platonic world of ideas and Aristotle's doctrine of substance. Kant, for his part, admitted that he was awakened from the dogmatic rationalism of his day by Hume's empiricism.

The hybrid technologies that characterize our contemporary cultures today are merely being intensified by the new wave of transportation and communication technologies that begun with the world's circumnavigation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The same principle of hybridity, however, is at work even today in the innovation of new gadgets that continue to populate - even overcrowd - our globalized world.

<sup>7</sup> Filipino artists and historians claim that Enrique was a Filipino slave captured in Malacca because of his linguistic fluency in communicating with Filipinos after their landing in Cebu Island.

## A Culture of Peace

From the perspective of the principle of hybridity, the problem of violence lies in taking apart the organic constitution of entities by reducing them to the determination of their component parts and arrogating to the primacy of these particular components the meaning of the rest of reality. The incisive insights of the above-mentioned philosophers were, to a certain extent, also guilty of a form of reductionism, no matter how powerful their explanatory formulas may happen to be. Hybridity as a principle of explanation is certainly not an exception to this reductionism; yet it at least tries to come to terms with the complexity of reality.

The panorama of root metaphors in the history of ideas demonstrate that the profundity of an insight is a function of its ability to put together the diverse perspectives of a prevailing epoch by coming up with a transcendental principle that subsumes the various perspectives in a synoptic vision, which includes the perspectives of contending parties.

The spectre of hybridity, however, can “transgress” (Coombes, 2000, p. 5) the domination of those who claim to bear the universal march of a preferred essentialist meaning of history on host native populations by offering alternative mixtures to the purity of the motherland, on the one hand, and the anarchy of the unconverted heathen populations, on the other hand. For example, the *metis* (the offspring of colonial masters and native servants) challenged the tranquility and secluded life of those who benefited from the colonial *status quo* amidst the squalor of the apparently disorganized life-world of the heathens. These hybrids eventually led their people, as in the case of the Philippine and Latin American peoples, to the birth of revolutionary movements that tried to disentangle and distinguish themselves from the colonial motherland. The Philippine Revolution against colonial Spain in 1896, for example, was led by Chinese and Spanish *mestizos*, who continue to dominate the political and economic landscape of the country to this day.

The post-colonial era, moreover, requires not only the transgression of a domination that merely replaced foreign masters with local ones; it also aspires towards the transformation of social systems that promote justice and human dignity for all the members of society, especially the most vulnerable sectors that need the mediation of hybrid institutions such as civil society and people’s organizations.

The possibilities of building a culture of peace, therefore, no longer hinge on the imposition of what appears to be universal principles over and above all others, nor are they built on the disorganized mass of native cultures, whose sustainability actually needs the support of external social systems. Peace can be made possible by offering alternative spaces of intercultural encounters wherein the world of others can be embraced as if it were one’s own, and wherein one can be received into the world of others as if one belonged to their world.

The work of translating one cultural context to another becomes of crucial importance in building a culture of peace that facilitates the fusion and enlargement of horizons in order to create mutual understanding. To this task philosophers have the special talent of reinterpreting philosophical texts that were originally conceived in other times and other places, for the sake of students and readers who belonged to other generations and social circles.

As Edward Said puts it in the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of his groundbreaking work, *Orientalism*: “The world does have a real interdependence of parts that leaves no genuine opportunity for isolation [...] Rather than the manufactured clash of civilizations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together in far more interesting ways than any abridged or inauthentic mode of understanding can allow” (Said, 2003, pp. xxviii-xxix).

## Hybridity in the Age of Globalization

The advent of new transportation and communication technologies in the age of globalization is providing more opportunities for social interaction and the convergence of ideas and products. The rapid development of such technologies, moreover, is driven by the power of hybridity as one technology is subsumed to the next by adding new features that cater to individual tastes and needs. As these gadgets become more powerful, the individual becomes more interconnected with others through a virtual world that can have real consequences on the practices of everyday life.

In contrast to branded electronic products, hybrid gadgets have the distinctive advantage of being compatible with a wide array of other electronic equipment because they were made from spare parts, which can be interfaced with other products that were manufactured in the farthest corners of the globe. It is not unusual to find cellular phones, cars and computers that were assembled in one place, yet composed of parts that were merely subcontracted wherever labour and managerial costs were minimal. Unlike branded products, hybrids can interface with other brands because they have been integrated from a conglomeration of many other brands.

In the realm of bioethics, the genetic structure of organisms is also being tailor-made to fit the demands of the market, expand the lifespan of human beings, and increase the production of basic commodities for the benefit of large populations that would otherwise have had no access to food and proper nutrition. The field of culinary arts has moreover shown how recipes from one culture can be adapted to other places by substituting ingredients that are available from the surrounding environment.

Nevertheless, the identities of these hybrids are never lost since they merely deflect from their inner life the variety of sources that constituted their being, in the same manner that prisms deflect the various colours from the light that shines through them. Jung prefers to use the metaphor of musical harmonization, wherein different tones are orchestrated to produce a symphonic whole (Jung, 2008, p. 156). Each note contributes to the enhancement of the whole in the same manner that the variety of cultural expressions testifies to the grandeur of being human.

These “sites of hybridity” or “sites of converging paths,” as Jung puts it, were mediated by intercultural encounters such as what we are experiencing today through the marvels of global transportation and information technologies (Jung, p. 155). These sites are also the locations that engender the possibility of going beyond the dilemma of universalism and relativism that haunted philosophical theories of the last century. Jung proposes that we make use of the term “transversality” to describe the middle voice “between ‘the Scylla of hegemonic unification’/‘a vacuous universalism’ on the one hand, and ‘the Charybdis of a chaotic pluralism’/‘an anarchic historicism’ on the other” (Jung, p. 150).

## Hybridity and the Culture of Peace in the Age of Globalization

The prefix “trans” in the terms transversality, transportation, transgression, transformation, transcendental and translation is not a meaningless monosyllable. It suggests an escape route from colonial and imperialist ideologies that were previously anchored to prejudicial claims such as racial superiority and divine mandates as expressed in the supposed “white man’s burden”, “evangelizing the heathens,” and “manifest destinies”. These ideologies actually trampled on the dignity of colonized peoples and have provoked counter insurgencies and guerrilla warfare that have been labeled as “terrorist tactics” by those who possess the more powerful arsenals of destruction.

A culture of peace, therefore, will emerge when every individual human being can gain access to the power afforded by education and self-cultivation. Edward Said thus calls upon his fellow scholars and intellectuals to “purposely complicate and/or dismantle the reductive formulae and the abstract but potent kind of thought that leads the mind away from concrete human history and experience (Said, p. xxiii) [...] It is by debunking the oversimplification of the quest for the good life that we can really come to terms with the intricate ‘density and interdependence of human life’” (Said, p. xxvii).

The difficulty of coming to terms with the complexity of reality may tax the patience and hospitality of our work of scholarship; the virtues to be gained from such tedious exercises, such as hospitality,

tolerance, and patience, however, are necessary conditions for the possibility of a more inclusive understanding of the human condition. Our interventions on the course of human history therefore can become more effective, the more we extend the comprehensiveness of our vision.

The technologies that are being made available today in the age of globalization, moreover, are bridging the gap of the particular practices between everyday life and the universal claims of theoretical discourse by making academics more involved in the affairs of the social world, in the same manner that ordinary people in their everyday lives are empowering themselves with the world of knowledge and ideas through their access to the information highway.

Since the index of reality, in the age of globalization, is defined by the depth and intensity of an entity's relationships with others, the explanatory power of theoretical discourses must also come to terms with the complexity and multidimensionality of the affairs of everyday life. Hybrid perspectives, like hybrid technologies, will most likely succeed in coming to terms with the complex problems generated by our globalized world.



## Commentary

*Phinith Chantalangsy, Lao PDR*

In his paper "Hybridity and the Culture of Peace in the Age of Globalization", Ibana states that the "principle of hybridity" has always had an inherent "power" in the development of human history. This idea is of utmost importance. Firstly, it raises what seems to be a contingent and peripheral phenomenon to the rank of a principle that, by definition, can apply to various fields of realities - philosophical, historical, ethnographical, economic, etc. Secondly, this statement shows that what globalization entails is not new: the hybridation of the world has always been in process. Stating this blatant fact leads us to the following question: Do we have more accurate knowledge of globalization now that we seem to have a better consciousness of being witnesses of this phenomenon? While the phenomenon itself is not new, the intense production of discourse on it surely is. Yet, this over-consciousness of being global today does not seem to make us accept more positively our hybridity.

Is it that the notion of hybridity necessarily implies confrontations and contradictions? Ibana praises the ability of "hybrid gadgets" to be interfaced easily with other products. But one must also note that hybrid beings, because they are "made from spare parts", can be ugly and alienating. The process of hybridation is not always a peaceful process: it can involve confrontations, violence, disagreements and difficult adjustments. Human history is self-explanatory in this regard: colonization has annihilated whole civilizations, and the minds of some have been durably "raped" by others, as described in Aminata Traoré's book entitled *Le Viol de l'Imaginaire* (Traoré, 2003). Reversely, many "foreigners" have been segregated, excluded or exterminated. And yet, all these moments of encounters could have been – and they actually were, as we look back on them – unique opportunities for hybridation.

The paradigm of hybridation allows us therefore to critically rethink the notion of "culture of peace". This notion should not be considered ironically as a consensual notion that nations loosely proposed to no one but themselves. Peace is difficult, even impossible, to attain - let alone a culture of peace. Thus, this notion calls on us to fight against what Ibana rightly calls "reductionism" defined as "taking apart the organic constitution of hybrid entity." The history of the concept of "human rights" in relation with the notion of "universal" is significant: for a long time, the idea of human nature and rights has been understood and applied to a restricted group of human beings, although the 1789 French Declaration had an ontological dimension in its claim. It is this kind of reductionism that triggers tensions and feelings of injustice. The paradigm of hybridation, on the contrary, through its demand for the "slow working-together of cultures" (Said), allows us to shed a new light on the notion of the "universal".

What is universal in all cultures is not the fact that they are all the same because they all reveal, and can be reduced to, some universal principles: this would be an abstract understanding of the universal. What really is universal in all cultures is the very fact that cultures are utopian – they belong to nowhere, but are related to, and borrow from, each other: cultures have a natural capacity for exchange and communication with others. This is what the principle of hybridity reveals: not only can there be no purity when it comes to cultures, but getting dirty, or getting complex, is the only way of building on the universal that cultures envelop.

This commentary raises two questions. First, how would Ibanez's paper, after having depicted a seemingly ideal and positive phenomenon of hybridation, address the issue of conflicts and violence that are naturally embedded in the hybridation of cultures throughout history? Second, what if, once again, it is precisely the "trans" ideas and trends that become themselves "pontified" into vague reductionist discourses and ideologies?

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# Looking for the Truth Wherever It Comes from: A Step Towards Peace

*Naima Hadj Abderrahma, Algeria*

Nobody will put into question the continuity that lies “between” cultures. Aware of it or not, each civilization borrows from that which preceded it. For instance, the Greek civilization took elements from the Egyptian one, namely in the field of mathematics. The Muslim-Arabic civilization borrowed from the Greek civilization (as well as from Persian and Indian civilizations) in every field and successfully exploited it so that all of humanity could be grateful for the legacy. The aim of the human being, through this kind of borrowing, is to use new knowledge, to improve on it and to make it visible - that is to say to make it evolve from “hiddenness” to “non-hiddenness” (or truth).

According to Heidegger, there are three types of hiddenness : ignorance, leading opinion, and mistake. The first and third types can be overcome by the quest for knowledge, the victory of the wrong and, finally, the passage towards non-hiddenness (truth). However the second type is more difficult to overcome. Muslim-Arabic philosophers from medieval times were faced with this second type of non-hiddenness, namely when they began to read and translate Greek sciences and to produce their own philosophy in turn. *Aletheien* means to take the world away from its hiddenness, which is possible thanks to language - in other words, a human way of being. But we should not forget that language always stands for the individual who enunciates it and always takes the color of their ideas, religion, and ideology.

In our dialogue between the Asian and the Arabic world, we'll focus on the role that philosophy plays in war and peace, an essential role in our opinion. In order to show this, we'll take a step back and focus on the origins of that role, not only to go back to the roots, but to draw on the original sources of the Ancients' experience and from there, progress towards peace.

In this paper, I will examine how Medieval Muslim philosophers have been able to convince the leading opinion (*al-jumhur*) to welcome Greek knowledge, which was very different from their own knowledge - articulated differently and in contradiction with their own principles. How did they manage to become so familiar with that language while remaining deeply rooted in their language and tradition? Should we believe that it is just a connection between philosophy and religion? If that is the case, why were the Muslims not content with Plato, who was closer to their own spirituality? Why did they need Aristotle? What was the link that Muslim philosophers (such as Al-Kindī and Al-Fārābī) established between Aristotle and the question of the truth? How did they manage to settle love and peace at a time when their society encountered very serious conflicts?

## The Birth of Falsafa

Falsafa was born at the time of the Abbasid Caliphate,<sup>8</sup> which appeared in 750 A.D. and later ordered the translation of Greek works for political, ideological, theoretical, and even practical reasons. Aristotle's works were abundantly translated. However a question remains legitimate: What was the reason given for the translation of the huge quantity of works coming from various sciences and from philosophy?

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8 Aubier, 2005. Plus exactement au temps d'al-Mansūr, le second calife et le vrai fondateur de l'État abbasside et de Bagdad. C'est lui qui a lancé le mouvement de traduction et non pas al-Ma'mun. Voir Dimitri Gutas, *Pensée grecque, culture arabe*, p. 63 et p. 130.

Aubier, 2005. More precisely, at the time of al-Mansūr, second Abbasid Caliph and true founder of the Abbasid state and Bagdad. He's the one who initiated the Translation Movement, not al-Ma'mūn. See Dimitri Gutas, *Pensée grecque, culture arabe (Greek Thought, Arabic culture)*, p. 63 and p. 130.

Ibn Al-Nadīm, in his *Fihrist*, suggests that the main reason behind this was Al-Ma'mūn's alleged dream,<sup>9</sup> which echoed the Caliphate's interests. The dream defined the three means of knowledge: intellect (*al-aql*, represented by the *mutazilits*), religion (*al-sharī'a*), and the opinion of the learned (*al-jumhur*, the consensus of the learned's community). El-Jabri interprets the dream according to two aspects: its saying (the *mutazilit* theory) and its non-said (i.e. there is no other reference for knowledge but the three references quoted). The aim of the dream is not that which it asserts but that which it denies or refuses: Manichean and Chiite gnosis and, consequently, the references to knowledge coming from movements that were opposed to the Abbasides. Following Ardéchir's testimony,<sup>10</sup> "Al-Ma'mūn wanted to create an 'upper class' that would take care of religion, so that the responsibility of it should not remain in the hands of the 'lower class' masses, with their 'hidden leader'."<sup>11</sup>

The dream's purpose is not aimed at Aristotle himself, but rather at the confrontation of (the Caliphate's) enemies through an intellectual debate rather than through the former method of liquidation.<sup>12</sup>

We notice that at the time of the Abbasside dynasty, and thanks to the *falsafa*, one evolves from physical combat and liquidations to intellectual combat. Is man not an '*aqil* (a rational)? The merit of *falsafa* was to install peace after the war had been declared against those known as the *zanadiqas* - the Manicheans, who were the political opponents of the Abbasside state, as well as those whose beliefs and faithfulness were suspect, such as the Dhimmities, the Sceptics, the free thinkers, etc.

We are now going to focus on two great thinkers of the Middle Ages: Al-Kindī, the Arabic philosopher, (*faylasūf al-arab*) and Al-Fārābī, the second master, in order to know how they proceeded to convince the leading opinion.

## Two Falasifa, Two Genealogies

Al-Kindī<sup>13</sup> (801–873 A.D.), the first Arabic philosopher, had a universal and encyclopedic mind. His purpose, through the transmission of sciences, was mostly to: 1) bring about progress; 2) approach mathematical accurateness in his argumentation, with mathematical evidence being the highest; 3) apply this approach to the theological and religious discussions of his time<sup>14</sup>. All this was made possible to Al-Kindī as he entered philosophy through the great door, essentially alongside Aristotle.

Al-Kindī makes use of an ethnic genealogy: "He invents a genealogy according to which Yûnân, the Greek's eponymous ancestor, could be represented as Quahân's brother, the ancestor of the Arabic people. Thus, the ancient Greeks' sciences could be considered as being of Arabic origin, and their study in Abbasside society, through the Translation Movement, would be nothing other than the re-appropriation of these sciences by their first initiators."<sup>15</sup> A few decades after Al-Kindī, Al-Farabi bases

9 Al-Ma'mūn rêva qu'il vit Aristote. "Je lui demandai: "qu'est le bien?" Aristote r pliqua: "Ce qui est bon selon l'intellect." Je demandai: "Ensuite quoi?" Il r pondit: "Ce qui est bon selon la loi [la sharī'a]." Je demandai: "ensuite quoi?" Il r pondit: "Ce qui est bon selon l'opinion (al-jumhur) des gens." Je demandai: "Ensuite quoi?" Il r pondit: "Ensuite il n'y a pas d'ensuite."»

Al-Ma'mūn dreamt that he saw Aristotle. "I asked him: "what is good?" Aristotle answered: "What is good according to the intellect." I asked: "Then what?" He answered: "What is good according to the law (sharī'a)." I asked: "Then what?" He answered: "Then there is no then." (self-translation).

Ibn Al-Nadīm. 1971. *Ketab al-Fihrist*. Teheran: Marvi Offset Printing. pp. 303-304.

10 Gutas, D. 2005. *op. cit.* Aubier, p. 153..

11 *Ibid*, p. 137. (self-translation).

12 El-Jabri, M. 'Abid. *Naqd al'aql al'arabi: Takwin al'aql al'arabi (Critic of Arab Reason: The Formation of Arab Reason)*, 8th ed. Beirut: Markaz dirassat al-wihda al'arabia, pp. 223-225.

13 Al-Kindī  tait un aristocrate. Il dirigeait un cercle de traduction c l bre par le nom du "cercle d'Al-Kindi". Voir les  tudes de G. Endress   propos de ce sujet.

Al-Kindī was an aristocrat. He oversaw a group of well-known translators by the name of "Kindī circle". See studies by G. Endress on the subject.

14 Gutas, D. 2005. *op. cit.* Aubier, pp. 187-188.

15 *Ibid*, p. 114.



his philosophy on a religious and philosophical genealogy. In one of Al-Farabi's texts<sup>16</sup> (in the same Kindian perspective, the conclusion of which will be given later), which has now become famous, he asserts that the origin of Islam's religion is Christianity corrected, improved and driven to perfection. Christianity, in turn, is a set of theoretical laws and practical laws coming from Greek philosophy with the aim of disciplining and educating *al-jumhur* (the masses). And the philosophy which has been transmitted to the Arabic nation is itself the Greek philosophy that was at the origin of Christianity and consequently at the origin of the Muslim religion. The conflict between the adepts of Islam (the Sunnites) and those of philosophy in Islam can be overcome by succeeding in having them understand that what lies within religion is analogous to what lies in philosophy. If philosophers in Islam have thought that what lies in religion is a set of similarities to what lies in philosophy, then they have stopped considering religion as religion. The adepts of Islam, on the contrary, have not come to that point and still oppose it. The duty of the philosopher today is to convince the adepts of Islam that what lies in religion is only a resemblance of what lies in philosophy. In conclusion, Islam does not contradict philosophy.<sup>17</sup>

The two characters conclude, consequently, that there is a connection between the Greeks and the Arabs, and continuity between Islam and Christianity, which both come from a unique source: *philosophia*. Islam is not in contradiction with philosophy because the world of religion is made up of resemblances with the world of reason. The invention of these genealogies most certainly had a goal: Muslim philosophers wanted to soothe minds and avoid conflicts between themselves and those who refused to borrow that which was foreign - all the more so if the country from which they borrowed did not have the same religion. According to their language, it came from *dar al-kufr*, and from the principle according to which "nothing comes from nothing." Therefore, we notice that during that time, there were two forces, or trends, which were very different from each other: one represented religion (*al-naql*) and was connected to the masses, to the theologians, etc. The other one represented reason (*al-'aql*) and was connected to the Mutazilites and philosophers.

This led philosophers, according to El-Jabri's interpretation, to associate Greek knowledge with Islamic thinking, to merge and combine philosophy and religion because the conflict was very intense at an intellectual level, which undoubtedly reflected the social level. Among the issues that were at the center of discussions, we will briefly quote that of the creation of the world, that of the soul, of reason, of free will. etc. Here we refer to Al-Farabi's approach entitled "the agreements of two philosophers" - Plato and Aristotle - whose main goal was the agreement of their contemporaries and the unification of the religious view, the philosophical view, the political view and the social view, between all of the social groups. At that point in time, it was not possible to question religion in a radical way, for it was thanks to religion that the building of a new society was made possible, putting an end to paganism and switching to monotheism followed by the religion of reason with the Mutazilites. Thus, it was necessary to interpret religion rationally because society was preparing to evolve from "mythos" to "logos" in the Greek way, and more precisely in the Aristotelian way.<sup>18</sup>

16 Al-Farabi. 2004. *The Book of Letters*, 3rd ed. Beirut, Dar El-Machreq, pp. 154-155.

Below is the unabridged version of Al-Farabi's text :

لم (ي)تلا (تفسر)لغلاو ،تفسي افسوسلاو لدجلا لصحي نأ لبقو تفسرلغلا لصحت نأ لبق مهيف تلملا تحدث نأ نكلم ، ادب اوربؤو اهوملغو ادب اوب دأف ىرخأ مهيفل لوقنملا تلملا دعب مهيف تحدث نأ نكلم ، لكذ لبق مهيف هذه تناك نىرخأ موق نع مهيفل تلقن نكلو موحئ ارق نع مهيف تحدث انع ادب ربغى يتلا ظافلا لك لتب تفسرلغلا يف يه امك اهيف تعرضوم ريغ اهيف يتلا تيرظنلا رومألا تناكو تلمك تفسرلغلا عبات تلملا تناك اذاف اهيف ام نأ الو تفسرلغلا عبات انأ افرعي نأ ريغ (نم) ىرخأ تمأ يلأ تلملا لك لت تلقنو ، ادرثكأ يف وأ اذك يف امرا انالكم اتالاثم تذخأل دق تناك امنل لب قحلا يه تلملا لك لت اهيف لم تشت يتلا تالاثملا نأ تلملا لك لت تنظى تبح لكذ نع تكس لب تينيقي نيه اربب تفسرلغلا يف تبح تيرظن رومألا تالاثم ادناعيو تفسرلغلا تلملا لك لت داضت نأ نمؤي مل / ، ءدو جلا يف اهل عبات تلملا هذه يتلا تفسرلغلا لكذ دعب مهيفل تلقن مث ، افسنأ تيرظنلا رومألا يه انأو نكلو مه اودناعي مل اهيف املا تالاثم انأ اوملغ يتمو . تفسرلغلا يف املا تالاثم تلملا لك لت نأ اوملغى مل ام تلملا لك لت تفسرلغلا لهأ دناعيو ، اهنو حطوي و اهلأ تلملا قحلي الو ، نيح رظم اهلأ أو تخ رظم نوكت لب اهلأ ىلغ الو تلملا لك لت ىلغ تسائر اهلأ الو تفسرلغلا نوكت الو . تفسرلغلا لك لت لهأ دناعيو تلملا لهأ لهأ دناعيو يلأ لكذ دنع تفسرلغلا لهأ رطضا امبر لكذلف . اهلأ أو تلملا لك لت نم قهيطع قرضم اهلأ أو تفسرلغلا قحلت نأ نمؤي الو ، تفسرلغلا نم قرضن ريثك اوليؤي نأ يف نوهدتحيو تفسرلغلا (ة) داضم تلملا نأ مهنظ يف مهنودناعي امنل لب افسن تلملا (ل) اودناعي ال نأ نورحتي و . تفسرلغلا لهأ تم ابلط تلملا . تالاثم يه مهتلم يف يتلا نأ مهيفت اوسم تلمتي ناب نظلا اذه مهنع ."

17 El-Jabri, M. Abed. 1993. *Nahnou wa tourath, kiraat mouassira fi tourathina elfalssafi (Tradition and Us: A Contemporary Reading of Our Philosophical Heritage)*, 6th ed. Al-markaz ethakafi al-arabi, pp. 70-71. Contemporary Moroccan philosopher. Died on May 3, 2010.

18 El-Jabri. 1993. *op. cit.* pp. 66-79.

## Philosophia, Falsafa and the Question of Truth

With Greek philosophy, the Muslim philosophers were faced with two great characters: Plato and Aristotle. Plato's philosophy, which implied the existence of two worlds, particularly fitted religion. And even though they found much interest in Plato, and translated almost all whole of his works, Aristotle remained their model and was considered the most eminent. During the Middle Ages, he stood as "a colossal intellectual in relation to whom each and every thought could be defined."<sup>19</sup> Almost all of his works had been translated. "During the fourth century, alternative translations were made of the same works by Aristotle. They were more accurate, more elegant, and written with a more modern technical vocabulary, to the point that often, four different translations were available (such as for the Sophistical Refutations, for instance)."<sup>20</sup>

The question is now: Why did the Muslim philosophers find an interest in Aristotle despite the fact that his work does not, apparently, fit the religion of Islam? To answer this question, we will briefly come back on the Aristotelian conception of truth, and we will then show the main reason that led philosophers to find more in Aristotle than in Plato.

In Aristotle's world, there is no current world in opposition to a beyond world. There is just "the world", closed in on itself, hidden. Light is brought into it through the psyche, with the use of language. Thus *ἀληθεύειν* means to tear off the world from its hiddenness. The *ἀλήθεια* is one of *psyché's* ways of being, belonging to the being-there and not to a higher or an absolute being.

Truth is then put in the human being's mouth thanks to language. *Ἀληθεύειν*, according to the Aristotelian doctrine of dianoethical virtues,<sup>21</sup> contains five modes: *epistémé* (*Ἐπιστήμη*), *sophia* (*σοφία*), *techné* (*τέχνη*), *phronesis* (*φρόνησις*) and *nous* (*νοῦς*). What is the *μαλιστα ἀληθεύειν*? Which one draws the spring out of its hiddenness? Which one is the *βελτιστὴ ἕξις*? In his analysis, Aristotle concludes that *ἐπιστήμη*, *τέχνη*, *φρόνησις* do not answer the conditions. As regards *σοφία*, one has first to make the difference between two kinds of person: the ordinary, everyday man, who belongs to the leading opinion and to the *sophos* (*σοφός*). He is connected to being, to that which appears. His highest point is the *ἀίσθησις*. The second kind of man is more interested by beings. He finds interest in the *αρχαί*, the principles, and his goal is the *ἀγαθόν*. The *ἀίσθησις* is only a first step for him, which he is going to move beyond.

This allows us to say that *σοφία* is prior to *ἀληθεύειν*, to the discovery of beings, because it is a simple *θεωρεῖν*, a simple consideration towards its object: the *θεῖον*, the *αἰεί* as the highest mode of the being of being, the permanent being, the highest being.

According to this analysis, there are in our opinion at least two main ideas that caught the interest of Muslim philosophers and that led them to find Aristotle more important than Plato. Indeed for Aristotle the truth is directly connected to the human being, which emphasizes the *sophos* and the preeminence of the *sophia* (which they called the *hikma*) over any other dianoethical virtue. Al-Kindī and Al-Farabi were faithful believers but they never hesitated to put the truth in the human mouth, in the mouth of philosophy. This is not a negation of religion. What Islam contains is a set of resemblances to that which is already in philosophy. This also satisfies the aim of the philosopher who follows the movement of *al-'aql* (and not of *al-naql*).

Finally and to conclude, I would like to open up the reflection onto how Al-Kindī speaks of the question of truth and how he sees the ancient Greeks.

At the beginning of his main work *First Philosophy*, dedicated to the Caliph Al-Mu'tasim Bi-Allah, Al-Kindī defines the first philosophy while speaking of his role and rank. According to him, the first philosophy is the noblest form of philosophy. It is a very noble science because it is the science of the first truth,

19 Badawi, A. R. 1987. *La réception d'Aristote dans le monde musulman*. Paris, Vrin, p. 75. (self-translation).

20 *Ibid.* p. 77.

21 Bodéüs, R. 2004. *Aristotle: Ethique à Nicomaque, Livre VI (Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book VI)*. Paris, Flammarion, pp. 289-344.

See also M. Heidegger. 2001. *Platon: Le Sophiste*. Paris, Gallimard, pp. 11-215.

the origin of being and of everything as well as its stability. This leads us to assert that first philosophy is the science of “cause” (or origin). This science is thus nobler than the science of effect since we cannot possess the latter if we do not master its origin.<sup>22</sup>

We also notice that the Muslim philosopher considered the permanent being in a theologian’s perspective, which was not Aristotle’s way, for whom being was only seen under an ontological light.

After considering the question of truth, Al-Kindī does not hesitate to evoke our “debt towards the ancient” and to thank them for giving us something true. Al-Kindī calls them “our allies” or sometimes “our associates”. He pays them a tribute at the beginning of his treatise, *First Philosophy*:

“It is our necessary duty not to blame anyone who has helped us make little or bigger profits. But what should we say of those who have helped us make big profits? For, even if they partially missed the truth, they were our allies and our associates since they gave us the fruit of their thinking, which has brought us paths and instruments leading to the science of truth that they could not reach.”<sup>23</sup>

“All the more so as it is clear that, for us as well as for the most pre-eminent of those who devoted themselves to philosophy (people who didn’t speak our language), no man, in the strain of his search, could reach the truth, as much as the truth requires to be reached, and all men together didn’t possess the truth. Each one of them either didn’t reach any of it, or only reached a very small part of it, considering what the truth requires to be reached.”

“If we put together what was reached by each one of those reaching for the truth, then the total amount becomes important. That is why we should thank those who gave us a part of the truth, and thank those who gave us a big part of it even more, because they let us benefit from what their thinking had acquired.”

“In fact, if they had never existed, we would never have put together those true principles by means of which we achieve our search for the hidden things, even if we had spent our lives intensely looking for them. All those principles could only have been collected during the centuries that have passed, one after another, up to our age, following an intensive search and work without respite. Such an intensive search, such a refined speculation, such devotion to work, multiplied by all of these times, couldn’t possibly be collected in the time allotted to one man, even if his time was prolonged and his search intensified.”<sup>24</sup>

Let us emphasize two main points from this excerpt. The first one is a negative sentence defining what shouldn’t be done: “not to blame anyone who has helped us make little or bigger profits.” Al-Kindī considers this a duty: “not to blame” is also not to come into conflict and discord with the other.

The second point is more positive: to thank those who gave us a part of the truth, small or big. People usually thank those who have helped us, with whom we share something, with whom we are able to discuss and establish a bond of friendship.

Therefore as he believes, in the one and only race, the human race, Al-Kindī speaks of a truth, which is not the possession of one people or one community, because each man can discover a part of the truth. All men, together, are on the path to truth. Truth is not the possession of a religion, because there are several religions. Truth is a human concern; it is a matter of reason and of intellect, which are universal strengths. Through this text, Al-Kindī creates an opening onto “the Other”. The Other, who is different from us, through their colour, their religion, and their language, is no kind of obstacle for us. On the contrary, he is our associate and ally in the search for truth. Al-Kindī, thankful, modest and unpretentious, firmly asserts that without the Ancients, we would never have put together those true principles. He insists on looking for the truth wherever it comes from, so as to bring the human species to perfection and happiness. In order to do so, Al-Kindī foresees a complementarity between the different cultures and nations. He requires us to “go back to what the Ancients said about it, complete it if needed, and

22 Upon closer examination, these ideas are similar to those of Aristotle (Met., A2,982a8-19;a1, 993b 19-23).

23 Rashed, R. and J. Jolivet. 1998. *Œuvres philosophiques et scientifiques d’al-Kindī*. I Vol. 2. Leiden-Boston-Köln, Brill, pp.10-12.

24 *Ibid.*

adapt it to the language and the times." Al-Kindi doesn't exclude anyone. On the contrary, he speaks the language of man; he speaks the language of peace.

## Conclusion

Most studies I referred to think that all of the Muslim philosophers represented the Muslim-Arabic civilization. Yet let me, at the end of this modest approach, conclude that Al-Kindi, *faylasuf al arab*, didn't express himself in the name of that civilization but in the name of man, in the broad sense of the word. As a philosopher, he spoke the language of *al-'aql*, of *logos* - the most equitable distribution among men. Only the *λογος* at its highest state, the state of *σοφια*, can reach the truth. This type of *λογος* is that of the *σοφος*, and at a lower grade, that of the *φιλοσοφος*. They are the only ones who accept the truth, or rather the several truths wherever they come from, without racism or discrimination. Through his thinking of the Other, Al-Kindi also discovers a language dedicated to peace. And all the *falasifa* after him, such as Al-Farabi and a few centuries later Ibn-Rushd, followed the same path.

This approach allowed us to focus on the origins of Muslim-Arabic philosophy, at its inception, in order to see how the *falasifa* were *σοφος*. As for the question of the truth, this asked how the Other, who held a part of the truth, was accepted and recognized. Finally, it also asked how, in order to introduce the truth or the several truths of the Other, Muslim-Arabic philosophers used the virtue of *σοφια*, which is nothing less than the language of peace.

# The Blanket of Peace, the Blips of Violence: How Does Philosophy Pitch In?

*Jasdev Rai, England*

Violence is an inevitable aspect of nature and human life. In nature violence is sporadic and generally purposeful. In human life it often reaches pathological levels, justified by an abstract purpose or triggered by the need for resources, yet often concealed under some ethical issue. When does violence become central to human society and spill over to war? When violence becomes marginal and periodic in a period of peace, it may be partly influenced by a philosophy, or philosophies, that dominate a civilization or region at that particular period. Is it possible that philosophies that claim an objective foundation and universal relevance are more likely to inspire tendencies towards a mission to bring peace, stability and prosperity across the world? But resistance to them is overcome with violence, which can take the form of wars. Consequently they may be less likely to be resolved. On the other hand philosophies, which are self-consciously subjective and limited in relevance to humanity yet unlimited in scope, are less likely to promote wars for abstract ideas. They are more likely to be for material issues such as food, land and resources, and are possibly easier to be negotiated. This leads to an important question: Do current conflict resolution approaches and institutions engaged in mitigating the possibility of war really help to achieve their objectives, or do they merely defer the time of war? The paper will look at two institutions. One is the United Nations, its approach to conflict resolution and its blueprint for peace. The other example is the inter-tribal conflicts within the Pushtoons, their tensions with other communities and their approach to resolving conflict.

It became a sort of norm in the twentieth century to pursue absolute peace or commit to such a prospect in the world. Religious leaders, politicians and prominent individuals talked in terms of peace, and quite a few organizations emerged to promote it. Gandhi, among others, was held to be one of the epitomes of this utopian dream. Absolute peace, that is a human society without any significant violence, is a particular human obsession. Perhaps the many wars, including world wars, in the twentieth century influenced the desire to yearn for peace. But twentieth century violence is also interesting in that most of it was ideological - either conflict between secular ideologies, such as western secular democracy and secular communism as in Viet Nam, or between religions. For example, the war between the religious-based Al-Qaeda/Taliban and the West (acting as the 'international community') was sanctioned by the United Nations.

Violence is an integral aspect of nature similar to birth or eating. The physical universe evolves in violent phenomena. Even the beginning of everything is described as the 'Big Bang'. There are perpetual cycles of powerful impacts between meteorites and stars, and collapse of solar systems. Archeological constructions of events tell us that there have been a few periods of near elimination of life on earth, equally resulting from violent phenomena. The theories range from long ice ages to meteorite impacts. While they are speculations, there nevertheless seems credible evidence that life forms, such as dinosaurs, did almost become extinct only to start again.

We only have to look outside of human life in our gardens to see an occasional bird swooping to kill an unsuspecting insect or worm. We know from the detailed and excellent programmes of life in the natural world that a peaceful herd of antelopes or zebras can suddenly be disrupted by a team of lionesses who will kill any of them for a meal. The kill is quite violent and sometimes difficult to watch as the unsuspecting baby antelope is brought down and torn apart. We also know from further detailed study of the natural world of the immense violent struggles for dominance of the tribe (such as in a pack of wolves or wild buffaloes), and territorial conflicts (such as in most species of apes), and mating (such as in a pack of lions). Nature thrives and survives by violence.

We convince ourselves that out there is another world, the animal world, the uncerebral world, and the untamed, uncivilized world. We even call any group of human society that engages in some form of ritual or strategic violence as uncivilized communities. We convince ourselves that we are a higher and lofty order of life with the mental capacity to rise above the phenomenon of violence and uniquely as

a form of life, be able to conquer it and herald a world of peace. It took a period of realism for leading human institutions to recognize that violence cannot be completely tamed, but at best it can be managed. However exalted a status human society accords itself, the simple fact is that it is as much a cog in the reality of nature as a colony of bees or a pack of wolves; and as such, it is as much subject to the phenomena and inevitabilities of nature as any other species. Utopia and grand theories cannot iron out these aspects in human society but can merely give it different forms and opportunities. And that is where philosophy walks in either as a ringside spectator, a master conductor or even, in some cases, as the author of human violence.

It might be noted that the statement doesn't raise the prospective role of philosophy in the promotion of peace, but rather in the active or a collateral engineering of violence. To bring forth a statement from the concluding summary, philosophy becomes a partner in the phenomenon of violence when it diverts in highly abstract fields or attempts to rewrite the script for nature.

When we observe violence in nature, it is generally purposeful. In fact, many eastern philosophies say that every phenomenon in nature is purposeful. But human beings, given their limited scope of understanding, are armed only with constructed scaffolding to venture into the heights - or rather the depths - of a phenomenon. We observe it through as wide a lens as our philosophical minds can create at that time, limited by the dimensions of pixels that we have been able to get our minds around. Yet human beings cannot understand the reasons behind many phenomena. The rational mind asks: What exactly is the purpose? Until our dimensions of rationality permit us to understand that bit more, we are burdened by this question only to answer it often with, "much of the violence is senseless." That, for instance was the question and response to a tsunami and the phenomenon of violence on human life and society it visited. "What sort of God is this?" the Dawkins School asked of the Church, whose response was anything but convincing, caught out by its own construction of a caring and compassionate God that didn't quite seem to square with the phenomenon of a tsunami. Similarly, even scientific reasoning ponders on the purpose, although it can explain how and sometimes why the phenomenon occurred.

The tranquility of a herd of deer in the African savannah is disrupted by a pack of lionesses not because they decide to go on a hunting trip as entertainment or driven into mad action hit by sunstroke, but because they want to eat. Once the kill is achieved, the violence ends, the purpose has been achieved. The herd of antelopes and the lion family continue to survive in close proximity. The herd realizes that one of its numbers has been sacrificed until the next time and it can continue in peace for that period. And similarly violence within an animal group - that is a pack of wolves or a herd of buffaloes - has a purpose but ends after that purpose has reached a conclusion. This may be a territorial marking or a leadership contest. Except in some species of apes and monkeys, violence is not planned as a strategic arm of an offensive campaign. At best, some species (such as bees have the ability to cause violence as a defensive measure. In nature, violence is followed by long periods of peace, or rather tranquility, although the cycles of tranquility may vary for different species and different families and herds, etc. For instance, after the kill, the lions go into a few days of satisfied bliss, the hyenas circle the remains, and the vultures feed off of the carcass. But the herd continues without having to migrate to another pasture unless nature forces it to. Similarly, leadership contests are followed by the defeated party accepting the victor's leadership or as in some species, walking away in exile, which leads to a long period of peace. Peace therefore is the default position of nature. It is disrupted by sporadic incidents of violence which are purposeful and limited in time.

But human society is unique in engaging in non-instrumentalist violence, which has no real immediate purpose, or an arguable rationale in nature other than ideological self-indulgence and perhaps even entertainment. Interestingly, the ideological campaign has found a greater moral and political legitimacy in human species than an instrumentalist action of violence. The ideological campaign is constructed by abstract imagination of reality and often a superstitious belief in its finality as the road to permanent peace and even happiness. Often the ideology itself is a superstition justified by some external and constructed objective arbiter. In the sphere of religious conflicts the external objective arbiter is God. In the secular modern world the objective arbiter is grandiosely defined as human sciences based on blind faith in human rationality built on the scaffolding of scientific reasoning and aided by the enlightened perception of scientific analysis. That this could be another superstition is not one entertained by those who determine the dynamics of human governance in the contemporary world. What we end up

with is an even greater distance between human society and nature with the consequent result that nature simply comes back from its suspended exile with longer and sustained violence. In fact the very suspension of nature is often sustained by violence. This is a difficult statement to unravel and could even appear to be rhetoric but we can begin to look at real examples. A significant role of philosophy in this is the concept of a “just war”.

A phenomenon of the modern world is that instrumentalist violence is carpeted in denial and human society persistently justifies war in lofty abstract ideologies. A state seeking access to natural resources in another country will not have the courage to state this as its instrumentalist reason but will, as we have seen even in recent conflicts, construct a convoluted cause to morally justify its violence with the addendum that its ultimate aim is peace in the world. The Iraq War is one of the most glaring examples of this, which brings us to consider the very idealist role of the United Nations in the justification of war, rather than an instrumentalist engagement to promote the prospect of peace.

On the face of it, the US-led war in Iraq was justified on several moral grounds, none of which really convinced anyone around the world. A very important aspect of it was the desire by the US, and even more compellingly by the United Kingdom, to lay a pretence to it as a collective decision of the entire world. Thus it was repeatedly reported in the UK and US media as the decision of the “international community”. This desire was later satisfied at first by the UN and then later by a number of Western countries that were engaged in its reconstruction programme.

The broader moral justification for war was the threat imposed on the world, and particularly in the region by Saddam Hussein through some mythical programme of developing weapons of mass destruction. The other justification given was that Saddam was a dictator denying democracy and good governance to his people; the ethical dimension was further deepened by the explanation that he was violating human rights, such as extra-judicial executions and torture with impunity. These justified a number of moral imperatives that constitute the concept of “just war”.

The first argument advanced, regarding weapons of mass destruction and the threat to the world ironically satisfied one of the most important and perhaps controversial roles of United Nations. The UN sees its purpose as promoting peace. In fact, that is the very rationale of its coming into existence according to the preamble in the UN Charter. The other is sovereignty of the member States. In upholding sovereignty it also justifies the concept of defense. And in ensuring that it meets with its existential purpose of achieving peace on earth, it can also rationalize a Security Council action to engage in war with the aim of achieving long-term peace in any region and the world. Although the UN itself did not actually pass a Security Council declaration of war, it laid the rationale of regional and world peace by insisting compliance from Iraq on search for weapons of mass destruction. Having achieved that, the US and UK made a creative interpretation of the Security Council resolution and made a “moral call” to disarm Saddam.

As for the second moral argument used to co-opt the liberal sections of American and British society, Saddam’s rule as an undemocratic dictator was exploited. It was developed as an argument to justify regime change and to replace the administration with a democratic, secular government. To those suspicious liberals and democratic evangelists who questioned the necessity of war in Iraq, as opposed to in Saudi Arabia, an even further UN-based purpose was used. It was alleged, with significant evidence from exiled Kurds and other UN investigations, that Saddam had been violating the ethical principles of civilized society: the human rights instruments. There was enough evidence of his regime’s horrendous acts of torture, use of chemical weapons against Kurds and extra-judicial executions of those who disagreed with him. With these series of arguments the die-hard opposition to war was reduced to small groups in the US and the UK, which were decidedly outwitted in their moral argument. The only counter-argument that the antiwar lobby could come out with was: Why not in Sudan? Or in North Korea? etc. This was weakened by the assertion that there has to be a start somewhere.

While the United Nations did not sanction the war, it is important to recognize that the United Nations’ ideological imperatives such as democracy, human rights and international peace, were used as moral arguments to justify what was described as a “just war”. Thus secular humanist philosophy formed the basis of public declarations for the necessity of the violence that both the US and the UK thrust on the people of Iraq, with disastrous consequences over a number of years. These concepts are intended to

promote a peaceful stable humane society in which violence would be reduced to a minimum, if not removed completely. But to reach that stage, violence has to be co-opted. It is a rerun of the Crusades waged for moral reconstruction of society by both Christianity and Islam. Even at that time, the end game was the promise of permanent peace. And so, it is upon these ideological frames that many international instruments of the United Nations are based, and they are the secondary purposes with which the United Nations' many agencies occupy themselves. There is, as Negri would say, a subliminal crusade in the post-charter philosophical orientation of the United Nations, which has digressed from its primary purpose of ridding the world of the scourge of war to, in fact, justifying it with a more idealized and abstract reason. It has diverted the UN from an instrumentalist approach of promoting peace to a philosophically-based determinism of perpetual peace.

In fact, the war in Iraq exposes the modern world's denial of natural needs for war to camouflage it in dishonest facades of "just war". Two people, who were very close to the US administration, revealed the real reason. The Chairman of the US Federal Bank, Alan Greenspan, said: "Let's face it, the real reason is for oil." A further reason was given by Henry Kissinger who said that the US needed a war it could win to reinstate the *status quo*, after the humiliating conclusion in Afghanistan, which followed Al-Qaeda's 9/11 terrorist attacks. The perpetrators of the attack remained free until 2011 despite one of the most sustained bombings of mountains and countryside. Ironically, it is Saddam Hussein who refused to give moral justifications for the invasion of Kuwait. He went for the oil and laid claim to Kuwait as Iraq's sovereign right. This is what we find in nature - violence for a purpose rather than for some ideological rationale of reconstructing society.

The UN has had a greater role in Afghanistan, where its secondary philosophical doctrine may have prolonged the war rather than helped to meet its primary purpose of promoting peace by facilitating a forum for settlement.

The initial attack on Afghanistan by the US after the 9/11 attacks, dislodged Afghanistan's Taliban-led government. The Taliban, who had hosted and aided Al-Qaeda, ran into the mountains. US forces landed in Kabul and were left with a state without a viable government. The US began the process of statebuilding, having painted Afghanistan as a failed state run by extremist fundamentalist Islamists, whose record on human rights was allegedly even worse than Saddam Hussein's. Whereas Saddam's human rights violations were to maintain his monopoly of power and resources, the Taliban's excesses were in pursuit of an ideological campaign to transform Afghan society into a puritanical Islamic society as understood by Taliban ideologues.

The United Nations provided the vital philosophical and moral ingredient to the US-led Western coalition to engage in the counter-reconstruction of Afghan society and to develop a modern democratic secular state with sound human rights, a fair judicial system and a reasonably developed economy. The ambition was to create a successful and desirable model UN state. Ten years on, this ambition has increasingly become precarious and unsustainable with the mounting casualties of war, a war-torn society and a state unhinged from its own moral foundations. The state is governed by a coalition of warlords and corrupt institutions denying people the very stability, peace and moral fabric that they seek as a society. In fact, the UN has failed in its primary purpose of ending war and has unwittingly provided the moral fodder for sustaining a prolonged war and delayed peace.

The commitment to promoting peace in the UN is compounded by three associated, but subsidiary prerogatives. The first is the promotion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its subsequent derivative treaties and conventions. The second is a preponderance towards a secular humanist philosophical approach to governance and human society. The third is the development of institutional structures to assist states and inter-state relations. In this it is equipped with the expertise and knowledge-base to promote peace between states within conventional conflict resolution theories. The state is seen as a secularized sovereign entity and conflict is resolved on that basis even when the state is overtly and explicitly theocratic. However, the UN does not seem to have practical expertise in the functional dynamics of ethical principles and practices of civilizations and cultures in relation to promoting the resolution of conflicts. In fact, it probably does not have that expertise even in fields such as development and human dignity. But that is a subject for a different discourse.



In Afghanistan, the UN's role as a mediator was confronted by a people whose ideas of conflict resolution and human society were fundamentally at odds with those that inform the approach of the UN. It began reconstituting Pushtoon society with a programme of what it considers progressive and modern, such as its version of emancipation of women, the development of a Western form of democracy, a judicial system based on human rights principles and an education system that would lead to a developed society along the principles of Western democratic developed states.

But these are also the broad aims that least interested the Pushtoon-dominated Taliban. In some areas, particularly in the fields of justice and emancipatory rights, the Taliban were on a different path than that which was promoted by the UN. As a result the Taliban were not only at war with the US-led coalition, but also with the very presence of the UN. Paradoxically, the UN peace efforts not only failed to achieve any progress, but the UN found itself at war with one of the parties in the conflict because it had compromised its own neutrality by beginning a reconstruction programme that included reconstituting the very character of society.

It is worth looking at the alternative approach to peace in Pushtoon society. Firstly, it is a society that is governed by codes of conduct that can be traced back many centuries, if not millennia. While Islam plays a significant role in the spiritual and legal codes of Pushtoon society, a great many of its codes of ethics and inter-personal relations owe less to Islam than to its own distinctive culture. For instance, Pushtoon society tends to be ambivalent and, to some extent, the antithesis of the Hobbsian state. The Pushtoos don't disarm and transfer the privilege of violence or justice to the state. They retain these powers as both individuals and as small communities, known as tribes or clans. They expect the state to facilitate their version of justice rather than impose a new one. Interestingly, they also appreciate that different societies in a state and even different tribes among themselves, may have different approaches to ethical codes and justice. Consequently they take a pluralistic approach.

Secondly, it is a society based on consensus decision-making rather than majoritarian democracy. They abhor the idea of a majority having power of decision over any section of society. Consequently, in theory, even the weakest member of the tribe has an influence in the decision, although in practice this does not work, as the weaker individuals will latch on to a strong person forming a group behind the strongman. But primarily governance is consensus at the tribal level first, then gradually rising to the level above. The biggest decision-making body is the "grand shura", wherein the biggest block of tribes meets to make community-wide decisions.

The Pushtoon are also fierce defenders of their customs. Whatever the status of women among them is, they do not tolerate interference in the reconstitution of their society by others. They also have a very strong sense of honour and tradition, which they will defend regardless of their impact on the status of state laws. They do not pretend that society is ever permanently peaceful. Consequently, they retain personal access to arms to defend their lifestyles and themselves.

In the resolution of conflicts, they seek retribution in any of several ways. The classical state model around the world, and now in the International Criminal Court, rests on the sovereign power acting as the arbiter and judge of tension and violence. The state decides guilt and then awards itself the prerogative to mete out a form of punishment. In some communities, while the state is accorded the privilege of neutrality to decide guilt, its role in punishment is a guide that can be ignored by the victim. The victim can decide a form of financial compensation or another alternative to that offered by the state as long as it does not exceed the guidelines established by custom and codified within the state system. It is unlikely that the International Criminal Court would entertain this as an alternative option to such communities.

In the Al-Qaeda/US conflict, the hurdle between a UN-led negotiation with the Taliban was the tradition of hospitality. Al Qaeda was their guest. Despite losing their ancestral lands to invading US forces, if they were to hand over Bin Laden and other Al Qaeda members, the Taliban (as Pushtoos), decided to uphold the long established tradition of placing a guest in Pushtoon protective custody, which must never be betrayed. The guest is privileged with the right of protection against his enemies. Neither the UN nor the US could find its way around this. They both applied Western notions of justice and peace, seeking the detention of Al-Qaeda and retributive justice in Western-inspired judicial processes, as they did with Saddam Hussein, and which is embedded into the UN system.

The UN for instance has almost no expertise and perhaps no cognizance of theocratic governance or customary law. Its philosophical foundation after the Charter is essentially Western secular humanism, rather than one of a neutral body. However, as much as the secularist may claim that secularism is a neutral philosophical paradigm, the practical example of the French government's decision to outlaw public displays of religion shows that secularism is, in fact, another theocratic position, albeit that of no God. The secularist position has existed in Indian civilization for over two millennia along with the philosophies that assert the idea of a super conscious in the universe. Neither has attempted to monopolize the public space until the post-colonial period. It was always seen as another theological position, while now it is seen as a competing theological position, even in India. Consequently the UN's assumption that its concentration on secularism is a neutral position is merely its own assertion, but not one that would find agreement in, for instance, a traditional Indian worldview.

However the point being made here is that the UN is restricted in its scope as an honest broker to arbitrate for peace because it itself has a preferred ideological position that it attempts to promote, which it has received from a particular philosophical paradigm. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the role of philosophy has been to prolong war, rather than to get to grips with the issues and find a resolution without an ideological position. The epistemological evolution of the hegemonic ideologies on justice and war can perhaps trace themselves to the notion of a "just war". Generally, this is famously enunciated by Saint Augustine in Western teleological understanding. But the concept of a "just war" also exists in other civilizations, such as in India. Kautalya, who preceded Machiavelli by almost a thousand years, wrote a book advising Prince Chandragupta on the violent route to power for the greater good, the restoration of adherence to principles and a future of long-term peace. The Prince was persuaded that it was his obligation to engage in a "just war" in order to achieve peace. Clearly we can see echoes within the UN's approach of a "just war" and subsequent statebuilding to restore ethics (human rights) and peace.

In fact this theme had already existed in the Bhagwat Gita. In it, Krishna (the God-head) convinces Arjuna of the latter's moral duty to go to war with his relatives, who have acquired power unethically and were running the state by violating the moral principles of governance. Interestingly, both Arjuna and Krishna knew that the war would not lead to the desired peace, but to the destruction of the Kingdom and long-term suffering. Krishna nevertheless tells Arjuna that the restoration of ethics is more important than the fear of countless deaths and the destruction of society. He seduces him with the prospect that the society which would emerge from the carnage would be more ethical and have the chance of long-term peace.

We can find echoes of that both within the UN and the theophilosophies, as well as pure philosophies, that attempt to promote peace. The one consistent fact is that none of them have delivered any permanent or even long-term peace. It can be argued that the UN was really established after the Second World War with the conflict in Europe in mind and that the formula has been successful in 60 years of peace in Western Europe as well as in North America. On the other hand, it is also a fact that while peace exists in Europe, it does so at the expense of violence having been exported abroad. European powers have been involved in several wars since the UN came into existence. And they all claim to have similar broad ambitions: the restoration - or in many cases the introduction - of ethical principles, as articulated in the UN's many conventions, as well as geo-political and world peace. When the UN has been involved as an active or even as a tacit partner in the pursuit of these principles, violence has rarely ended. It has merely prolonged war.

The purpose of this paper is not to question the UN, but to critique the role and influence of philosophy in the promotion of peace. Almost all theological and pure philosophies concerning human relations strive towards a permanency of peace. Whether it is Christianity, Islam, modern Hinduism or even Buddhism, they all claim a commitment to peace and the ideological crutch to deliver it. So do secular philosophies, such as the theory of state in Hobbs, who saw the Leviathan state as the deliverer of peace, or the many humanist philosophies who see "rights" as a way towards the era of peace and human dignity. Interestingly, even neo-Indian thought has laid claim to having the ultimate theory of peace in Gandhism and a reconstruction of the cult of Om Shanti. A fact that is often overlooked is that Gandhi endorsed the involvement of Indians in the Second World War, but tried to negotiate a price for that engagement in violence - hardly a moral position on peace. In the first India-Pakistan War, he endorsed Indian retaliation rather than putting peace above national interest. In both, there is a Gandhian version

of a “just war”, not one of martyrdom to non-violence. And if we look beyond the propaganda of Om Shanti, we find that both the Ramayana and the Mahabharata talk of Om Shanti, and further developed a form of Hinduism that has also been responsible for some heinous massacres in Indian history, including the near-genocide of Buddhists in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.

Without deference to great minds, philosophy, like the law, is a myth constructed in human imagination. Like many other constructions it can lead us away from reality and our place in the wider order. Quite often it encourages us towards bending nature to recreate it in a utopian ambition. As a result it fails in the longer term to deliver peace. In fact in most cases, it not only ends up postponing it, but even in sustaining it with the idea of a just war.

The idea of a moral dimension to violence is perhaps a uniquely human obsession. It may be serving the primal instincts for violence but glorifying in grandiose theoretical ethics as we see both in Iraq and Afghanistan. Philosophy, I contend, should not foray into the arena of violence and peace because it is restricted by the political discourse that denies it from stating the obvious - that violence is an inevitable aspect of nature as of human life. Among human beings the course of war merely takes pretentious moral dimensions, as a “just war”, whereas in most cases the underlying reason remains primordial, such as a desire to gain access to resources, or for power such as hegemony. Philosophy unwittingly often provides the reason for prolonged violence and a dishonest cover for such violence.

It would be injustice to say that all philosophies violate the state of human relations to nature. On an anecdotal observation, it seems that philosophies that have an element of exclusivity or certainty or a combination of both are more likely to provide the moral basis for crusades for peace aided by prolonged violence. This is seen in medieval Christianity, in the rigid interpretation of the idea of *dar al-Islam* (“house of Islam”) and *dar al-harb* (“house of war”), and in the last three centuries in the claims of philosophy to be a scientific study worthy of an objective legitimacy. These two world religions have led to numerous wars and continue to do so despite the assertions of their theologians that they promote peace. But not surprisingly, the enlightenment and its subsequent versions, the post-enlightenment philosophies, have also given moral purpose to prolonged wars. Nationalism is a product of enlightenment ideas, as are political divisions such as communism, capitalism, socialism, and secular democracy, among others. Each has gone on crusades or given moral legitimacy to lengthy wars.

Perhaps philosophies that do not lay pretence to an objective legitimacy and are inclined to refrain from transcendental and universal tendencies are less likely to lead to just wars and legitimized violence. These philosophies introduce an element of intuition or subjectivity and thus limit their relevance to a region or a people. They usually have a much wider scope in the range of human activity and knowledge that they can engage in or even explain. But by adopting a sense of humility, of admitting subjective context, they caused less damage to the relations between human and nature.

Unfortunately, in today’s world, the very institution that could have assisted in understanding knowledge as a pluralistic and subjective phenomenon, is also the institution that has taken the baton from doctrinaire universal religions and transferred their external agency of God to a presumption of scientific basis of knowledge, while according itself the duty to discover the new Holy Grail of a human code of conduct codified in international norms by what are called emancipatory progressive conventions. The United Nations was born from the cradle of European civilization, which has yet to discover the tools of coexistence after millennia of exclusivity and universal evangelism, as we see in the considerable difficulty that the French state has in accommodating diversity.

And it is against this background that I refuse to engage in seeking a definition of human dignity. Dignity is particular to a culture. Civilizations, which rotate around Descartes’ famous statement, “I think therefore I am,” might put a great deal of emphasis on the idea of dignity tied to the theories of individual rights. On the other hand, cultures whose essence is in the statement, “Thou art, therefore I am,” may put emphasis on dignity as a value within society.

If philosophy cannot keep itself away from this most basic of human activity, the sphere of violence and peace, then it should strive towards understanding nature and assist in producing theories on management and mitigation of violence rather than on the utopian realm of permanent peace and “just war”. In nature, the default position appears to be peace with blips of violence. In an attempt to

extinguish the blips, human society with its various philosophies has almost created a default position of violence with short periods of peace. That at least seems to be the history of the Twentieth century and a defining factor in the Twenty-first century, as we all experience at the airport when we are thoroughly searched in case we are carrying an explosive device. We are all in a state of war, and none of our various institutions, including the UN, have delivered us permanent peace and a utopian society of ethical governance, aided by the many philosophies that articulate, in their various ways, the achievement of *nirvana*.



## Commentary

*Robert Aori Nyambati, Kenya*

Dr Jasdev Rai's paper, "The Blanket of Peace, the Blips of Violence: How Does Philosophy Pitch In?" is obviously provocative as well as informative in many ways. I must admit that philosophical approaches to global peace and security are not only complex but also inevitably critical as illustrated in this paper. The paper not only exposes the void of philosophy, *per se*, in peace building, and especially the Hobbsian one, but is also an open gate for a meaningful dialogue on wars and conflicts amongst scholars, policy makers and others.

There is no question that philosophers have for long philosophized peace. Both Thomas Hobbes and Immanuel Kant, for instance, have described peace as a "better way of life" and prescribe to an artificial state of peace aimed at promoting human security, progress and stability. Saint Augustine, too, has argued that peace is a "tranquility of order", where order, in his view, refers to "the disposition of equal and unequal things in such a way as to give to each its proper place." Moreover, both Christianity and Islam have often presented peace as a divine quality that must be pursued in order to achieve the state of felicity that only exists in heaven.

Even though the concept of "absolute peace" can be described as abstract (utopian) and illusionary, one can consciously argue that a more secure and peaceful world is possible, even though Dr. Rai seems to rebuff this view. Furthermore, it is arguable that institutions like the UN have offered little in conflict resolution as postulated. But it is also true that the UN and other institutions have had critical roles to play in conflict resolution and peace building that we cannot afford to neglect.

The US invasion on Iraq and Afghanistan remains contentious. The mediation role of the UN and subsequent promise of peace in these cases is non-existent as argued in the paper. But there are better lessons to be learnt and I believe philosophy has a key role to play. Moreover, the realist school of thought's approaches to peace and international governance is important, as illustrated in the paper. Realists are always thought of as war-mongers but realists do not dream of, nor merely justify wars, as liberal thinking postulates. Errant liberal thinking will often blindly associate wars with realism (be it offensive or defensive), without underpinning the fact that the principles of just war stretch beyond the boundaries and ramifications of realism. (Hans J. Morgenthau, the forerunner of realism, advances a better argument on Realism).

While critiquing the role of the UN and Philosophy, Dr. Rai fails to attack the root causes of conflict in our societies. There is no doubt that abject poverty, inequitable resource distribution, impunity, racism (and all other forms of -isms), the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the inability to create a norm of collective responsibility to protect others, lack of dialogue, among others, are the true causes of conflicts and wars.

Understanding nature and the workings of Pushtoon societies is critical. Several conflict resolution lessons can be drawn from these societies as argued in this paper. But excessive reliance on traditional anti-conflict methodologies is dangerous, particularly in our rapidly globalizing world. The past has its story and lessons. The present is with us. The future awaits us. Whether it is true or not that the past and the present inform the future, we must live with the present realities, now and here. The current generation seems to learn little from the past generations' challenges and thus making us ask the following questions: How do we seam the "traditional" with the modern techniques of conflict resolution? How do we develop and benefit from such connections (if at all they exist)? Do all peoples of the world view nature and the cosmos in the same way? Are cultures the same? And how can philosophy help us untangle ourselves from conflict predicaments?

The mind and the philosophy of wars are closely linked but the paper fails to highlight the state and the role of the "mind" in conflicts and wars. Understanding the intricate connection is a crucial step to solving the impasse. In fact, Dr. Rai's paper hardly establishes this connection and leaves us thinking that philosophy is hollow and therefore useless - a proposition that many will reject. The paper focuses little on possible ways of strengthening the existing conflict resolution instruments and institutions (the UN included), or on how philosophy can be tailored to meet these challenges.

In sum, however, Dr. Jasdev Rai succeeds in presenting the challenge that lies before us, while at the same time challenging our conventional wisdom on violence, conflicts and wars.

# Elements for a Culture of Peace in the Early Arabic Conception of Government

*Syrine Snoussi, Tunisia*

As defined by the United Nations, “the Culture of Peace is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.” This definition assumes that some traditions and behaviors can cultivate peace. The metaphor of culture means that these traditions are like nutrients. The nutrients are feeding a plant in order to make it grow. According to this definition, the culture of peace consists in the development of these elements. In this context, peace is not reflected in a simple state of fact. It cannot be reduced to negative peace, defined by the absence of war. Peace consists in affirmative actions. The definition adopted here recognizes the existence of possible conflicts, but the set of elements that ensure a culture of peace is intended to solve these conflicts peacefully through dialogue.

The bases addressed for a culture of peace represent many of the major social movements of our time, especially human rights, gender equality, democratic participation, free flow of information and international peace and security. All these ideas are very modern ones. The aim of this paper is not to inquire about these subjects in the medieval Arabic literature; that would be nonsense. However, some of the other bases pointed out by UNESCO, as education, or understanding and tolerance and, to a certain point, sustainable development, may have roots in the medieval Arabic representation of government. A useful concept of a culture of peace should not appear only as the product of a modern, developed world( if not the Western world). To be efficient and accepted, it has to reflect the universality of the concept of peace, and this universality cannot be reduced to its modern acceptance. In addition, since a modern representation, mostly in the Western world, considers Islam as a culture of war and terrorism nurtured by its history and its literature, a reflection on the representation of peace in the earliest Arabic literature on government can help to deconstruct it.

We will first try to make the link between the modern conception of a culture of peace and the medieval definition of peace. Then an analysis of the cosmology of medieval peace will be provided, followed by the presentation of the anthropology that sustains this representation of peace. In the end, we will try to draw some conclusions about the modern concept of a culture of peace.

## From the Modern Culture of Peace to the Ancient Peace

It seems that the idea of a Culture of Peace could be opposed to the idea of a Culture of War. But these contraries are not symmetrical. A concept of a Culture of Peace includes the notion of duration. The effort to ensure peace is intended to be continuous in time. On the contrary, a culture of war always includes the notion of the end of the war. Each war is intended to be stopped by the victory of one of the actors. Even if the concept of peace is reduced to the meaning of the end of the conflict, and if it designates only dead time between two conflicts, war is never intended to be perpetual. A culture of war, at best, leads to the notion of peace as a necessary future.

A Culture of War would only promote internal discord, violence, and permanent disorder in every field of life. The war of everyone against everyone can be considered as a state of nature, as Hobbes showed. As long as there is no common power that maintains men in respect, they are in a condition of war. The will to fight is permanent as long as there is no assurance of peace. Such a situation cannot allow any development, any promotion or any education. But since new conflicts should always rise in such a state, we see that peace cannot have this limited meaning of the end of the conflict. It implies an institution of the state of peace and a practical relationship between different members who are acting peacefully. Then, we may conclude from this fictitious situation that there couldn't be any culture of war. A culture is the product of a social organization. In the state of nature, there is no enterprise because the benefice is always uncertain. There is no agriculture, no shipping, no knowledge of the world, and no

measure of time, no literature, and no society of any kind. Human life is miserable and dangerous. The expression “culture of war”, if we understand it as the war of every one against every one, seems to be contradictory. Men are in a condition of war when there is no common power. The conflict is permanent and even if it is not effective, there is a permanent disposition to the conflict. Hobbes names every other time “peace”. Peace is the name of the condition in which men live when there is a common power that ensures everyone’s safety and eradicates the permanent fear and danger of a violent death, which are the main feelings of the people in the state of nature. Unlike war, peace is immediately related to culture in this representation.

If a culture of war doesn't seem very significant, isn't a culture of peace a bit tautological? No, it adds something to the basic understanding of the end of the conflict. We need to understand what a true concept of peace is. What does the experience of peace reveal, what happens at the end of the conflict? In fact, safety and security are the main aspects of the social state of peace. First, fear disappears. Peace is the product of an institution. A description of a concrete peace reveals this very first determination of the concept of peace - safety.

This is the main significance of the word “peace” in Semitic languages. The radical s-l-m, in Arabic means safety. The same is used to salute, and was used in the ancient times with the meaning: “We rely on you, and there is no war between us.” In the old times, meeting someone was not as sure as it is now. The first thing to say and to know when meeting someone was to ask for peace and to be assured that a confident relation was possible. *As-salem*, had a very concrete meaning unlike the modern catachresis. The word *salem*, has a negative definition: it means to be preserved from, to be intact. Peace is, in the Arabic etymology, the preservation from the war, and from all kind of dangers and weaknesses. The social meaning of peace derives from the meaning of safety, of relief from dangers and of completion. There is also the notion of surrendering. The word implies a relationship. The salutation is a kind of primary contract. In Hebrew and in old Phoenician, both Semitic languages, there is also the meaning of offering to God something, in order to calm the rage of the god. There is an exchange, a contract in the act of a donation. Peace designates the preservation of every kind of corruption. The expression has now the meaning of well-being, entirety, safety, being intact, and peace. The notion of peace has also now both the meanings of pacification and pacifism.

It seems difficult to imagine a social state of war, implying a promotion of war at every level of society. Indeed, even if we try to represent to ourselves a warrior civilization – every culture has its own representation of a warrior neighbor, or ancient civilization – war is an external activity. Even in this case, a state in war is sustained by a certain idea of an internal order tensed towards the external war. A state in war cannot efficiently handle internal discord. The author of the Testimony of Ardashir is well aware of this. Ardashir, the first Sassanid king who lived in the 3rd century A.D., addressed his descendants. His testimony was translated in Arabic and was one of the matrix of the first Arabic mirror for princes during the 8th century A.D.:

“You shall know that fighting against the enemy, before winning the battle for the mores of your subjects, will not protect you and will be to no avail. How could you fight against the enemies with divided heart and contrasting hands? You know that the fundament for humans, to which hearts and natural instincts get attached to, is the love of life and the hate of death. War drives away from life and brings closer to death, and you know that there is no defense, no resistance and no protection against those two things, if not by these two ways: either, determinate an aim, and the subjects are not able to determine an aim when the aim that was established in the first times of the nation does not exist anymore, or, a good education and a right policy.”

Every society rests on a certain understanding of peace: internal peace. The internal peace of a state is conceived as policy: theory and practice of government. This quotation mentions two ways to preserve peace - that is to preserve life and to prevent death. The first way consists in the determination of a goal. The aim is a collective aim, an aim that gathers people together. But determining such an aim seems to be the first constitutional act of a state. This initial decision once lost must be replaced by education and righteous policy. Education or morality (here it is the same word) and policy are part of the same way, but they are opposed to the initial determination of an aim. Once this aim is lost, when people have no more sense of their collective goal, this goal cannot be recovered. The only other way, then, is a good government to avoid discord.

Peace in its first meaning can be opposed to discord and not to war in the first place. Accordingly, war has to be defined as the conflict that occurs between states. The discord is the conflict that can happen between members of a society already constituted, or between groups of same individuals. According to the medieval literature, discord is the main danger that a society has to deal with. This discord can lead these same members of a totality to be seen as different and to consider themselves as different from one another. The Arabic word for discord is *fitna*. The word originally meant test or discrimination - in the way that gold is discriminated by fire. The discord tests the community: if it can resist this discord, then the community has a reality. If not, there is no more community and the discord will develop into war, since the groups that are now separate no longer share any common identity. But this kind of conflict is considered as the worst, maybe because this discord may not have any possible end, since the parts that are fighting are equal and they cannot make any concession: everyone has the same right to represent the whole. Discord produces violent changes. The Great Discord was a historical event of great importance in the later representations of the development of Muslim power.

Peace is understood in the medieval context as internal peace, like it was for Plato. A reflection on the culture of peace may address this issue: How do we ensure internal peace through the way of government? This may be the first aspect of a culture of peace. Many of the bases addressed for a culture of peace by UNESCO concentrate on aspects that have to be established by national states. Internal peace is a *sine qua non* condition of international peace. The question of the establishment and perpetuation of an internal peace is not specifically a modern issue. It could be one of the main underlying questions that run through the medieval literature about the technique of government.

If we consider that a political state contains in its concept a certain representation of peace, we have to understand the concept of a culture of peace as if it is intended to promote peaceful relations between states. The ideal of a culture of peace is then to be conceived as an effort of cosmopolitan generalization of practices of government that are promoting a universal peace. The concept of a culture of peace should not be opposed to a concept of a culture of war, but it puts the stress on the differences between a comprehension of peace as the end of the conflict and the political meaning of peace. When the conflict is over, what strategies are to be developed to ensure peace? The theories of contract are the modern attempts to solve this problem. But even without an understanding of the distinction between the state of nature and the state of culture, this issue is the base of any representation of the institution of power.

## Cosmology of Peace: A Representation of the World, from the Example to the Universal

Tolerance among the people of the world is one of the bases addressed in a culture of peace. Tolerance is a modern concept. It can be defined as the acceptance of other beliefs and opinions that we don't share. However, this modern definition raises problems. Tolerance is a negative disposition: it considers that these beliefs are radically different and, at first, not acceptable. That is why tolerance appears as a set of rules initiated to prevent conflict by accepting different opinions that cannot be changed in a society. The notion of tolerance may seem to be the result of a failure in the government of the society. The only way to prevent the weakness of the concept of tolerance is to transcend the differences between these opinions by education. Tolerance has to be sustained by understanding. The education to the cultures of others is the only way to allow a positive tolerance. But education means a critical knowledge of the culture of the other and of its own culture. Through education, the differences between the beliefs may appear less radical. Tolerance then can rely on the presumption of universality. The differences between opinions, once explained to others, should loosen their aspect of belief and appear as examples of some universal notions. The singular can turn into the particular, which reveals the universal.

The Arabic *Mirrors for Princes* do not conceptualize tolerance. But their exemplary nature meets a logic of universalization. It shows a truth that stands up in every time and every space. The *Mirrors for Princes* show a political culture of reference that has no spatial or cultural limitation. The models of the ruler are taken from Persian, Greek, Indian or the Chinese culture, as well as from Muslim history. The rulers of the time before Islam were as good or as bad as Muslim rulers, and they are examples for them. For



example, one of the prefaces of Kalila and Dimna mentions that once upon a time, four kings from four countries met. This story illustrates two points. First, the dialogue between the rulers of different nations is possible. Second, the precise subject of this dialogue is the issue of the freedom of speech, which is one of the bases for a culture of peace. This means that the problem of free speech is taken into account in the early reflection on government. It is, of course, an old claim. In this extract, the kings of China, India, Persia and Greece decided to quote one of their past sayings. The subject was the speech:

“The King of China said: ‘It is easier for me to say what I have not said yet, than to repeat what I have already said.’ The King of India said: ‘I am always surprised to see men pronouncing words, since, if words are for their advantage, men do not take any benefit from them, and if words are pronounced to their detriment, words cause their ruin.’ The king of Persia said: ‘When I pronounce a word, it has me in its power, therefore, when I have not yet said it, I am the one who holds it in my power.’ And the King of Greece said: ‘I never had to regret not to have spoken, whereas I have often repented to have spoken. Silence is best for kings than idle chatter, which is never to your advantage; man has interest in hiding first his tongue.’”

The meeting of kings theme is a topos of the genre. Kings are always talking about government in these examples. It is an ideal representation of an international assembly. It signifies that ruling is a universal matter. But this quotation is situated in a moment of the preface relating how the wise Bidpay decided to speak to the tyrant Debchelim. Bidpay wanted to advise the king. He tried to bring him to the feeling of equity and justice. Wise men do not take into account the advice of their followers or the sayings of their kings. He spoke the truth to the king, but was condemned for that. Yet, the tyrant changed his mind and asked Bidpay to write a political book to perpetuate his name. This book is supposed to be the book of Kalila and Dimna. This debate is about the issue of free speech: the story illustrates the danger of criticizing the ruler. The text says that the philosophers are the ones who are able to take firm resolutions. But they have the duty to take advice from those who are above them, or from those who have not the same spirit of decision. Kings may lack this spirit of decision, which is linked to the possession of knowledge. That is why wise men have to advise them. The story also shows that the ruler is asking for information and knowledge. Even if he is capable of anger, he is also able to evolve and to listen to the philosopher. This Indian story was translated in Arabic. It indicates that the rules of government are conceived as universal practices. These rulers are all linked in a same tradition that is not relative. But the sages are also teaching to humanity a universal political moral, in the mirrors for prince. The wise men, Aristotle, Plato or Galinus, are invoked as temporal references. This world political culture is to be related to a representation of the origin of power.

Power is justified by a rational theology. Of course, in the Muslim writings, power would come from God. However, the *Mirror for Princes* does not try to legitimize this power. This legal issue is not pertinent in a genre dedicated to advising the kings. There is a secular culture of government. When Kalila and Dimna mention the divine origin of power, the purpose is to remind the ruler that his power is strengthened by a gift of god to human kind, which is the intellect. The sequence of the text sets forth what seems to be a Neo-Platonist tone. It is a preface that relates the travel of Borzouyeh to India to get the book of Kalila and Dimna for the famous Sassanid king Chosroès Anourshirwan. Chosroès heard about a book that introduces animals in amazing situations. In the book, kings shall find all they need “to govern their people, organize their possessions' affairs and rule them”. He orders Borzouyeh to get it. The physician Borzouyeh makes a speech to express his agreement. He first reminds that God has provided his creation with the intellect. The intellect is the pillar of everything. Without “the emanation of the one and unique creator intellect,” no one could “direct his life, keep a good or avoid a trouble.” The character proceeds with the description of the use of the intellect: “The intellect is innate and natural, but it increases with experiences and education.” The intellect is described as the highest virtue. It is the intellect that makes the king more powerful. Indeed, “only the emanation from the source of justice, that emanates from the intellect, can make the ordinary people virtuous, because it is the consolidation of the nation.” This representation of the first cause of kingship may be associated to the previous universality of the government.

Indeed, one of the schemes developed in the *Mirrors for Princes* is the metaphorical representation of a unique soul of the kings: it figures in the Testimony of Ardashir and it was reproduced by Nizam Al-Mulk in *Nasihah Al-Muluk*. In the past, the kings' souls of a successful dynasty were like one soul:

“Their souls were like one soul, the predecessor strengthened the kingdom for his successor and the successor was faithful to his predecessor so much so that their ancestors tales, their opinions heritage and their intellects arts were drawn together in their descendants after their death. It was as if their ancestors joined together with the latest to educate and advise them.”

The reason of succession of the successful kings doesn't lie in the transmission of power considered as strength, or in blood relationships. The succession rests on the transmission of knowledge. The dynasty is linked by a culture and an education marked by cultural transmission. This culture consists of historical experiences, theoretical considerations and techniques produced by the intellect. The representation of a unique soul of the kings links the necessity of power permanence with rationality. The power does not rely on strength, but on a rational continuity. This continuity is one of the sides of peace. The breach in this tradition brings trouble, suffering, division and war. In the text, it is caused by the conquests of Alexander the Great. The representation of one common soul of king's soul suggests that the whole world is like a universal city. Such a conception of the intellectual continuity of kingship collides with the notion of culture of war.

The intellectual origin of power given by God sets the kings at the top of the world considered as a city. This structure has consequences in the representation of the society. As we have already seen, power has to struggle with the temptation of discord in the early medieval Arabic literature of government. If peace is not expressly mentioned, therefore, the king is frequently advised to prevent the discord. Peace is then to be understood as the preservation from discord. It implies that peace is closely related to the notion of order. By order, we mean the harmonious disposition of things according to their qualities. In the political field, this notion of order is developed from its Persian origin: every one has a place in society and must stand at his place. This is recurring advice in Ibn Al-Muqaffa's writings. Therefore, the place of everyone in the society must be accorded its value. The places are not determined as in a system of caste. There is in Ibn al-Muqaffa an attempt to take into account the individual virtue, but it fails with the execution of the counselor who acts with self-interest. Then, the final moral is that the individual has to avoid personal ambition and if he is satisfied with his rank, he has to accept his place.

A pyramidal scheme well represents the structure and the proper order of society. There is a social hierarchy. The function of this kind of writing as model for the subjects is clearly indicated in the Testimony of Ardashir: “You shall know that every king has a court of faithful followers, and that each person in this suite, has its own court of faithful followers, etc... And when the king sets up his suite in a convenient manner, everyone will set up its own in the very same way, so that all the subjects shall find welfare.”

Knowing the history of the past times leads to imitate the great actions of the past in the present time. It also allows the reproduction of the imitation in the present space, through the imitation of the prince's suite in the whole society. The insistence on this point shows that in its beginnings the Arab sovereignty has significantly modified the ancient Persian order. Since the conquests were acts of war and disorder, it seems logical that in peacetime, the claim for an order in society appears. The *tartib* is more than an undefined order; it is a classification. This classification that Ibn Al-Muqaffa' mentions indicates the association of order with justice. It seeks to introduce the concept of justice into the notion of order: the order must reflect the qualities of the individuals in the society. Policy is a classification of the members of the society. Only a proper designation of the places and charges to undertake can guarantee peace.

## Peace Ethic

We have tried to show that the medieval representation of power is sustained by a definition of peace as internal peace. But we have also seen that the notion of peaceful ruling is related to an architectural representation of the world. This representation is based on the idea of a rational origin of power, and on the conception of a cosmopolitan knowledge of the rules of power. Peace can be understood as the crossroad between the horizontal dimension of power and its vertical dimension. The pyramidal representation of policy should also refer to its base. The mirrors for princes do not theorize the notion of power. These books give advice on the sovereign and on humanity through examples. This genre naturally leads to the study of human nature in order to set the rules of a good policy, that of an internal

peace. We have seen that the ruler has to learn from the past. He must have intellectual abilities. But these abilities have to know how to adapt to passion and ethos. The ruler must know the human passions in order to maintain order and harmony in his kingdom. The *Mirror for Princes* thus promotes an ethic of peace.

The first activity of the ruler regarding his people is the institution of the power. In one of the first mirrors, the letter of Aristotle on the cities, Alexander the Great is advised to perpetuate peace. Peace can be understood as the natural state, whereas war only interrupts the ordinary peace. But in order to ensure peace, there is a need to establish the law. The conqueror is invited to institute laws. The institution of law brings peace, "because legislation is source of welfare for the people, of lasting uprightness and of calmness among the subjects."

A common opinion considered that a regent was only useful during wartime. Once peace and calm were back, he was not useful anymore. The pseudo-Aristotle thinks, on the opposite, that when people are in safety, "they incline to evil and corruption. They reject the limitation of vigilance." So, they need discipline and law. But law is law only if it is applied. That is why people need a ruler. The only ruler who can bring men to act according to law is defined as "the one whose power is legal and based on the society and not on discord and tyranny". Discord here is opposed to law. Power has to be based on society, which means it has to be recognized by the collectivity. Power is then opposed to tyranny, which serves only the interests of the sovereign, by force. So we can deduce that the perpetuation of peace in the legal state is guaranteed by a collective agreement to a power that takes the people into account.

The institution of law must be reinforced by the use of passions to rule the people. The sovereign leads the people to the good behavior by using fear to rule vile and blameworthy men, whereas noble people and men of generous nature are ruled with delicacy. The exercise of power has to discriminate between people. The king has to be just and clement and at the same time severe and awesome. It depends on the individual nature of his subjects. According to their nature he has to use either pleasure or fear, which are not rational means, in order to ensure peace in his kingdom. Peace is ensured with non-rational arguments. A peace ethic acts on the imaginary nature of men, since pleasure and fear are feelings. Men act according to pleasure or fear that they think they will feel as a consequence of their action. The use of non-rational means to educate people runs all over the medieval tradition of the art of government. In the Letter of Aristotle, laws have an aim of pacification. Pacification is efficient if it uses persuasion by resorting to non-rational arguments.

But in order to make more people agree to obey, the king has to be loved by his people. The only way to be loved and admired is to establish a soft government and to avoid violence and inhumanity. People are not slaves and they may rebel against a ruler who treats them like slaves or beasts. The obligation of severity against some individuals in the first *Mirrors for Prince* is very often tempered by the necessity of softening the government of the many. The humanity of the subjects motivates this last necessity. But humanity is not distributed equally among all men. Furthermore, each and every man can incline towards good or evil.

The representation of power as soft power may be a way to understand what peace is in the medieval Arabic world. The first duty of the ruler is to ensure the safety of the subjects, a sweet life, and protection against the violence perpetrated by the most powerful people. This duty is often repeated in this literary genre. The government establishes the order with the association of strength and softness, fear and delicacy. The ruler thus gathers his subjects together in a friendly relationship. This friendship is the consequence of a good policy, the principles of which are fear and hope. In the medieval ages, friendship means the affective link in a general sense. It designates civility, social relations between people. Friendship is essential to the political community: it causes an emulation to do good deeds. The good government produces a circle of virtue. The ruler is a model and a censor for his subjects, and the friendship that is produced reflects the good deeds in the society, at the pyramid's base. The concept of peace has this relational meaning. We may define it as a mode of being that establishes a community of reciprocal action between men.

In order to prevent violence, some practical advice was given to the king. Many counsels were not exhorting to do what is absolutely good, but what is good for the king. This includes people's well-

being, but also the preservation of power. Tricks were not only used against enemies but also within the empire. The use of tricks in ruling is one of the tools used to avoid violence. This prevention against the use of unilateral violence has to be understood as an invitation to preserve peaceful relations between the ruler and his subjects. For the same reason, the ruler is advised to know very well his kingdom. He must know its needs and also the positions of his various subjects, because if one of them is frustrated by his social position he might conduce rebellions, as the Letter of Aristotle and Kalila and Dimna mention. To know the state affairs and the civil affairs requires tools. That is why the theme of secret takes an important place in the advice. For the first time in Arab writing, Ibn Al-Muqaffa' advises the king to have secret agents, who can bring him this kind of information. The use of tricks, such as the use of secret agents, are techniques that replace the use of violence by what can be understood as a reason of state. By reason of state, we mean a rationalization of passion in order to rule people. The excess in the use of violence is understood in Ibn Al-Muqaffa' s work as the consequence of being drunk on the power.

The contemporary definition of a Culture of Peace, may seem anachronistic if applied to the medieval Arabic Culture of Power. However, if we look beyond the modern common representation of this literature, we see that the medieval understanding of political practice is devoted to the safety of the subjects, their welfare. It is one of the first duties of the king. Indeed, safety is one of the meanings of peace. In fact, a concrete state of peace designates a state of safety. In the medieval context, the opposite of peace is discord rather than war. This is why we can say that the aim of policy was peace. The medieval representation of safety, or *salam*, is sustained by a representation of the world as a big city, where kings share a same knowledge of the rules for peace. This knowledge has a divine origin, but is a rational knowledge. It is made of universal examples taken from various cultures. The *Mirrors for Princes* share a universal vision of the rules of power. The universality of this culture of government is also one of the faces of the medieval peace. Yet, the *Mirrors for Princes* do not show an irenic vision of peace. Human nature was not idealized and the duty of the prince was to pacify its people. Pacification is one of the ambivalent meanings of peace. Peace has to unify the differences between people and solve them by subordinating the inferior to its superior. Peace is based on a pyramidal classification of the society. The pacification of the medieval society is also based on the use of non-rational elements to lead people to the righteous actions. Pacification designates the dialectical dimension of peace. But, the consequence of an efficient pacification, would be a peaceful relationship between men, named friendship. The concept of peace has also a relational meaning. The medieval Arabic literature of government promotes the different levels of signification of the concept of peace: its description of safety, its sense of stability, it's meaning of instituted state, and its relational meaning that peace is a way of acting that is shared by people and that leads to a unification.

Of course, the medieval definition of peace focuses on the internal peace. Yet, we have seen that this does not mean that the medieval culture of government was ignoring or despising the other cultures. Education also, which is one of the bases addressed for a Culture of Peace is one of the main themes developed in the medieval Culture of Power. The *Mirrors for Princes* show a long-lasting tradition of a Culture of Ruling that promotes peace. And maybe the UN charter for a Culture of Peace, in its recommendations and its examples, has much to share with the universality and the exemplary nature of the literary genre of advices for the princes. It also draws on a universal, cosmopolitan and trans-historical cultural base.

# Just War Thesis: An Ethical Challenge

Ravichandran Moorthy, Malaysia<sup>25</sup>

## Introduction

“The real evils in war are love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like; and it is generally to punish these things...that, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, good men undertake wars.” - St Augustine (354-430 AD)<sup>26</sup>

War is as old as humanity. Humans have been fighting wars in the name of clans, warlords, kings, nation, sovereignty, religions and freedom since time *in memoriam*. Perhaps being a soldier is one of oldest professions known to humankind, after farming and prostitution. In terms of destruction, the Second World War tops the chart as the nastiest war of humankind, especially due to the enormous devastation to human lives and property by the extensive use of firepower and the atomic bombs. War should be understood as an actual, deliberate and widespread armed conflict between political communities, motivated by major disagreement over governance. (Gelven, 1994). This description is a continuation of Von Clausewitz’s claim that war is “the continuation of policy by other means”, where “an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will.” (Von Clausewitz, 1995). Therefore, war relates specifically to the notion of governance, in which the use of violence is permissible (as oppose to peaceful means) to resolve and/or pursue certain policies or interests. Therefore, conflicts between non-political communities such as fights between individual persons or between gangs do not constitute wars. In this context, war is a phenomenon that takes place only between political communities, defined as those entities which either are states or intend to become states (in order to allow for civil war), such as the two World Wars (Orend, 2008). While this is so, wars can also be fought within a state between rival groups or communities, like civil or ethnic wars. Certain groups or factions of society may consider themselves as legitimate political communities due to the associations of people with a particular political purpose. These groups may wage war against other political communities or against the state in order to pursue their political and military objectives. For example, terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah aspire for statehood or to influence the development of statehood through violent means.

Scholars of war studies usually employ the theory of realism to explain the phenomenon of war. Realism is a long-established theory of international relations, largely employed in the post-Westphalia period to explain the behaviours of states with other states and with other international actors. In recent years, this theory was reformulated into neo-realism. Realism and neo-realism became prominent theories to explain the many modern wars fought by states in last century. Realism is based on several cardinal principles of statehood; the first principle proclaims that states are the primary actor in world politics. The centrality of the state ensures that all other actors are important but only subsidiary to the state. The second principle suggests that states are ranked by the power they possess, usually measured through military capabilities. The third principle claims that states pursue their national interests in the conduct of their foreign policies. National interests are defined in terms of the preservation of sovereignty, territorial integrity and power. As such, states will employ all alternative policies and exploit all available means, including war, to pursue their national interests. The fourth principle suggests that the rivalry for power amongst states is permanent and ubiquitous. War is essentially a product of the realist mind. Realism continues to promote the use of violence and war as an “unquestionable right” of the state. As such, states legitimize the use of force against external adversaries, usually other states, and against dissenting elements from within one’s own state. Realism is perhaps the primary contributor towards violent state behaviours since the inception of the modern states, often with consequences that are

25 The author would like to acknowledge the contribution of ideas by Dr. Sivapalan Selvadurai of UKM in the writing of this paper. Special thanks also to Dr. Chin Kok-Fay of UKM for his comments on the paper.

26 Augustine of Hippo. 1962. *The Political Writings of St Augustine*. Henry Paolucci (ed.) Washington, D.C., Regnery Gateway, p.164.

disastrous to humans. The aftermath of the Second World War places realism under immense scrutiny and criticism. Massive human suffering and destruction of the environment caused by the many battles of the war, brought doubt in the mind of political thinkers and scholars on the viability of military actions as an instrument of the state. Further, with the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the emergence of international systems, realism came under greater scrutiny.

## Just War Doctrine

The immediate post-Second World War period witnessed intense debate on the moralistic justification of war. As a result, the post-war debate on the good and evil of war was centered on the 'unethical' clashes between the interests of the states, which are generally seen as parochial in nature, with genuine human security concerns resulting from the war. As described by Stephen C. Neff, "the spirit of righteousness as heavy in the air as the stench of corpses after the wars, it is hardly surprising that the 'just war' ideals should strongly pervade the immediate post-war era dialogues" (Neff, 2005). The wars of 1914-18 and 1939-1945 clearly show that there are no significant legal barriers to deter states from waging a total war. In most cases (as proved by these wars), war does not only persecute the armed forces in the battle field, but also the whole of the enemy society, particularly its economic capacity and its civilian morale. Therefore, the devastation is not limited to military assets alone. The effects of war are always far reaching and sometimes take generations to heal. Sometimes, memories of war hostilities are often reminded and awakened at specific times to garner support against a preexisting enemy, as in the case of Sino-Japanese relations.

The basis of just war doctrine suggests that while war may be dreadful and undesirable, it is nonetheless at times a necessary aspect of international politics. The violent nature of wars and the massive social affects that it causes in its aftermath raises many disturbing moral questions in the minds of any rational and thoughtful individuals. Is war morally wrong? Do states have the moral rights to subject their citizens and the citizens of others (warring adversaries) to the atrocities of wars? With the sufferings experienced by humanity as consequences of wars, can the decision to go to war ever be justified? Is war going to be a permanent feature of human experience and human nature? Is it a hopeless fate or can we bring about change to make war disappear? Some claim that war does not exist in a vacuum, external to moral forethought. In fact, "neither the argument that moral categories do not apply nor the claim it is inherently a moral evil is convincing."<sup>27</sup> As such, wars can be subjected to some moral values and principles, perhaps to categorize the "justness" of each war. This is necessary, as the primary objective of the just war doctrine is to lessen the reasons for states to wage war by imposing certain moral standards. It is hoped that by adhering to these standards, the probability for states to resolve their conflicts on the battlefield will reduce significantly. As such, just war does not only act as high priest – propagating morality in wars, it also facilitates conflict resolution or peace promotion.

Developed over the span of many centuries, the just war doctrine is perhaps the most influential doctrine regarding the ethics of war. It originated from the thinking of Catholic theologians, most notably Saint Augustine, Saint Aquinas, Grotius, Suarez, Vattel and Vitoria. Historian James T. Johnson says that in its origin, just war is a synthesis of classical Greco-Roman and Christian values (Johnson, 1991). The values and principles that emerged from these traditions can be seen manifesting in spirit and as rules in several international treaties and documents, most notably in United Nations Charter, Geneva Conventions and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many other declarations by the United Nations and other multinational organizations have been influenced by these values and principles. No doubt the just war doctrine has been significant, especially in the aftermath of the Second World War, influencing the legal and moral discourse of war. The idea behind this doctrine is the probability that war can be used to subdue evil and for the promotion of good. The great debate of the just war doctrine centers on two dilemmas; the first centers around one's reasoning to justify the pursuit of wars, especially when the very essence of war is against humanity. The second refers to the question on how to decide that some wars are more moral than others. While these questions have been intensely debated over the past few decades, the doctrine does provide several ethical precepts to be adhered to

27 Cline, A. *Just World Theory*. Available online at <http://atheism.about.com/od/warandmorality/a/justwartheory.htm> Accessed on 13 May 2010.

by states before deciding to engage in war. Therefore, states that are planning to wage war now have the responsibility of demonstrating that just war principles are fulfilled. The objective of this doctrine is in essence to deter war, as the adherence to these principles makes it more difficult for states to justify their decisions for going to war. In principle the doctrine appears relevant and just, but not easy to utilize due to its inherent conceptual ambiguities and contradictions with state-centric value- systems. The doctrine of the just war has three major parts. The first is *jus ad bellum*, which refers to the justification for going to war. The second is *jus in bello*, and refers to the justifiable acts in wartime, while the third *jus post bellum*, which concerns the justice of peace agreements and the termination phase of war.

## **Jus Ad Bellum**

Having a “just cause” for waging war is perhaps the most important underlying principle prescribed by this doctrine. Violence and war should only be used as the last resort after exhausting all other avenues, and only done if there is a just cause. It is generally observed that persons calling for war always proceed to explain the reasons for engaging in war. The explanation is necessary to justify that war is pursued to defend justice, freedom and/or against tyranny and evil forces. As such, pursuing war becomes a just and righteous cause. To date nobody has claimed that they wage war for immoral reasons. States should only embark in war if there is a just cause. The just causes, which are usually cited, are self-defense from external attack, protection of innocents from brutal and aggressive regimes, and punishment for a grievous wrongdoing, which remains uncorrected (Orend, 2008). There are several just war criteria to be fulfilled before a state can justify its action to go to war. As a first criteria, the state should have the right intention to engage in war – seeking war only for a just cause. The motivations for war must be morally justified. Engaging in war for reasons of acquiring power and territories due to parochial state interests are not acceptable. The second criteria suggests that war can only be engaged when the decision to go to war is carried out by relevant authorities and in accordance with the proper process within the state system. The decision should be made known to their own people as well as to the adversarial states. The decision-making authority must be a legitimate entity such as the government, which has constitutional mandate to make such decision. As such, no other entities within the country have the legal right to make such a decision.

As for the third criteria, states can only exercise the option of war as a very last resort. States should firstly explore all plausible peaceful options to resolving the conflict. Conflict resolution methodologies like diplomatic negotiation, mediation, arbitration and others should be employed to find mutually acceptable solutions. All attempts at peaceful resolutions must be exhausted before deciding to engage in war. The fourth criteria refers to the probability of success in engaging war. It suggests that a state should not wage war if it foresees that it is unable to achieve its initial war objective(s). In other words, a state should not wage a war that it cannot win. It is aimed at encouraging states to think about the cost of wars. Although this criterion may seem biased to the smaller and weaker states, its end game is to reduce the probability of violence. The fifth criteria is proportionality, and urges states to exercise good judgment in weighing the universal good that can be expected from the decision to wage war. It essentially involves balancing universal good versus universal evil. Since all wars result in violence, casualties and suffering, states should consider the proportional benefits and costs. The idea of universality is stressed in the criteria because states often only consider their own expected benefits and costs, thus discounting those accruing to the enemy and to any innocent third parties.<sup>28</sup>

## **Jus in bello**

This refers to the justifiable and right conducts in wartime. The idea suggests that once war commences, international law helps define its limits. These limits manifest in the form of *jus in bello* principle. States (through their military leadership) have the responsibility to uphold this principle during war. Recent history has shown us that when war crimes occur and the *jus in bello* principle is breached, state leaders and military generals are put on trial, such as in the cases brought to the International Criminal Court (ICC). This principle can be distinguished into internal *jus in bello* and external *jus in bello*. The external

28 *Ibid.*

*jus in bello* refers to the rules a state should observe regarding the enemy and its armed forces, while internal *jus in bello* concerns the rules a state must follow in connection with its own people as it fights war against an external enemy.<sup>29</sup> The external *jus in bello* outlines several rules to be observed during war. Firstly, it prohibits the use of weapons that can bring about mass destructions such as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as outlined by existing international treaties. Secondly, in military engagement, soldiers need to discriminate between combatant and non-combatant targets. Civilian populations should not be military targets. Although in some engagements civilian casualties are unavoidable, *jus in bello* claims that it is illegal to deliberately target civilians. Thirdly, based on the principle of proportionality one may only use force proportional to the objective that one seeks to achieve. As such, blatant use of force like random bombings and the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are usually seen as illegitimate military actions.

Fourthly, the principle suggests benevolent quarantine for prisoners of war (POWs). When a soldier surrenders or is taken captive, they are no longer a threat. As such, they should be accorded the appropriate treatments as outlined by the Geneva Convention. POWs should be treated with benevolence and not malevolence; they should not be subjected to inhumane acts such as torture, abuse, starvation, death, as medical guinea pigs, and so on. They should be placed in a safe location away from the war zone, and exchanged for one's own POWs after the war ends. The fifth principle, *Mala in Se*, suggests that military personnel are forbidden to use weapons or techniques which are evil in nature, like genocide, ethnic cleansing, the use of poison and treachery, using biological and chemical agents, etc. Sixth is the principle of "no reprisal" — which means a country should not retaliate when its *jus in bello* principle has been violated by an enemy country. The moral of this principle is that such retaliatory action may bring about escalation of atrocities and further sufferings. The internal *jus in bello* refers to the responsibility of the state, though still embroiled in war, to respect the human rights of its own citizens.

### ***Jus Post Bellum***

*Jus in bello* concerns the justice of peace agreements and the termination phase of war. The termination period of war involves the transition from war to peace that usually poses many legal problems especially in regards to issues of occupations and human rights. The just war doctrine may provide some moral resources in dealing with such issues. The principle suggests several rules to be considered. Firstly, in the post-war period, peace settlement should be measured and reasonable, as well as publicly proclaimed. Peace settlement should not appear to be an instrument of revenge, as it may trigger further bad feelings amongst former warring states. Punitive elements such as the insistence on unconditional surrender should be avoided. Second is the principle of "rights vindication" means that peace settlements should also protect the basic rights of those who violated the war. Post-war posture should not be vindictive; it should promote peace and the restoration of human rights. The main goal of a peace settlement is to have a healing affect in the aftermath of war. Thirdly, civilians (or non-combatants) are to be accorded reasonable immunity from post-war measures. As such, punitive actions towards the aggressor state, like socio-economic sanctions, should be avoided as it affects the whole population. Fourthly, the aggressor state should receive proportionate punishment. The political and/or military leaders, under whose watch rights violations took place, must be held responsible for the crimes through free and fair international trials. Fifthly, post-war trials should not only be restricted to leaders only: others (like soldiers) who have been a party to war crimes should also be held accountable to investigation and trial.

Sixthly, although war compensation can be imposed on the defeated aggressor state(s), it should not be done at the expense of the reconstruction process of the defeated state. Finally, the seventh principle suggests that the defeated state(s) should go through a process of rehabilitation to eradicate unjust elements in its society and perhaps reinstitute structural transformation to develop just society governed by an equally just and legitimate government. This process is extremely important in order to ensure that the aggressor state does not revert to its old practices. However, this stage is perhaps the most contentious aspect of the *jus post bellum* principle.

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29 *Ibid.*



## Just War Principles Enshrined in International Documents

War affects humans. In addition to violent conflicts, human rights abuses may also occur during conflict and in the aftermath of conflict. Human rights abuses like acts of torture, extensive killing, illegal detention, extrajudicial execution, cases of the disappearance of persons, or attempts at genocide may be inflicted by states or by other warring groups. In most cases, such scenarios will aggravate existing conflicts, urging warring groups to take up arms and spinning off new series of violence. The aftermath of the Second World War predicted an international framework that would prevent, mitigate and solve international disputes. The United Nations (UN) and its agencies emerged as important bodies entrusted to manage international disputes. While their effectiveness can be debated, the conflict resolution frameworks that they provide have assisted in the mitigation of many wars and conflicts around the globe in the post-Second World War period. Since 1948, the UN has been involved in numerous peacekeeping operations in many warring regions of the world. See Table 1 for the listing of ongoing UN peacekeeping operations.

**Table 1: Ongoing UN Peacekeeping Operations**

Acronym	Mission Name	Start date	Closing date
UNTSO	UN Truce Supervision Organization	May 1948	Present
UNMOGIP	UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan	Jan 1949	Present
UNDOF	UN Disengagement Observer Force	June 1974	Present
UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon	March 1978	Present
MINURSO	UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	April 1991	present
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia	Sept 2003	Present
UNOCI	UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire	April 2004	Present
MINUSTAH	UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti	June 2004	Present
UNMIS	UN Mission in the Sudan	March 2005	Present
UNMIT	UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste	August 2006	Present
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur	July 2007	Present
MINURCAT	UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad	Sept 2007	Present
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	July 2010	Present

Source: Adapted from <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/list.shtml>

Since its inception the UN has been active in conflict prevention and mitigation initiatives throughout the world. However, pursuing these initiatives through traditional diplomatic means has proved to be somewhat frustrating and ineffective, especially when it involves internal conflicts. To mitigate such conflicts the UN have developed several categories of conflict prevention methodologies. The first category, structural prevention, refers to initiatives to alleviate possible causes of conflict through activities such as “poverty alleviation, reduction of corruption and inequality, reform of governance and institution building programmes, and the reform of the security sectors” (Sriram, 2010). The second category, operational prevention, refers to direct initiatives to lessen and remove more immediate causes of violence, including intervention of external intermediaries, addressing frictions before they lead to heightened tensions, meeting humanitarian needs like food, water, medicine and shelter and even the use of external sanctions to pressure warring groups to seek peaceful means. In 2001, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General at the time, introduced a third category, systemic prevention, which essentially developed to address the emerging transnational and global issues that require global responses. Conflicts that emerge from illicit trade of small arms, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction like nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, dispute over environmental resources and pandemics diseases require a more concerted global response.

The principle of just war can be seen enshrined in several UN documents. For example, the UN Charter emphasizes that states should resolve their disputes “by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered” (Article 2.3, UN Charter). Thus, the article clearly promotes the idea of peaceful resolution and justice among states as fundamental obligations that needs to be upheld. Since the UN has been the central actor in resolving inter- and intra-state disputes, chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter have provided it with the mandate to carry out its conflict mitigation initiatives. These chapters explain the role that UN organs need to undertake in the peaceful resolutions of disputes. In order to do this, chapter VI outlines the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes while chapter VII deals with the responses to threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression.<sup>30</sup> The UN Security Council (UNSC) carries out the main responsibilities enshrined in the UN Charter. For example, Article 33.2 calls upon the parties to settle their dispute through peaceful means; Article 34 empowers the UNSC to investigate any possibilities that might lead to international conflicts; Articles 36.1 and 38 enable the UNSC to recommend appropriate responses to a given conflict. The UNSC also has the mandate to decide on the appropriate actions to be taken when there is a threat to peace and security (Article 39). While all these articles are meant to preserve peace, the UNSC (through Article 41) has the option to employ force if necessary, only after exhausting all other peaceful means.<sup>31</sup>

The just war principle also manifests itself in the development of international rights conventions. Although human rights were spoken about well before the WWII, only in the aftermath of WWII did international human rights standards begin to emerge. The widespread atrocities of war were the impetus for human rights to transform themselves from the domestic sphere to the international stage, drawing widespread acceptance from the international community. The spirit of human rights is well enshrined in the preamble of the UN Charter with the phrase “determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”<sup>32</sup> The Nuremberg Charter, which emerged after the Nuremberg Trials, pushed forward the recognition of the concept of “crimes against humanity”, especially in war. This eventually led to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In addition, there are other documents and establishments under the UN that promote just war principles, such as the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) that prosecuted war criminals. The period after WWII witnessed a significant move by the international community to lay the foundation for an international framework on human rights. Human rights laws and bills of guarantees began to be incorporated in UN human rights documents, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Although the UDHR is not a binding document, it was overwhelmingly accepted by member countries in the General Assembly. The acceptance illustrates the importance of human rights to the international community.

## Conclusion

The perennial question now, is whether the just war doctrine that has been incorporated in the UN documents, and has been in practice for several decades, is adequate enough to deter states from waging war with each other. On the surface, it is clear that the number of wars waged by states in the aftermath of WWII have lessened dramatically. Nonetheless, state-wars have been replaced by conflicts by non-state actors; the emergence of terrorist acts, ethnic and religious conflicts and internal civil strife have increased in number and in severity. Terrorist attacks all over the world have claimed thousands of lives, ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has claimed some 70,000 lives, and the ethnic cleansing in the former Balkans and Sudan have resulted in protracted conflicts, suffering and massive casualties. In these conflicts, groups claiming to represent a particular socially, economically and politically deprived segment of society engage in war with the state and with other involved parties. Although the just war

30 *Ibid.*, p.19.

31 *Ibid.*, p.19.

32 *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*. Available online at <http://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CTC/uncharter.pdf> (25 December 2010).

doctrine is aimed at deterring states from waging wars, it appears to be insufficient and ineffective to mitigate conflict amongst non-state warring parties. This situation arises especially due to two reasons. Firstly, non-state actors are not signatories to the international treaties regarding war and international norms of conduct, and as such, their actions in conflicts are usually more blatant and violent. Secondly, states rarely recognize non-state groups as legitimate entities, and as such, they do not usually accord them with the norms of conduct of war, as they would to normal states. Therefore, in most conflicts with non-state actors, states actions can be more blatant and perhaps less justifiable. Since the combatants are non-state entities, states are less warranted to justify their actions. States are also prepared to employ more severe actions to secure their dignity and sovereignty. For example, in the case of the Tamil Tigers' struggle in Sri Lanka, in the tail end of the conflict, the Sri Lankan army invoked a total war against insurgents, often targeting civilian Tamil populations. The massive human suffering and abuses inflicted on the Tamil population during the war and in its aftermath have been camouflaged under the "sanctity" of statehood. As such, I would argue that while the just war doctrine has assisted in the mitigation of state wars, it does not have the legitimacy to be applied in non-conventional wars, especially when non-state entities are involved. Therefore, the ethical challenge that confronts us now is how to make this doctrine relevant in the mitigation of contemporary conflicts. Since its goal is to deter wars and human sufferings, its principles should be extended to other types of violent conflicts. Nevertheless, the more difficult task is to get states to acknowledge the warring parties as legitimate entities. However, such a move may have equally negative repercussions, as more groups, claiming to be legitimate, may be tempted to enter conflicts. While this paper acknowledges that there are many structural difficulties to apply just war doctrine to non-conventional conflicts, it is nonetheless a fundamental endeavor to address the human suffering emerging from non-conventional conflicts.



## Commentary

### *Zosimo Lee, Philippines*

First of all, it has to be said that the concept of a just war, while much discussed and debated these days, is really a contested concept. War is inherently violent and the use of that violence has been justified in various ways. The question that arises is: What kind of justification for war would be acceptable and valid? The particular rhetoric of the concept of "just war" was appropriated by US President George Bush in the 2003 attack on Iraq as being a pre-emptive war, justified because Iraq was reported to have weapons of mass destruction. However, the evidence for this eventually turned out to be non-existent. The older rhetoric of a just war was used by the colonized peoples of Asia, Latin America and Africa against their colonial masters. A war was just in order to win liberation for colonized peoples.

More recently still, the concept of just war has been used by both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel says its offensive war against the Palestinians is in defense of its territory and survival (being surrounded by mainly hostile Arab nations), and hence, in their view, justified.

Palestine, for its part, is asserting its survival in the face of an Israel that denies it physical sovereignty and actual control over territory that has already been recognized as Palestinian. Given the superior weapons that Israel has and the support that it receives from the United States, many claim that the Palestinians are the more oppressed party, and that Israel sticks out as a sore thumb in the Middle East. The question would be: Whose war is more just? And by what criteria?

This is why the Islamic concept of *jihad* becomes very important. Given the perspective that extremists propagate (that Western civilization is basically and fundamentally against the main tenets of Islam), in the view of the jihadists, the war being perpetrated by Muslim extremists is justified because it seeks to destroy an "enemy of the Faith", harking back to the Crusades of the Early and Middle Ages. So we are back to the question: What would be justifications for a just war?

One obvious candidate would be the justification that when people find themselves under conditions such that, for their own survival, they have to fight against the oppressors or armed protagonists. A just war is waged under conditions of genocide or armed invasion to assure the survival of the people under attack. A just war cannot be justified, though, under the rationale of probable or imminent attack unless of course these are truly evident. Would a just war be justified to fight off the colonizers who have occupied a territory so that a people's regime can be installed? This was the argument of the anti-colonial nationalists. Would this be the same rationale that the people in Iraq and Afghanistan use against the present occupiers? The question of "just war" must be located within a larger context. And while it is difficult to resolve the further issues that will arise, an answer to the legitimacy of just wars needs to take into account the question of the use of violence to further political and social ends. The use of violence to protect the sovereignty of nations is an accepted principle in international public law. The use of violence to further a political and social agenda of a political or social movement is opposed because it will fundamentally weaken the existing state. When the social or political movement succeeds because of the use of arms, that social and political movement must demonstrate that it has the support of the majority of the citizens to establish a new state. Wars of liberation were considered just when they succeeded. And they were considered insurgencies when they failed. But the use of violence itself as the main tool to wrest power is suspect. The newly established states invite insurgencies because of the violence (considered just by the victors, but unjust by the victims) that was perpetrated; hence the established regimes are never stable. The use of violence *per se* is fraught with moral dilemmas. Because it is a non-discriminating power, there will always be what has been called "collateral damage" (victims killed or injured because of the fighting), and innocent victims need defense and protection. If the question were asked from the perspective of the innocent victims, would there be any social goals and purposes that would justify their being sacrificed? If it is possible at all to find such justifications, would that therefore make it a just war?

We are indeed caught in a difficult dilemma. Those who are oppressed and threatened with ethnic annihilation would of course feel justified in defending themselves against annihilation. I feel that this would be a just war. But it is already a total breakdown of moral order when the rest of the world allows such a situation to begin, to exist and to continue. It is incumbent on all the other states to impose moral persuasion, and perhaps through the use of the most drastic of diplomatic means, to prohibit such rogue states to continue with their oppression. This cannot be considered intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation, because in the final analysis what we are really protecting here is the humanity of the victims, which is in fact our own humanity.

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# Criticism of Jihad by Contemporary Muslim Lawyers

*Makram Abbas, Tunisia*

## Islamist's Approach to War

After the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the end of the Caliphate in 1924 and the emergence of numerous Arab-Moslem states in a context marked by colonization and decolonization, the thought of war was transformed because of the presence of a new political and international context. Beyond the use of the notion of *jihād* by the nationalist actors who led the fight against colonization, in North Africa and the Middle-East, the real transformation of the thought of war was led by Islamist thinkers who reacted negatively to the notion of the nation-state and to the process of secularization, which began to affect the societies of the Arab-Muslim world. Two authors, Maududi and Qotb, had a considerable influence on the thought of war during the 20th century and even beyond. Of Indo-Pakistani origin, Maududi (1903-1979) led an intense struggle against the model of the nation-state that resulted from the West, and advocated Panislamism instead. For him, Islam is a moral and political revolution, which aims at the abolition of tyranny and injustice on earth. He said that the duty of the Muslim "is to free humanity from oppression, wickedness, disorder, immorality, tyranny and illegal exploitation by the force of weapons. His objective is to break the myth of the divinity of demi-gods and false divinities and to reinstall Good in the place of Evil".<sup>33</sup> Thus, the theme of the global *jihād* first gained traction during the process of decolonization at the beginning of the 20th century, to counter the Western model of the nation-state. That's why for Maududi, the terms of "offensive *jihad*" or "defensive *jihad*" make no sense. He said that: "The *jihād* in Islam is offensive because it attacks hostile ideologies and it is defensive because the Muslims have to reach the heads of state to be able to propagate Islamic principles."

The second author, Sayed Qotb (1906-1966), can be considered as the most influential Islamic thinker of the Arabic world in the 20th century. Stemming from the sphere of influence of the Moslem Brothers, he wrote a lot at the beginning of the sixties, in the shadow of the Koran, in which he revives *jihād* as the foundation of a political and social project. In a similar way to Maududi, he undertook a struggle against Nasserism and its ideological device: socialism, secularism and party politics. Qotb denounces 20<sup>th</sup> Century Muslim's society as heathen and godless, a society which looks like that of ante-Islam, in "the time of ignorance". He asserts that the Muslims idolize foreign political symbols. His abstract device elaborates two notions: *hākimiyya* (power belongs only to God) and *ubūdiyya* (worship belongs only to God). This allows him to condemn all the human powers under the pretext that they are not in accordance with God. The conception of the world that expresses itself through this phenomenon of divine monopoly of sovereignty is a theocratic vision of power, where man is only supposed to administer the sacred. Islam is considered here as a total, complete ideology. But it is especially the charge of godlessness thrown against all societies, Moslems and Westerners alike, that characterizes the work of Qotb. And it is this radical thought, coupled with his activism, which led the Nasser regime to execute him in 1966, after 15 years in prison.

Generally speaking, the thought of war among the Islamists<sup>34</sup> rests on the idea that the "true" Islam existed only in the 7th century A.D. with the Prophet and his companions, and that it would be necessary, consequently, to renew this foundation after several centuries of a fall into obscurantism, ignorance and godlessness. So, the founding period is considered as a creative and mobilizing utopia and the representation of the society of the Prophet as the ideal society ends, for these thinkers, in the

33 Maududi, M. S. A. 1996. *Al Jihad Fil Islam* (Urdu). Lahore.

34 We indicate by this terminology the actors who rely on a reading of the history of Islam or on sacred texts in order to reach a political objective, regardless of whether or not this realization entails an appeal to violence. This definition allows us to integrate all the currents historically known, from the Muslim Brotherhood and Jamā'a islamiyya in Egypt, to the Wahhabis and Salafists in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Algeria. The objective is not to merge all these actors, or to erase the differences which separate them, but to show the main lines which can federate them when it is a question of studying their positions towards political power. Our assertions rely mainly on two authors, A. Maudoudi (1903-1979) and S. Qotb (1906-1966), who had a considerable influence on the thought of war for the Islamist actors during the 20th century and even beyond.

"barbarisation" alongside contemporary society and the human experiences and civilisation produced through more than fourteen centuries in the various nations and by the numerous peoples who referred to Islam. Therefore *jihâd*, to them, fits into a vision of the fight against a barbaric and decadent society. The defenders of this radical model refer generally to the verse nicknamed the Verse of the Sabre (IX, 5), from which the jurists of the medieval period legitimized the principle of the long-lasting war against the godless.

## Criticism of Jihadism

The position of legal specialists for the contemporary period was to return the Islamist activists to the position of dissidents, which was politically and theologically condemned. This criticism explains why the contemporary jurists returned the Islamists who opposed the governments in Egypt, Algeria and Syria at once to the figure of *khawârij*, which were formerly the paradigm *par excellence* of political dissidence in Islam. It explains the total agreement between the Sunni jurists and Shiites on the condemnation of dissidence, as we can see in two works on the *jihâd* in Islam, written by two Syrian jurists, one Sunni and the other Shiite. This position meant that most of the contemporary jurists adopted an option, which was strongly spread in the medieval period - that of the defense of the installed power which is also a defense of the absolutism and a ban on any form of opposition to the state. In spite of their legal conservatism and the mobilization of dated notions such as *imamat*, *dâr al-harb* and *dâr al-islâm*, the approach of these authors allows for internal criticism of jihadist's doctrines. This first reaction which we can qualify as conservative shows how modern jurists of war continued to apply ancient conception of sovereignty to new units of government such as the nation state.

The second criticism of the theory of global war concentrated on the rehabilitation of the moral and spiritual sense of *jihâd*. Many religious or theological papers try to counter the radical literature by recalling the ethical rules of self-government. On the other hand, the war is returned to its defensive aspect, as we can see in the works of Mohamed Charfi who analyses the ban on murder in the Koran, from message and history and other books, and reflects on the notion of justifiable violence in Islam. He concludes that it is not godlessness, which can be the cause of *jihâd*, but only an aggression against Muslims. According to Al-Bûtî also, *jihâd* must be defensive or only as last riposte to hostility. *Jihâd* does not thus have as motive the will of conversion or expansion, but it is motivated by response to aggression. However, in their will to get rid of the negative image of war in Islam, their works tend, sometimes, to return the sense of *jihâd* only to defensive war, which does not explain, for example, the wars of conquest led at the beginning of Islam. At the same time, they often fall in a seraphic vision and an apologia of Islam as a religion of peace, justice, and humanity, denying the real existence of warrior practices or of legal doctrines, which legitimized Holy War. Here again, we face the question of essentialism, which is not the effect of the Western view of the East, but the result of the East itself. We have a perfect example in the thesis of W. Al-Zehili, who gives a seraphic vision to the notion of peace and war in Islam. In contrast to this approach, we consider that it is indispensable to leave out moral or religious appreciation of the question of war in order to study the way that a single notion like *jihad* can, because of its plurality, cover several types of practices, and contain the rational fields of religion, economy or politics which can be contradictory or complementary.

The third type of criticism, which is in my opinion the most important, engages a work of an internal interpretation in sacred sources and consists of the introduction of the question of the freedom of conscience based on a return to the Koran. One of the authors who have strongly criticized the interpretation of modern *jihâd* is Al-Hilli, in his book *Freedom of Conscience in the Koran*.<sup>35</sup> The author analyzes the idea of "freedom of conscience" such as we find it in the Koran, while refusing to give superiority to classical exegetic literature or to other sacred texts having prevailed in the comments of the Koran, such as the *hadith*. In his research, Al-Hilli brings to light the presence of numerous verses, which defend the freedom of conscience. For example, in Sura 2, Verse 256: "There's no compulsion in religion." Al-Hilli notices that this Verse is put in brackets by the classical exegesis of Koran, because it contradicts the classical theory of the global war against the other religions. This work on the question of the freedom of conscience joins directly approaches of the previous criticism of offensive *jihad*,

35 Al-Hilli, Jamal. 2008. *Freedom of Conscience in the Koran*.

but adds another dimension that the author does not exploit very well which is the question of the privatization of faith.

Even if they contain certain limits owed fundamentally to their conservatism, these criticisms show how it is possible to renew the thought of war in the contemporary Muslim world. They show first of all that the most effective criticisms of radical readings are the ones that are made from an interior position to the texts and not from the exterior. In the second place, these critiques demonstrate the incapacity, which consists in the reactivation of the notional and abstract device appropriate for the ancient jurists. Indeed, we consider that sovereignty is the major problem, which informs all the political and military questions in the Muslim world. How is it shaped? What is its logic? How can we rationalize the access to power and change in the heads of state and government? The answer to all these questions is fundamental to approach the theme of war, and as long as the opposition is considered dissident, or is politically demonized and theologically forbidden, then it will not be possible to eradicate this violence, which is based in religion.



## Commentary

### *Johnny Ho, Canada*

The presentation by Makram Abbas indeed gave me a totally different view of *jihad*. The presentation thoroughly analyzed quality facts which gave us a fascinating background to his view on the issues of *jihad*. However, in my opinion, Islam is not a religion of war, nor a source of insecurity, tyranny, or terrorism in our society. Muslims have coexisted with other members of the society for many centuries today: "Islam did not begin with violence. Rather, it began as the peaceful proclamation of the absolute unity of God by the Prophet Muhammad" (cited in Cook, 2005, p. 5)

Today in the West, many people would regard *jihad* as a source of insecurity called terrorism, especially the United States. The term *jihad* itself is a term with great plural significance. That is why this critical analysis is so valuable to us today.

Here is a verse taken from the Quran: "Those of the believers who stay at home while suffering from no injury are not equal to those who fight for the cause of Allah with their possessions and persons. Allah has raised those who fight with their possessions and persons one degree over those who stay at home; and to each. Allah has promised the fairest good. Yet Allah has granted a great reward to those who fight and not to those who stay behind" (cited in Cook, p. 33).

The key word in this verse is "fight". The word "fight" doesn't necessarily have to be physical, it may be mental, or in other words, a struggle against oneself. Therefore, there is no universally accepted definition of *jihad* since the term may be interpreted by different people with different purposes. So I would like to ask, is it defined as a holy war? A defensive war against the West? Or is it a struggle against oneself?

Personally, I think the best way to understand how *jihad* functions is to understand how realism works with nation-state scenarios. It is arguable that offensive realism can be compared to offensive *jihad*, wherein offensive realism refers to how states are not satisfied with the given amount of influence and power and they seek more to establish security and survival.<sup>36</sup>

36 Offensive realism holds that anarchy (the absence of a worldwide government or a universal sovereign) provides strong incentives for expansion. All states strive to maximize their relative power because only the strongest states can guarantee their survival. They pursue expansionist policies when and where the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. States face the ever-present threat that other states will use force; see D. Cook, 2005. *Understanding Jihad*. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

On the other hand, we can also compare defensive realism to defensive *jihad*, wherein defensive realism refers to a state's survival. Such survival is best attained by increasing its security, but not by decreasing others' security. If we decrease the security of others they will feel more threatened and more insecure - a common cause of war. According to Tang (2007), the difference between two strands of realism is: "An offensive realism state seeks security by intentionally decreasing the security of others, whereas a defensive realism state does not seek security by intentionally decreasing the security of others."<sup>37</sup>

Finally, religions *per se* do not offer a complete solution to the existing problems of insecurity but offer religious principles, which if applied correctly, and put in a correct context, can be a great source of peace and security. Greater understanding of such sensitive words as *jihad* will go a great way to building a culture of peace.

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37 Tang, S. 2007. *From Offensive Realism to Defensive Realism: A Social Evolutionary Interpretation of China's Security Strategy*. Paper from S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. p.12.



# Philosophical Methods of the Insurgent and Counter-Insurgent

*Jonathan H. Kougl, United Kingdom*

Since the rise of nationalism and people-based power, insurgencies, previously cast off as banditry and rebellion, take on new meaning in the hands of politicized populations. This was a revolution in warfare realized and harnessed by Mao Tse Tung when he switched the revolutionary base from the industrial worker to the peasant. What has arguably ensued increasingly through the last century, is a struggle between states that wish to maintain their monopoly over the use of force, and those that feel that if a political system does not meet their needs, then the social contract by which it governs is broken. What ensues, whether one realizes it or not, is in essence a battle for legitimacy in the eyes of the population, and of the world, the means by which run counter to the logic of conventional warfare.

Guerrilla warfare is as old as warfare itself, yet poses a number of problems for the conventionally orientated military. It is best summarized by Sun Tzu's thoughts on hiding ones strength to strike the enemies weakness, whilst the army flows like water across the land. Insurgencies draw their strength from sympathetic populations. As such, in the words of Mao, "a guerrilla must move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea."

In reaction, states have responded with various approaches, broken down into those that focus on the enemy, and those that focus on their base of support, the population, by either direct or indirect means. Military or technological advantages are almost nullified within the political dynamics of guerrilla warfare. From Viet Nam, to Iraq and Afghanistan, these foreign expeditionary forces have met with added challenges of trying to maintain their staying power in what are invariably long and slow wars.

Contemporary counter-insurgency strategy, favoured by democratic Western nations, takes an indirect, population-centric approach. In essence this attempts to "separate the fish from the water" by winning over the population, nullifying, or if necessary appropriating their 'revolution.'

There is never a one-size-fits-all solution, but the broad dynamics by which such struggles are governed remain very much the same. In the concepts of a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy lay the foundations of conflict resolution. There are no military solutions to an insurgent problem, and as such one is faced to deal with the political reality, the recognition of the people as the source of political legitimacy an acceptance of the grievances that underpin militarism. In the words of Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) John A. Nagl of the British Army, counter-insurgency not only asks us to assess the moral implication of how we fight, but also why.

# The 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War: A Discussion of the Processes and Changes in Conditions that fostered De-Escalation to a Peaceful Stalemate

Leonard Henry Le Blanc III, USA

## Introduction

The historical roots of Lebanon's 2006 conflict can be traced back to the centuries-long disintegration of the Ottoman Empire (Lewis, 1995), as modern Lebanon was an integral part of that extensive regional polity. This slow political and administrative arteriolosclerosis (Lewis, 2002) was a marked counterpoint to the emerging power and influence of Western nations in the region. This empire dissolution accelerated (Akarli, 1993; Lewis, 2004) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and entered a terminal phase in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The final dismemberment (Fisk, 2005) occurred after World War I when the French and British victors apportioned the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence. This apportionment included Lebanon (Kaplan, 1995) being placed into French protectorate status under a League of Nations mandate until independence was granted in 1943.

Lebanon then, as today (Friedman, 1990), remains a polyglot of religions, with mainly a majority of Shiite and Sunni Muslims, and a minority of Maronite, Druze, and Eastern Orthodox Christians. One of the three primary bases of the 2006 conflict stems directly from the contentious relationship between these groups. This problem was initiated (Kaplan, 1990) with Lebanon's 1926 constitution. Political representation was later apportioned based on the 1932 census. Neither this apportionment, nor a new census, was ever updated, thus skewing accurate political representation and ensuring political dysfunctionality. The second primary basis was the still on-going, unresolved issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Gilmour, 1987). The third was the interactions to influence, or dominate, political events in Lebanon by the major regional players – namely Israel, Syria, Iran, Turkey, France, and the United States (Gordon, 1983).

## An Overview of the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel War

The 2006 conflict in southern Lebanon and northern Israel (Milton-Edwards and Hinchcliffe, 2001; Abraham, 2010) is a classic example of a frustrating, and ultimately ineffectual, political-military stalemate. The fighting (Rowe, 2011) between Israeli and Hezbollah military forces brought no resolution to the area's simmering and still unresolved political situation. Both contestants (Ellis, 2010) clashed briefly for thirty-four days to an inconclusive end. Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese civilians were trapped in the heavy cross-fire. It was estimated that over two thousand were killed (Sultan, 2008), including 1,200 Lebanese civilians. Additionally, a million Lebanese and several hundred thousand Israeli civilians were internally or externally displaced as refugees. The damage to and destruction of Lebanon's national infrastructure counted in the billions of dollars (Hamieh and MacGinty, 2010).

At the end of the contest (Levy, 2010) the antagonists were in roughly the same position and status as at the beginning. Finally a ceasefire brokered by the UN eventually ended the fighting (Sultan, 2010). The *status quo* was restored and maintained since then, with any political resolution in stasis. It is also a noteworthy endeavor to study the conflict for future academic, diplomatic and historical understanding of the events in the highly important Levantine region.

## A Description of the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel War

The conflict commenced on 12 July 2006 (Sultan, 2008) when the Hezbollah militant group launched rockets at northern Israel border towns as a diversionary tactic for attacks against two armored Israeli Army Humvees just inside of Israel. Israel (Arkin, 2007) retaliated on 13 July 2006 with artillery fire and airstrikes against Hezbollah military positions. These attacks also included strikes against Hezbollah's major rocket and missile stockpiles. Israel also initiated an air and naval blockade of Lebanon. Additionally (Hamieh and MacGinty, 2010), Israel attacked Beirut International Airport damaging all three runways, plus Lebanon's infrastructure was also repeatedly hit causing transportation havoc and chaos. Several incursions into southern Lebanon by the Israeli Army (Sultan, 2008) commenced on 17 July 2006. The main invasion occurred on 26 July 2006 (Levy, 2010) with infantry troops supported by armored units. Hezbollah militiamen fired several thousand more rockets and missiles and engaged Israeli troops with guerrilla warfare from prepared positions.

The majority of the fighting (Sultan, 2008) consisted of small unit clashes in urban and rural areas of southern Lebanon over nearly five weeks. This included Hezbollah missile launches, Israeli airstrikes (Arkin, 2007) and artillery barrages, plus Israeli off-shore naval bombardments.

In an effort (Rupp, 2007) to end the hostilities the UN Security Council on 11 August 2006 unanimously approved UN Resolution 1701. This would authorize a ceasefire (Rupp, 2007) which became effective on 14 August 2006. Both the Lebanese and Israeli governments (Norell, 2009) quickly approved the resolution, although some attacks continued from both sides for several days after the ceasefire came into effect. Israel finally (Sela, 2007) withdrew from southern Lebanon in September 2006.

## A Political Analysis of the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel War

The 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War is a perfect example of the conundrum of, and the problems associated with, the urgent need for mediation to a resolution of the long-festered regional political problems between the various intractable antagonists. This resolution can only be accomplished through the de-escalation of the seemingly unresolvable regional conflict. However, the abysmal failure to achieve such an important goal remains as elusive today as it did more than six decades ago.

The reasons for this current situation are quite complex, but easily understandable. They originally stemmed from the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine and the abrupt displacement of the local non-Jewish inhabitants to adjacent areas. The strife in the Middle East places this conflict on a par with other seemingly unresolvable conflicts such as the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and the long-running military disasters in Afghanistan abetted by assorted foreign interventions. But even the decades-long civil wars in Sudan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam were eventually resolved, although through either protracted negotiation or military victory.

## A Discussion of the Processes and Changes in the Conditions that fostered De-Escalation of the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War

The processes and changes in the conditions that fostered de-escalation of the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War are markedly different to the previous wars that Israel has fought against its neighbors in retrospect. These wars (Fisk, 2005) occurred in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 with signal Israeli victories. Although all these wars (Levy, 2010), including the 2006 war, were concluded with a negotiated ceasefire, this conflict was different on military grounds. What was unusual was that Israel was widely seen as the loser in its failure to achieve its strategic and tactical aims. In Len Deighton's book *Fighter: The True Story of the Battle of Britain* (1977), he perceptively stated that the British won the 1940 battle against the Germans because they didn't lose. The same observation can be applied to the Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon, in that by all standards they fought the Israeli Army to a standstill. This fact was the most salient point in pressuring Israel to agree to a United Nations sponsored ceasefire. Equally, Hezbollah (Sultan, 2007) was only causing untold suffering and damage to its host, Lebanon, although the vast majority of Lebanese supported Hezbollah.

There were two other reasons that also affected the processes and changes in the de-escalation in the 2006 War. One was the international condemnation of indiscriminate fighting (Kurtzer, 2010) that caused Lebanese civilian casualties and damage to Lebanon's infrastructure by both sides. The other reason was the inconclusive fighting that was marked more by sheer attrition and destruction to no end than military advances.

## A Diagnosis of the Critical Turning Point in Terms of its Level of Escalation in the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War

The critical turning point (Sultan, 2008) in terms of its level of escalation in the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War occurred on 12 August 2006 with Israel's 2006 Litani offensive into southern Lebanon. Prior to that date (Kurtzer, 2010) the fighting was seen as more standardized tit-for-tat military responses and the subsequent retaliatory attacks. These actions were in response to indiscriminate fighting, rocket and missile launches, artillery barrages, air strikes and bombings. Several days prior to the Litani Offensive (Levy, 2010) Israel tripled the numbers of its troops in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah attacks (Sultan, 2010) against these troops caused the largest single number of Israeli casualties during the nearly five-week old war. However, mediation efforts by the United Nations had been on-going for several weeks prior to end the conflict. A cease fire was finally declared on 14 August 2006 which was quickly accepted by both sides. Although some attacks continued for several weeks afterwards the ceasefire finally held and all fighting came to a full stop.

## An Important Distinction in this Conflict over Previous Area Conflicts

In hindsight, the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War was actually a minor clash of arms. It was not by any measure a prolonged or important conflict, in and of itself. In fact there was not a winner in the brief engagement, just mainly a tremendous amount of infrastructure damage inside Lebanon and some to Israel. Plus there were over one thousand civilian casualties in the cross-fire, mainly Lebanese citizens. The two sides quickly concluded the major fighting, with some minor skirmishes afterwards for several weeks. A UNSC-arranged ceasefire was finally arranged after almost five-weeks of heavy fighting. Both sides relatively quickly returned to the *status quo* where they remain at the present time.

However, this does not mean that several important lessons cannot be elicited from the relatively brief, but intensive, series of clashes that constituted the war and the speed at which the UNSC negotiated the ceasefire between the antagonists. One lesson will include and highlight the futility of fighting with no clear reason or purpose other than to inflict damage on the other side and deplete their stock of ammunition and armaments. This all was done just to score mere talking points. The other lesson is a failure to recognize that both sides do not have the power to destroy the other in military clashes.

Subsequently, both lessons can be used as the basis for negotiations by the adversaries, if those adversarial powers-that-be are wise enough to draw on them for further understanding and wisdom in the mediation or negotiation process. Sadly, it does not look apparent that that scenario will occur at any time soon. Both sides are too well-entrenched by hardened mindsets to even consider such a basis for real negotiation. Without such a dramatic or sea change to those polarized attitudes and positions then the situation that has persisted over 6 decades will remain as is – at a stalemate.

## Conclusion

The significance of the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War was the demonstration that Israel's force of arms (Sultan, 2008; Levy, 2010), which had carried it to stunning victories in each of the previous four wars against its neighbours, was ineffective in this instance. At best, the conflict could be summarized as a stand-off with no victor being crowned or declared. However, as both sides were already at a stalemate prior to the war, the status quo continued afterwards. With no possibility of movement towards a final settlement of differences, the contestants returned to their previous activities. In summary, it was a short war that interrupted the futility of neither side advancing their position or moving towards any ultimate resolution.

The failure to achieve any real, meaningful progress in resolving the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War, and the attendant, contentious interlocking issues attached to the conflict, is in stark contrast for the desperate need to achieve that progress. However, in retrospect, the only conclusion that can be elicited from this long-running international political stalemate is that a dramatic turn of events is warranted. This turn will have to smash the logjam of intransigent mind-sets of both antagonists in an effort to achieve a breakthrough resulting in a lasting peace for the region.

As Thomas Friedman (1990) astutely appraised the solution in *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, peace will occur only when Israel decides to allow it. Apparently the only force that can compel Israel to allow peace is when the U.S. threatens to, or actually does, withdraw its unstinting financial, material and moral support from Israel. The most vociferous complaint (Abi-Ezzi, 2005) that is, and long has been, constantly heard throughout the Middle East is the complete lack of impartiality by the U.S. government towards Palestinians and Palestine's occupied lands as opposed to staunch, some say blind, support for Israel. This watershed event will require complete political courage to stem a vehement, if not a violent, domestic political reaction in the U.S. to these proposals in a completely dramatic policy shift. Without some other unforeseen occurrence to forge a separate agreement between the antagonists, the only logical assumption will be the U.S. initiating the final resolution to the conflict.

Otherwise the *status quo* will remain indefinitely unresolved with no resolution possible due to the extreme polarity of the antagonist's hardened positions. The mutual unwillingness to move forward even on the slightest concession dooms any attempts at a peaceful settlement. This case study shows the essential need to move towards a Culture of Peace by which these sides will then start to negotiate an end to the culture of fear and distrust.

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# What has the A-bomb Dome Symbolized Over Time?

*Hideki Fuchinoue, Japan*

## Introduction

The A-bomb Dome, located in Hiroshima City, Japan, is an atomic-bomb ruin that has been included since December 1996 on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List as a symbol of the vow to abolish nuclear weapons and establish peace among all of humankind. The registered official name of this site in English is “The Hiroshima Peace Memorials”.

Security Council Resolution 1887 was adopted by the Security Council at its 6,191st meeting, on 24 September 2009. The symbolism inherent in the A-bomb Dome apparently compliments the shared goal of “a world without nuclear weapons”, as addressed in that Security Council Resolution. The question arises of how that heritage can be incorporated into Japanese history.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law came into effect in Hiroshima City on 6 August 1949. On account of that Law, Hiroshima became a nominal “Peace Memorial City”. A National Upper House member from Hiroshima, Tadashi Teramitsu, had drafted the legislation. He remarked that “Peace Memorial City” means “the city symbolizing permanent peace”. In this sense, it was logically better to entitle it merely “Peace City”. Alternatively, the term “memorial” should have been replaced by the term “symbol”, and therefore the title should have been “Symbolic City of the Peace” (Teramitsu, 1949, p. 14). According to this definition, a series of facilities that were constructed or developed based on the guidelines of this Law—a series that includes the Peace Memorial Park, the Peace Memorial Museum, and the A-bomb Dome—would be considered ‘facilities in Hiroshima symbolizing permanent peace’. In this article, these facilities will be referred to, collectively, as ‘Peace Memorial Facilities’.

This article examines how the symbolic meaning of the A-bomb Dome has changed as time has passed. The author has undertaken research to examine the hypothesis that a peace-related facility actually consolidates or facilitates peace. When both this hypothesis and another hypothesis—namely, that peace facilitates economic growth—have been proved, a peace-related facility can be made part of a post-conflict society as a development-assistance option. This analysis will illustrate the psychological roles played by a peace monument such as the A-bomb Dome, within the context of the post-WWII reconstruction of Hiroshima City. Ultimately, this article looks to contribute to the ways in which we, as citizens, use peace monuments in peace building in a post-war society, by analyzing the impact of this particular monument.

For this purpose, the events leading up to the establishment of the Peace Memorial Facilities, as well as the parallel history of Hiroshima City, are reviewed. Then, transitions in the symbolic meanings of the A-bomb Dome are traced. Finally, the conclusion is addressed. Furthermore, the limitations of the current study, and future research prospects are addressed.

## A Brief History of Hiroshima City

With regards to the history of the Peace Memorial Facilities, Hiroshima experienced a great change in its identity as a result of the atomic bomb (A-bomb) having been dropped. To fully grasp and appreciate this magnitude of change, it is essential to review its history following the Meiji Restoration (1868).

Since the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), Hiroshima had come to be thought of as a military capital. In 1888, when six army divisions were deployed, the fifth division was established in Hiroshima. Ujina Port in Hiroshima City, as planned by Governor Sadaaki Senda, was completed in 1889. Furthermore, construction of the Ujina Railroad, from Hiroshima Station to Ujina Port, was started in August 1894 and completed within an amazingly short 17-day rushed-work period. Three kinds of military-related facilities—namely, weapons, clothing, and foodstuffs—were developed along the rail line.



Japanese Emperor Meiji moved his throne to Hiroshima during this period. The Imperial Headquarters moved to the command conference room of the fifth division in Hiroshima, and remained there between 15 September 1894 and 27 April 1895. In accordance with the move, the Great Japan Imperial Diet also moved to Hiroshima, and the temporal Imperial Diet was built in the west military drill court of the fifth division. For all these reasons, Hiroshima was considered a military capital. Since the fifth division was deployed in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), the Russo-Japanese War (1904), and WWI, Hiroshima had strengthened its character as a military capital.

Near the end of WWII, on 7 April 1945, the First and Second Commands were organized for the possible decisive battles on the main Japanese island. The First Command covered the East half of Japan, while the second covered the rest of the country. The headquarters of the Second Command was established at an old barracks of the fifth cavalry regiment in Hiroshima City. This fact alone proves that Hiroshima was a military capital until the end of WWII. The fifth division greeted the end of WWII in August 1945, in the northern islands area of Australia.

At 8:15 AM on 6 August 1945, US forces dropped an A-bomb on Hiroshima. The number of deaths resulting from the bombing, until December 1945, is said to be about 140,000. Hiroshima Mayor Senkichi Awaya also died in the bombing. According to *Chūgoku Shinbun*, Hiroshima's local newspaper, as of 6 February 1946, the population of Hiroshima City had declined from 245,423 on 1 July 1945 to 151,693 on 1 January 1946.

The headquarters of the Second Command lay in ruins (Ogura, 1948, p. 119). Hiroshima City had been completely destroyed in terms of humans and materials, along with its identity as a 'military capital'. On this point, Ogura states that: "Even if 'military capital' disappeared, 'Hiroshima' would never disappear. Seven clear streams and seven deltas remain as in the past. The lagoon city Hiroshima would never perish. It is going to revive as a 'city of peace'. A 'phoenix' is flapping away from the ruins. 'A city of peace' is 'an eternal city'. The largest sacrifice is about to bear a beautiful fruit with a silent warning toward the next generation." (Ogura, 1948, p.198).

Plans for reconstruction began soon after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, largely because municipal governments had always been ready for bombardments during WWII. An air-defense plan for Hiroshima in 1941 is shown in *Hiroshima Genbaku Sensaishi (The History of A-bomb Damage in Hiroshima)* (Hiroshima City, 1971, pp. 1–320). For instance, according to the by-law enacted at Hiroshima's air-defense headquarters, whenever damage was imminent, headquarter members were to assemble and take action as soon as possible. According to *Genbaku Shicho (Mayor of Atomic Bomb)*, written by Shinzo Hamai (1967), the chief of distribution at that time (and subsequent mayor), the city's air-defense headquarters were provisionally established at an intact employment agency facility soon after the bombing. The personnel mainly comprised the surviving deputy mayor, a rating officer, and a treasurer. The headquarters were moved to the front of the city hall, later that day. According to the city's air-defense plan, the tracks of the Ujina training camp for the division should be mobilized for distribution work, in the event that the city sustained an aerial bombardment. For this reason, the headquarters started to distribute hardtacks that, under the authority of the foodstuffs authorities, had been stored in warehouses.

On the morning of 7th August, a considerable number of rice balls, supplied by surrounding communities, were transported to city hall. The Peace Memorial Museum possesses a photograph of a policeman from the Ujina police office, which is two kilometers away from the bombing epicenter, issuing certifications of affliction to the victims at around 5:00 PM of the same day. Once victims were issued the certification, they could receive rations of foodstuffs that had been set aside for wartime emergency. These facts also prove that the coordination efforts for reconstruction assistance among the surrounding communities were well prepared in advance.

Not only the aforementioned public authorities, but also the private sector started to mobilize soon after the bombing. President Yamamoto of *Chūgoku Shinbun* stated in the 6 August 1951 issue that he went to work on 7th August. National railroads were rehabilitated on 7th August, and Hiroshima City trams were also partially rehabilitated within the city on 9<sup>th</sup> August.

A physicist, Dr. Nishina, visited Hiroshima on 8 August and made firsthand observations, at the request of the army. As a result, it was clarified that what the Imperial Headquarters reported to be “a new-type bomb” had been an atomic bomb. The epicenter was also identified: it was on the east side of the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Exhibition Hall and the northern side of the Hiroshima Post Office. Ogura (1948) suggests that certain people in Hiroshima, immediately following the bombing, knew that the bomb had been atomic. A young soldier whom Ogura had met in Mt. Hijiyama—which is located to the south of Hiroshima City—told him on the morning of 6 August, as a result of having assessed the damage to the city, that the dropped bomb was atomic.

The other A-bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. WWII ended with the unconditional surrender of the Empire of Japan as it accepted the Potsdam Declaration on 15th August. An advance team of Allied Forces arrived in Kure on 26th September (Hiroshima Prefecture, 1983, p. 2). The advance team from the X Corps of the US Sixth Army arrived at Hiro, previously an east neighboring city of Hiroshima City. The team comprised six members, and they had a talk with Governor Takano, Station Sergeant Ishihara, and Kure Mayor Suzuki at the official residence of the Commander-in-Chief, at Kure Naval Station. However, the occupation army was stationed not in Hiroshima, but in Kure, Hiro (in what is now part of Kure City), Kaita, and Edajima. The initial purpose of the occupation army was to disarm the Imperial Army of the Empire of Japan and neutralize military facilities (p.18). There were a large number of military facilities in Hiroshima Prefecture, most of which were in Hiroshima City, including the headquarters of the Second Command (p. 21).

The first City Council meeting following the atomic bombing was held on 20 August 1945. The agenda focused on the endorsement of a new mayor. Reviewing the memorandum, we can see the chaotic situation surrounding the Council. The City Council adopted a resolution that endorsed Mr. Ichiro Fujita as the new mayor, without his formal consent. Following the resolution, another discussion took place on how to ask Fujita to accept their request: “It might be better if the Hiroshima City Council chose some members to tell Fujita directly how we much support him enthusiastically and to ask him to accept our request...” (Hiroshima City Council, 1987, pp. 31–32). Despite their efforts, Fujita did not accept their request, and the City Council adopted a resolution to endorse Shichiro Kihara as the new mayor. Thus, Kihara accepted and appeared on 22 October; at the same time, the next mayor, Shinzo Hamai, assumed duties a deputy mayor.

Hiroshima City Council set up the Committee for War-Damage Reconstruction on 3 November 1945. They also decided to ask General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, the General Headquarters (GHQ)/Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), to provide assistance for reconstruction. Hiroshima Prefecture convened the prefectural Committee for War-Damage Reconstruction on 8th December; subsequently, Hiroshima City set up the city Committee for War-Damage Reconstruction on 9th December, assembling members of the City Council, chiefs of the United Town Association, and chiefs of various town associations.

The Hiroshima Reconstruction Agency was established on 9 January 1946, and the Hiroshima Reconstruction Council was set up on 15th February. The Council announced a proposed city plan that included the construction of a 100-meter-wide road in Hiroshima City. On 7th March, the Council determined Hiroshima City to be “a synthetic city which has combined the central city of industry, politics and economy, an academic city and cultural–tourist city.” The chief of the Hiroshima Reconstruction Agency contributed an article entitled “The City of the Peace and Culture: A Sketch for Dreaming of the Hiroshima Reconstruction” to the 13 April 1946 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. On May 7, Hiroshima City announced a construction plan for a 100- or 200-meter-wide major street that includes today’s Heiwa Bowl Yard.

British Major Harvey Satin (Doctor of Medical Science) and US First Lieutenant John Montgomery (an advisor in the Michigan regional plan), both of whom belonged to the Allied Forces’ Kure occupation army, assumed positions in May 1946 as advisors to the Hiroshima reconstruction. They also attended the Hiroshima Reconstruction Council meeting and advised that the area comprising the epicenter be preserved, and that facilities for visitors be established around the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Exhibition Hall. The Hiroshima commemoration tower for war victims at Jisenji temple was completed, and a Buddhist service for the dedication took place on 26th May. First Lieutenant Montgomery stated

at the commemoration tower for war victims that it was desirable that the tower for war victims “be an international peace memorial tower. The realization of an international peace conference will be a fantastic story as far as its occupation is lasting.” The term ‘peace memorial’ may have been appropriated from this statement.<sup>38</sup>

At the one-year anniversary of the atomic bombing, both Hiroshima City and local groups worked out plans for a memorial ceremony. First, the Hiroshima Prefectural Chamber of Commerce and Economy and the merchants of the Hondori shopping street communally planned a world peace memorial festival from 5-7 August.<sup>39</sup> Hiroshima City announced plans for a reconstruction festival, to take place around 6th August.<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to note the thinking at that time with regards to atomic bombings. Mayor Kihara released a statement on nuclear testing in Bikini Atoll, stating that: “Atomic bombing on Hiroshima promoted world peace and the sacrifice of civilians was able to rescue hundreds and thousands of human beings all around the world from the tragedies of war. The nuclear test in Bikini is a good chance to appeal again to the world with the devastation of Hiroshima. Hiroshima would inevitably win sympathy from the world. I would like for atomic bombs, which provided us with peace, to consolidate eternal peace, not destruction; I also hope that nuclear power will be utilized for the welfare of human beings.”<sup>41</sup>

The expression “atomic bombs, which provided us with peace” may provide evidence of the various impacts that the A-bomb bore on occupied Hiroshima. It is necessary to analyze the statements while considering those impacts.

On 5th August, the citizen’s Rally for Peace and Reconstruction—the prototype for today’s Peace Memorial Ceremony—was convened in Hiroshima City. The National House of War-Damage Reconstruction was set up, and a city plan for Hiroshima’s reconstruction was announced on 1 November 1946.

Hiroshima Governor Tsunei Kusunose convened in 1947 a round-table discussion on reconstruction. In the round-table discussion, the deputy mayor of Kure City, Tomiko Takara, said that new Hiroshima should be built in a new place (Hiroshima City, 1996b, p. 249). This statement indicates that, in those days, there were not only people who hoped to recover Hiroshima, but also some people who sought to abandon it.

Shinzo Hamai, who is well known today as the “A-bomb mayor”, was elected the mayor of Hiroshima City on April 17, 1947. Mayor Hamai had graduated from the Faculty of Law at Tokyo University and had worked for the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce in 1932. Since 1935, he had served as Chief of the Commerce and Industry Department, Personnel Division, Ration Department, and General Merchandise Division at the Hiroshima City Office. He became mayor after being deputy mayor.

The new Japanese Constitution took effect on 3 May 1947. The new Constitution included Article 9, which advocated renunciation of the right to belligerency; this meant that Hiroshima could not restore its pre-war identity as a military capital.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law was adopted in the National Diet on 11 May 1949, and was promulgated on 6 August 1949. Article 2 of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law refers to facilities that ought to be established (Hiroshima City, 1950, pp. 4–5). Teramitsu remarked upon the cultural facilities he deemed suitable for the Peace Memorial City: “The Law exemplifies ‘a facility which ought to commemorate the permanent peace’ as an example of suitable cultural facilities. Those facilities commemorating permanent peace, such as memorial museums or memorial monuments, should be located in Hiroshima” (Teramitsu, 1949, p. 19). In short, the term “Peace Memorial Facilities” implies facilities that memorialize or symbolize permanent peace in Hiroshima City: the Peace Memorial Park, the Peace Memorial Museum, and the A-bomb Dome can be considered existing examples of Peace Memorial Facilities.

38 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 16 June 1946.

39 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 2 July 1946.

40 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 6 July 1946.

41 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 3 July 1946.

According to Article 95 of the Japanese Constitution, a referendum is required to enact a special law that is applicable only to a particular local city. This referendum posted results as shown in Table 3 (Hiroshima City, 1950, p. 3).

As shown in Table 2, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law was overwhelmingly approved by Hiroshima's citizens. Consequently, this Law was promulgated on 6th August of that year. According to Shinoda (2007, p. 331), as a result of this Construction Law, (1) former military land was given to Hiroshima City, and (2) financial assistance was provided via the national budget. Following the promulgation of this Law, general account revenues were included as follows in Table 3 (Hiroshima City, 1948–1951).

**Table 2: Results of the 1949 Referendum Concerning the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law**

Items	
Number of eligible voters	121,437
Total votes	78,962
Valid ballots	78,192
Affirmative votes	71,852
Dissenting votes	6,340

**Table 3: Annual Revenue of Hiroshima City, 1947–1950**

Year	Annual Revenue
1947	82,632,299 yen
1948	452,283,480 yen
1949	1,071,459,371 yen
1950	1,041,793,462 yen

When the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law came into force in Hiroshima in 1949, a translated, Japanese-language version of John Hersey's *Hiroshima* was published in Japan. Since its original, English-language version first appeared in an August 1946 issue of *The New Yorker*, the facts pertaining to Hiroshima were immediately known throughout the US. Although the Japanese version was published in 1949 in Japan, it had already been introduced to the Japanese populace via an October 1946 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. Therefore, Hiroshima had been a popular topic of conversation prior to its publication in Japan.

A Japanese priest visited the US from October 1948 to 1949, accepting an invitation by the Mission Board of the Methodist Church in the USA. This exchange occurred when concerns about and sympathies with Hiroshima were increasing as a result of what happened in Hiroshima. That man was a priest of the Hiroshima Nagarekawa Church named Kiyoshi Tanimoto, who was one of the well-known characters in Hiroshima. He went on a lecture tour around the USA. During the tour, he proposed a construction plan for the Hiroshima Peace Center, and worked hard with Hersey to make it happen. He recorded his memories from this time in his book.

Tanimoto met Dr. Albert Einstein during his trip in the US. At their first meeting, Dr. Einstein answered the question posed by another priest, of whether the US should have developed A-bombs: "It was not exactly evil to develop atomic bombs. But it was evil to employ them in practice. Even if it was necessary to threaten Japan, it would have been enough to drop them over any countryside or small islands without people." (Tanimoto, 1950, pp. 43-44).

While Tanimoto travelled throughout the US to deliver lectures on Hiroshima's tragedy and to request assistance in establishing the Hiroshima Peace Center, he met Dr. Einstein again. At that time, Dr. Einstein

said to Tanimoto: "It is certainly meaningful to conserve Hiroshima's tragedy as a memory of World War II" (p. 44). Dr. Einstein bought 2,000 volumes of Hersey's *Hiroshima* and gave them to his friends to use as a reference for peace-related activities.

Tanimoto commented on the Hiroshima Peace Center (which, at the time of publication, was called the World Peace Center), saying that: "We propose the establishment of a World Peace Center, international and non-sectarian, which will serve as a laboratory of research and planning for peace education throughout the world; and in connection with this center, we propose various subsidiary agencies" (Tanimoto, 1949, p. 63). In particular, he envisaged an institute for research and education in international relations and peace studies at the postgraduate level.

Norman Cousins, chief editor of *Saturday Review*, who promoted the establishment of the Hiroshima Peace Center proposed by Tanimoto, visited Hiroshima in August 1949. With Mayor Hamai, he visited the bombing epicenter, as well as hospitals and orphanages. He remarked that the Hiroshima Peace Center should also feature welfare facilities, such as medical institutions or orphanages (Cousins, 1949, p. 9).

Tanimoto, Hersey, and Cousins led a plan to petition US President Truman for the establishment of a world government. They sought to acquire 100,000 signatures from among Hiroshima's A-bomb survivors. This proposal was submitted to Mayor Hamai on 27 April 1949, and he agreed to it on 4th June. Eventually, 108,010 signatures were collected. The original plan was to submit the petition to US President Truman on 6 August 1949; however, it was instead sent on 7th October, due to signature-gathering delays posed by the referendum on the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law.

At first, Major Thomas Ferebee, who dropped the A-bomb from the Enola Gay (B-29), was supposed to be a member of the delegation sent to the White House to submit the signatures. Since the main purpose of this petition was to establish a world government, he was excluded from following subsequent discussions. Notably, this signature collection was not meant to be 'anti-nuclear', nor did it seek the abolition of nuclear armaments; rather, it sought the establishment of a world government. At that time, Japan had not yet been allowed to join the United Nations. The gathering of more than 100,000 signatures from Hiroshima's citizenry proved their strong intentions with regards to peace, especially under the extraordinary circumstances.

The old Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Exhibition Hall (the present-day A-bomb Dome, which was generally called the 'Exhibition Hall' at that time) was assigned to Hiroshima City on 14 November 1953, and the Peace Memorial Park designed by Kenzo Tange was completed on 1 April 1954. Professor emeritus of Hiroshima University, Tadayoshi Saiga, prepared a draft of inscription for the Peace Memorial Monument (i.e., the memorial for victims of an A-bomb) in the Peace Memorial Park (Takemura, 2005). The epitaph paper of the memorial is stored and exhibited at the Hiroshima University Archive. The original draft read thus: "Please rest in peace; for we shall not repeat the error" (p. 4). The day after the original draft was submitted to Chief of Mayor's Office Chimata Fujimoto, the following sentence was submitted by Saiga to Mayor Hamai, and was left as the inscription: "Let all the souls here rest in peace; For we shall not repeat the error."

Immediately following its dedication, there were various arguments about this inscription, particularly about the use of "we" in the second half of the sentence. Newspapers at that time reported that the Judge of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Radhavinod Pal, criticized this inscription upon his visit to Hiroshima. Judge Pal presumed "we" to indicate Hiroshima residents. Saiga had translated *jinrui* ("all of mankind") as "we". The 4 November 1952 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun* commented that it was reasonable for Judge Pal to misunderstand the meaning of "we" in this context. Judge Pal was eventually convinced of the intended meaning, following Saiga's counter-protest.

In the mayoral election in April 1955, sitting Mayor Hamai was defeated by a newcomer, Tadao Watanabe. On 6 April 1955, the first World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima town hall, apart from the Peace Memorial Ceremony convened by Hiroshima City. Following the event, pacifist movements in Hiroshima became more animated.

Concurrent with these movements, there was an accident whereupon the Daigo Fukuryū Maru, a fishery boat, became saturated by radioactive fallout from the US hydrogen bomb testing at Bikini Atoll on 1 March 1954. Gensuikin, which was against atomic and hydrogen (A and H) bombs and showed no outward ideology, began to assume a left-wing character. This transformation is summarized in Hamai's Book (1967, pp. 266–275). The Watanabe administration remained in power until the next mayoral election.

Hamai, with the support of opposition entities, such as the Socialist Party of Japan, returned as mayor in the 1959 election. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum had already opened in 1955, exhibiting materials gathered by Shogo Nagaoka, a part-time lecturer of Hiroshima Bunri University (currently Hiroshima University), immediately following the atomic bombing. When Hamai returned to the mayoral post in 1959, Nagaoka was appointed director of the Museum.

An investigation into the permanent preservation of the A-bomb Dome commenced on 20 July 1965. The Hiroshima City Council voted on 11 July 1966 and, by unanimous consent, agreed to undertake permanent preservation. Seeing an end to the proceedings, Mayor Hamai resigned from the post of mayor. Thirty years later, in December 1996, the A-bomb Dome was listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, as a symbol of a pledge to eliminate nuclear weapons and establish peace among all human beings. On 21 April 2006, the buildings of the Peace Memorial Museum were designated as a cultural asset of national importance.

In this section, we reviewed the history of Hiroshima City, from the viewpoint of how it changed from being viewed as a military capital to a peace memorial city. By reviewing history, readers might understand the will of leaders in realizing a new identity, namely, that of the Peace Memorial City, as well as the will of victims and citizens, and changes therein. The next section outlines the process by which the A-bomb Dome has been preserved as a symbol, while following shifts in the meanings inherent in its symbolism.

## The A-bomb Dome: Variation in the Meanings of Symbols

Today, one A-bomb ruin in Hiroshima is called the "A-bomb Dome". It is part of the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall that had been ruined during the bombing. That Hall called "Exhibition Hall" was built on 5 April 1914, with the purpose of promoting the domestic sale of goods produced in Hiroshima. The local economy had been thriving in logistics pertaining to military goods after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) (Hiroshima City, 1996a). Intensification of the war led the government to discontinue its commercial use on 31 March 1944 (Hiroshima City, 1967, p. 26); instead, it housed the branch office of the Chūgoku Shikoku Public Works Office of the Internal Affairs Agency and the offices of the Hiroshima District Lumber and Japan Lumber Control Corporation.

The Exhibition Hall had been a landmark of Hiroshima before the atomic bombardment. Ogura also remarked that the old and slightly non-Japanese flavor of the brick building with a quaint dome was a Hiroshima institution (Ogura, 1948, p. 175). The Exhibition Hall continued to be a landmark following the atomic bombing. In May 1946, the Hiroshima Student Culture Development Association, which was set up by voluntary school teachers and staff in Hiroshima, convened a sketching event for students of their elementary schools (i.e., third grade and above); during the event, they identified as subjects the Exhibition Hall and the neighboring Aioi Bridge, both of which are located at the bombing epicenter.

After WWII, Hiroshima was under the control of Australian and British troops. Extant photographs show that a number of Allied soldiers, commanders, and other VIPs visited the A-bomb ruins of the Exhibition Hall. The names of Allied Forces military personnel who had visited were left on the wall of the Exhibition Hall at that time. In 1947, a monument named the Peace Memorial Monument was built near the Exhibition Hall (Hiroshima City, 1996b, p. 26). Two pictures of the Exhibition Hall were installed in the monument, one with the note "BEFORE COLLAPSE", and the other with "AFTER COLLAPSE". Between them was inserted an engraving of a pigeon flying in front of a cloud that resembled a mushroom cloud. Those servicemen's carved names and the monument suggest that the Allied Forces personnel considered the ruin of the Exhibition Hall symbolic of their wartime victory of great achievements (i.e.,

the development and dropping of A-bombs, and the termination of the war). In photographs taken in 1951, it is clear that these pictures and notes had been withdrawn; instead, there is a plaque with a simple explanation of the facts pertaining to A-bomb damage, in both Japanese and English (p. 140).

It is uncertain at what point the Exhibition Hall started to be called the “A-bomb Dome” (Hiroshima City, 1967, p. 26). To the best of the author’s knowledge, the first appearance of the term “Dome” in printed materials can be found in Hersey’s *Hiroshima*. This term was used in a phrase by Father Kleinsorge, a German priest who lived in Hiroshima and was a survivor of the A-bomb attack, to describe the circumstances around the bombing epicenter. This phrase appeared in the feature article “Hiroshima,” in an August 1946 issue of *The New Yorker*: “...the Museum of Science and Industry, with its dome stripped to its steel frame, as if for an autopsy” (Hersey, 1946, p. 88). Hersey visited Hiroshima in May 1946, in preparation for writing *Hiroshima*. The term “A-bomb Dome” was not in current use at that time. Hersey’s book was translated and published in Japan in April 1949. As we can see from Father Kleinsorge’s statement, the “Dome” was considered quite remarkable in the midst of this atomic land.

Upon returning to the US after his 1949 visit, Norman Cousins contributed the article “Hiroshima—Four Years Later” to the *Saturday Review*, referring to “the famous landmark of the atomic explosion, the hollowed-out dome of the old Industrial Exhibition Hall” (Cousins, 1949, p. 9). Furthermore, the following phrasing was found in the text of the article: “the dome, or what used to be a dome, of the old Industrial Exhibition Hall”. There is no evidence that people at that time were calling the atomic ruin the “A-bomb Dome”. Cousins’s term “hollowed-out” seems to be a product of his own impressions, and it is apparent that no one used nor translated these particular words.

It was not until 23 June 1950 that the term “A-bomb Dome” first appeared, in *Chūgoku Shinbun*. However, even after 23 June 1950, when it appeared for the very first time, the structure was variously referred to as the “Industrial Promotion Hall” or “Exhibition Hall”. At the round-table discussion “Talking about the Peace Festival” in *Chūgoku Shinbun*, Hiroshima City Mayor Shinzo Hamai, Hiroshima Prefecture Governor Hiroo Ohara, and Hiroshima University President Tatsuo Morito each used the term “A-bomb Dome”.<sup>42</sup> The first appearance of the term “A-bomb Dome” in *City in Brief* is found in its 1958 issue (Hiroshima City, 1958, p. 51). Thus, the nominal use of “A-bomb Dome” had already proliferated, as newspaper readers generally understood the referent of the term “A-bomb Dome” in the early 1950s.

A discussion on the preservation of the A-bomb Dome and other A-bomb ruins started, immediately following the bombing. According to the 2 September 1945 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*, Hiroshima Prefecture was planning the erection of a memorial facility. This plan proposed the in-perpetuity preservation of what was essentially a “scorched earth” site. On the other hand, considering that the toxicity of the A-bomb residue would remain at the site for a considerably long period, there was another plan to leave the epicenter vacant. Koichi Hata, who wrote “Asakusa March” and “A Song of Flush Days”, insisted upon using the title “*Zenzen Atarashii Hiroshima wo*” (“Give Us a Totally New Hiroshima”), saying “I do not want to keep anything but memories of A-bomb that have been written down in books as historical materials of the grounds of Hiroshima.”<sup>43</sup>

*Chūgoku Shinbun*, on 30 May 1946, reported that the Hiroshima Tourist Office was examining a plan to preserve the collapsed buildings, in part to make Hiroshima a worldwide tourism destination. In the same month as their appointment as Hiroshima Reconstruction Advisors, Major Satin and First Lieutenant Montgomery—who had been appointed as Hiroshima Reconstruction Advisors—attended the Hiroshima Reconstruction Council meeting and supported the preservation of the bombing’s epicenter and the establishment of visitor facilities.

Hamai assumed the position of mayor of Hiroshima City on 17 April 1947. Hiroshima City selected 10 “A-bomb scenes” to demonstrate to future generations the uniqueness of A-bomb damage; this selection was unveiled on 10 August 1947. However, neither the A-bomb Dome nor the landscape of the bombing epicenter had been selected. These omissions point to Hiroshima City’s negative attitudes toward the preservation of the A-bomb Dome.

42 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 6 August 1951.

43 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 27 February 1946.

On 28 March 1948, the Hiroshima Tourist Office and the Hiroshima tram system announced plans to offer sightseeing bus-service travel around the bombing epicenter or landmarks. On 12 July 1948, the Hiroshima Tourist Office specified 13 places—such as the A-bomb Dome—as A-bomb landmarks, with the aim of building up Hiroshima as a tourist town. A poll had been conducted by the Hiroshima Tourist Office that asked whether the A-bomb Dome at the bombing epicenter should be preserved or abolished; it appeared in the 18 August 1948 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. Of the 604 respondents overall, 436 agreed with preservation and 168 did not. It is clear that the voices of residents supporting preservation had been strong, even soon after the atomic bombing. Additionally, these poll results also tell us that the tourism industry had a positive attitude toward preservation.

On the other hand, another viewpoint on this matter arose. *Evening Hiroshima*, a local evening newspaper, on 10 October 1948 inserted pictures of the A-bomb Dome with the headline, “For how long will you remain as you are?” An article about the A-bomb Dome accompanied it, stating the following: “It has been four years since such debris has been left, which is nothing but miserable in the middle of a city. It is time for the citizens of Hiroshima to clear this spiritual poverty that looks to arouse sympathy by showing its pockmarked face to the world.”

According to Inoue (2003), additionally, it is clear that the mental damage inflicted upon Hiroshima’s citizens was so severe that a number of A-bomb victims had repressed their memories or physically left Hiroshima altogether. Those opposed to preservation must have been influenced by concerns about external appearance and the mental trauma of bombing victims.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law was passed in the Diet on 11 May 1949. The construction proposal *vis-à-vis* the Peace Memorial Park by Associate Professor Tange that was adopted along with this Law planned to create an axis line that could be observed from the 100 meter road to the Hiroshima Peace City Commemoration (Cenotaph) and the A-bomb Dome, through the columns of the Peace Memorial Museum. Tange was preparing a construction plan that incorporated the A-bomb Dome; however, it was uncertain at the time whether or not the Dome would be preserved.

According to the 11 February 1950 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*, Hiroshima City conducted a poll regarding preferences *vis-à-vis* the preservation of the A-bomb Dome. The respondents comprised 500 people with experience with the atomic bombing, and they had been asked their opinions about preserving the A-bomb Dome and the features of the Peace Festival held in October 1949. Of those 500 people, 428 responded; 62% of them preferred to preserve it. The following were given as reasons: “for commemoration”, “as a warning against war”, and “as a symbol of peace”, among others. On the other hand, the major reason cited by those wishing for the removal of the A-bomb Dome was that they “do not want to be reminded of the tragedy”. It became clear from the poll results that the majority of citizens, particularly those who had experienced the A-bomb personally, preferred to preserve the A-bomb Dome.

A comment of Yasuro Yamashita, chairman of the Japan Federation of Architects and Building Engineers Association, appeared in the 4 June 1950 evening edition of *Chūgoku Shinbun*: “It would be better to remove the ruined Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall.” The July 31 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun* featured a picture of the tattered A-bomb Dome. An article was later featured, in the October 24 evening issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*, entitled “The Treatment of the A-bomb Dome”. It asked: “Isn’t the A-bomb Dome too miserable to be regarded as a symbol of Hiroshima? Don’t you feel something in common with the mind-sets of shameless and slavish people who go begging around streets, capitalizing on their own pockmarked faces?” While the majority of the citizens called for the Dome’s preservation, it seemed that references to “pockmarked faces” were occurring again and again.

On 29 November 1950, the Hiroshima Prefectural Assembly adopted a resolution to request that the national government designate the old Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall a historical site, under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. The proposal was submitted by Assembly Member Hiroshi Doi. The grounds of the proposal were that:

“Hiroshima received unprecedented damage caused by an A-bomb and had become a focus of world sympathy and attention. The old Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall at the center of the explosion exists only as a historical site that tells of the brutal damage. However, since the devastation caused by



five years of wind and rain is so severe that it is in danger of collapse and the price escalation of steel materials has prompted steel-frame theft, its preservation is in a very regrettable condition. Therefore, I urge that this atomic-bombed building be made a historic site, pursuant to the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, to collect and exhibit materials and mementos related to the A-bomb inside the Dome; to lay them open for visits not only by Hiroshima residents but also by domestic or foreign visitors; to aim for its adequate preservation; and to take prompt measures also to construct a peaceful Hiroshima that is a symbol of world peace" (Hiroshima Prefectural Assembly, 1950).

Steel frames in the Dome were stolen due to shortages of materials, which were widespread at that time. Furthermore, it is also clear that Hiroshima Prefecture was unique in its attempts to make the Industrial Promotion Hall a historical site and a museum, even as the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law came into force, the construction of the Peace Memorial Park had started, and the framework of Peace Memorial Museum had been established. Hiroshima Prefecture might not always adopt positive approaches to plans for Hiroshima City, as evidenced by the fact that the Industrial Promotion Hall was not designated as a historical site pursuant to the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties.

Hiroshima City Mayor Hamai, Hiroshima Prefecture Governor Hiroo Ohara, and Hiroshima University President Tatsuo Morito stated that the "preservation of the ruins is not necessary" at the round-table discussion "Talking about the Peace Festival", as reported in the 6 August 1951 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. Mayor Hamai remarked: "I think it is impossible to preserve it. The 'Human shadow on the stone' and gas tanks seem to be fading away. I think spending money for the preservation of the Dome is not worth doing." Governor Ohara remarked: "I think, unless we incite people's hostility, it is not necessary to preserve it for the commemoration of peace." Hiroshima University President Tatsuo Morito mentioned: "I too think there is no necessity to preserve it."

The Committee on Reconstruction of the Industrial Promotion Hall consisted of the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and on 25 January 1952, Hiroshima City petitioned Hiroshima Prefecture to rebuild the Industrial Promotion Hall, under prefectural management. At this point, it is understandable that there was a large gap in opinion among people in Hiroshima City on the preservation of the A-bomb Dome. Additionally, Governor Ohara caveat of "unless we incite people's hostility" seems to imply that he understood—or did not want to see, at least—that the A-bomb Dome become a symbol of antipathy toward the US.

Eventually, the tone of both Mayor Hamai and Hiroshima City began to shift slightly. During a regular monthly meeting of the Hiroshima Junior Chamber—this one held on 13 February 1953—Mayor Hamai remarked upon the preservation of the old Industrial Promotion Hall, "In my personal viewpoint, since devastation at that level could be made by a regular fire, it would not be helpful in indicating the power of an atomic bomb. However, I think it is better to leave it for a while, because I found it helpful currently as a figure that symbolizes Hiroshima."<sup>44</sup>

This statement is significant, as it implies the mayor's acknowledgement that the A-bomb was becoming a symbol of Hiroshima. Subsequently, oversight of the A-bomb Dome was transferred from Hiroshima Prefecture to Hiroshima City. In *Chūgoku Shinbun* on 15 February 1953, the following article was printed, with the headline of "A-bomb Dome Transferred to Hiroshima City", and a notice was announced in the name of Governor Ohara that the world-famous A-bomb Dome as a symbol of Atomic Hiroshima would be transferred to Hiroshima City as a result of an application by the city. While the Parks and Greens Division of Hiroshima City was to manage it as a park facility, at this point, their policy was not to have any special measure, neither to preserve nor to demolish it, but to leave it until its natural collapse.<sup>45</sup>

We can see from this article that Hiroshima City was following the aforementioned thinking of Mayor Hamai. Considering that the "neglect" policy remained valid until investigations into its preservation in 1965, it would be true that the "neglect" policy was propounded by both Mayor Hamai and Hiroshima City.

44 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 14 February 1953.

45 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 15 February 1953.

On 21 May, 1954, the Hiroshima Prefectural Tourist Federation called for citizens to set up “A-bomb Dome Preservation Association”, for the purpose of preserving the A-bomb Dome. It stated that the “A-bomb Dome is a symbol of Hiroshima residents striving for peace. It is a historical monument and a precious tourism resource for Hiroshima City.” Considering this mounting public opinion, the Parks and Greens Division of Hiroshima City—which managed the A-bomb Dome—put a wire fence around it to declare it off-limits.

The first discussion pertaining to the preservation of the A-bomb Dome was held at the Hiroshima City Council on 15 March 1956. In response to city council member Yoshiro Uemura’s request to “hear the mayor’s view on the A-bomb Dome in the future”, Mayor Tadao Watanabe—who assumed the mayoral post in April 1955—answered: “Although we must decide either to preserve or demolish the A-bomb Dome as soon as possible, in my heart, it should be left for a while as a source of A-bomb sightseeing, rather than return it to Industrial Promotion Hall” (Hiroshima City Council, 1987, p. 816). This was the first time the term “A-bomb Dome” had been used by the city council in an official document. In Mayor Watanabe’s statement, there is no expressed desire to consider the feelings of A-bomb victims.

While Hiroshima had vacillated on the issue of preserving the A-bomb Dome, Nagasaki City, the second atomic-bombed city in Japan, also had a similar problem. The atomic ruins of Urakami Cathedral began to be demolished on 14 March 1958, in spite of a request for its preservation being unanimously passed at Nagasaki City Council.<sup>46</sup>

Germany-born journalist and writer Robert Yung contributed the article “A-bomb Dome” to the 5 August 1959 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. Yung remarks in this article that the A-bomb Dome has become a worldwide symbol as famous as the Acropolis in Athens and the Coliseum in Rome. However, while the Acropolis and the Coliseum speak only of the past, that round tower of the old Industrial Promotion Hall warns against the possible fate of the future.

Moreover, writer Torahiko Tamiya contributed the article “Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Okinawa” to the 1 August 1960 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*. Tamiya writes: “The past will be forgotten. This is the fate. However, not all past is allowed to be forgotten. I guess that even if it will collapse and be reduced into piles of iron frames and rubble, the Hiroshima A-bomb Dome must be forever left in its place, where it was.”

Discussions on the preservation of the A-bomb Dome became a hot issue around 6th August of each year; nevertheless, there was no organized movement in the 1950s for its preservation.

## From Neglect to Preservation

The *Hiroshima Orizuru no Kai* (Origami Bird Society of Hiroshima) decided to start a petition and fundraising campaign for the preservation of the A-bomb Dome on 5 May 1960 (*Chugoku Shinbun* Sya, 1995, p. 267). Mayor Hamai announced on 4 August that Hiroshima City was going to demolish the Dome in the near future, stating that “It will cost about 10,000,000 yen to preserve the Dome. This debris does not have any academic value in proving the power of the A-bomb itself” (*Choubunnya* Editorial, 1990). The 21 August 1960 evening edition of *Chūgoku Shinbun* featured the issue of whether to preserve or demolish the A-bomb Dome. In this feature article, Mayor Hamai stated: “I will decide, based on public opinion.”

Ten children belonging to *Hiroshima Orizuru no Kai* called for donations and signatures, appealing for the preservation of the A-bomb Dome. This was done in front of the Children’s Peace Monument on 28 August 1960.

The trigger for the first preservation movement was the diary of Hiroko Tsubakiyama, who died of acute leukemia in April in 1960. In her diary, she says that “Only the Epigraph on the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims and that painful A-bomb Dome will tell the world, after the twentieth century, about the fearsome atomic bombs” (*Chugoku Shinbun* Sya, 1995, p. 262).

46 *Nagasaki Nichi Nichi Shinbun*, 15 March 1958.

A representative of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikin) visited Hiroshima City Hall on 2nd December and asked Deputy Mayor Masao Kato to preserve the A-bomb Dome. In the period from 1955 to the 1960s, when civil movements inspired by growing communist movements were activated, civil movements in Hiroshima began to influence the municipal administration with regards to preserving the A-bomb Dome.

When Professor Emeritus Yasuo Kondo of Kyoto University visited Hiroshima on 29 August 1961 to deliver a lecture on concrete, Kondo pointed out the necessity for reinforcement work around the A-bomb Dome's structure, stating that: "The A-bomb Dome is in a very critical condition. There is the possibility that it will collapse from the vibrations of cars." Hiroshima City showed a negative attitude toward this statement, saying in *Chūgoku Shinbun* that: "It is technically impossible to reinforce it while retaining the original form."<sup>47</sup> According to *Chūgoku Shinbun* on 5 October 1963, the Chamber requested the Faculty of Engineering of Hiroshima University to examine the A-bomb Dome, since there was the possibility that the A-bomb Dome could collapse on account of new construction activities for the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry building. Responding to this request, a lecturer of the Faculty of Engineering of Hiroshima University, Yasuo Yano, carried out seismic qualification tests.<sup>48</sup> On this occasion, Mayor Hamai remarked: "I think the Dome is not anything worth preserving that needs reinforcement." When the risk of the Dome's collapse increased, Hiroshima City ordered on 11 April 1964 that the dwellers of a private house in the area were to evacuate. Since that time, expert opinions on the Dome's engineering systems have become clearer, but policy from both Mayor Hamai and City Hall that awaited natural collapse did not change.

From late 1964 through to 1965, with increasing movements against A- and H- bombs, A-bomb Dome preservation movements had also become more active. The Hiroshima branch of Gensuikin decided on 26 November 1964 to promote the A-bomb Dome preservation movements. It also decided upon a project plan for the 20th anniversary of the atomic bombing on 28th November. The project plan consisted of four pillars: (1) developing a campaign for submitting a white paper on A-bombs; (2) compiling a history of campaigns against AandH bombs; (3) developing a campaign in support of A-bomb Dome preservation; and (4) constructing of Gensuikin Hall.<sup>49</sup> Eleven pacifist organizations—including the Gensuikin, the Christian Congregation of Hiroshima, the Hiroshima Conference of Religion and Peace, and the Meeting of Academics Protecting Peace and Knowledge—asked Mayor Hamai on 22nd December for the permanent preservation of the A-bomb Dome. Responding to this request, Mayor Hamai promised to include in the 1965 budget research expenses for investigations into preservation methods.

On 11 February 1965, Hiroshima City decided to include in the 1965 budget 1,000,000 yen for expenses related to strengthening investigations of the A-bomb Dome. On the same day, *Orizuru no Kai* submitted to Hiroshima City 9,181 yen of A-bomb Dome preservation funds, together with a 1,300-signature petition. On this matter, Mayor Hamai remarked at a later date that: "I was strongly inspired by the petition of Orizuru no Kai at that time" (Hamai, 1967, p. 312). Shinich Iwamoto, a member of *Orizuru no Kai*, wrote an article that appeared in the March 4 issue of *Chūgoku Shinbun*, entitled "Let's Leave the A-bomb Dome". On 29 March, Kondo, Tange and Dr. Hideki Yukawa jointly asked Mayor Hamai to preserve the A-bomb Dome. In that "Request for Preservation of the A-bomb Dome", they remark that 'the A-bomb Dome is a memorial sacred edifice symbolizing atomic-bombed Hiroshima City and an unparalleled worldwide cultural property' (Hiroshima City Council, 1987, p. 823).

Under the influence of these successive requests and the preservation campaign, a strengthening investigation for the permanent preservation of the A-bomb Dome began on 20 July 1965. The investigation was commissioned to Professor Shigeo Sato of the Faculty of Engineering of Hiroshima University. The interim report submitted by Professor Sato on 15th November says that the A-bomb Dome could be preserved with reinforcement. As a result of the investigation that indicated that preservation was technically possible, calls for preservation of the A-bomb Dome increased even more. The principal actress of the film *Hiroshima* (1966), Yuko Mochizuki, visited Hiroshima City Hall on 22 April

47 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 29 August 1961.

48 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 23 October 1963.

49 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 28 November 1964.

1966; she advocated the preservation of the A-bomb Dome, saying “It should be absolutely preserved as proof of the war.”<sup>50</sup> Professor Hideki Yukawa of Kyoto University, who earned the Nobel Prize for Physics, visited Hiroshima and said at a press conference on 8 May: “I really want the A-bomb Dome to be preserved for the future of human beings. We must not forget the awfulness of nuclear weapons waiting to destroy human beings forever.”<sup>51</sup>

Hiroshima City Council unanimously voted in favor of the permanent preservation of the A-bomb Dome on 11 July 1966. Draft resolution No. 21, the “Resolution to request the preservation of the A-bomb Dome”, states as follows: “Hiroshima City completed last year an investigation of the methods of preserving the A-bomb Dome, spending 1,000,000 yen in investigation costs. As a result, it was reported that the Dome could be preserved by reinforcement. Preservation of the Dome, along with prevention of nuclear war and the comprehensive prohibition of A- and H-bombs, are the earnest desires of all atomic-bomb victims, citizens, and people around the country who wish peace. It is one of our duties toward the souls of the two hundred thousand A-bomb victims and people wishing world peace to preserve the Dome in a perfect condition, to leave it to future generations. Therefore, the Council decides to take every possible measure to preserve the Dome” (Hiroshima City Council, 1987: 822).

Mayor Hamai reviewed the progress of A-bomb Dome preservation efforts and commented as follows:

“The A-bomb Dome—it is a monument of a permanent and ardent wish to seek peace among human beings.... During deliberations of the city’s reconstruction plan, there were quite a lot of opinions insisting that ‘in order to convey the terrible devastation of an atomic bomb, the A-bomb Dome should be preserved purely as it is’. However, on the other hand, there were also a large number of opposing opinions. Those people alleged that ‘in the case of earnestly wishing for world peace, things that remind us of past animosity or hatred should be removed immediately’. In particular, for the people who lost their own dear children, darling husbands or wives, or their beloved families and relatives, the appearance of the Dome will be gut-wrenching forever. The majority of victims voice a desire to demolish such a thing as soon as possible; this was understandable. This is not a question of what is right or wrong. Whether we left it or not, money was the first consideration. Since it was impossible to acquire the budget for preservation, we decided to leave it alone. Later, an investigation report was submitted by Professor Sato; it said that the Dome suffered countless cracks, large and small, on all sides, and that cement protecting the bricks had decayed. Therefore, there was the possibility of collapse unless it was reinforced before it was too late. That report also introduced a construction method for reinforcement that involves the pressing of a new and excellent architectural glue into the cracks in order to stop cracking, keep the building standing, and preserve it. This construction method encouraged us more than a little. It is no longer a question of whether we should remove or leave the A-bomb Dome. I believe that now is the time to decide to reinforce and preserve it. Human life is finite; the people who experienced that tragedy and learned a lesson firsthand will be gradually dying off from year to year. Therefore, we must preserve this Dome to carry out the mission of the witnesses. This means leaving the most tragic history of WWII here as it is, and that it is a symbol for world peace. I think so” (Hamai, 1967).

Mayor Hamai also stated in another report that “nowadays, it so happens that public opinion has been in favor of preservation and that the City Council has unanimously resolved preservation. Considering these circumstances, Hiroshima City is determined to reinforce the Dome and preserve it forever” (Hiroshima City Hall, 1967, p. 21).

If one were to review only these statements following determinations of A-bomb Dome preservation, they may have the impression that Mayor Hamai had fully intended, from the beginning, to preserve the Dome, and that he had merely waited for the chance. However, in reviewing his past statements and actions—as outlined in the present article—it is obvious that he originally had a negative attitude toward preservation. The presence of the A-bomb Dome itself and the concerns of the citizenry brought about his change of mind.

50 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 23 April 1966.

51 *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 9 May 1966.

The president of the Knack Visual Center, Masaaki Tanabe, who is an A-bomb victim, remarked in *Asahi Shinbun* on 22 January 1997 that, "The appearance of the A-bomb Dome after the war reminded us of the hell. However, I have begun to feel familiar with the Dome, upon reaching the age of 50. The former Industrial Promotion Hall suffered serious injury and I was hurt by an atomic bomb. Now, I feel that the figure of the Dome looks like me."

Tanabe's house was located next to the Industrial Promotion Hall at the time of the atomic bombing. Clearly, the feelings of the A-bomb victims who protested preservation efforts had changed with time. In December 1996, the A-bomb Dome was inscribed on the World Heritage Site List as a symbol of the vow to abolish nuclear weapons and establish peace among all of humankind.

## Conclusion

The objective of this article was to address how the symbolic meaning of the A-bomb Dome in Hiroshima has changed as time has passed. The first part summarized the history of A-bomb Dome preservation efforts, as well as the testimonies of Mayor Hamai and others. That history seems to imply that what the A-bomb Dome has symbolized has changed over time. Once, it was a symbol of victory in war and of great achievements, especially among Allied soldiers immediately following the atomic bombing. It then became a symbol of the devastation inflicted by A-bombs. As can be gathered from the expression of then-Mayor Kihara that the 'atomic bomb...brought peace,' there had not yet been a concrete conception of "anti-nuclear" sentiment at that time. Moreover, as we can surmise from the comment of former Mayor Hamai that the A-bomb Dome holds "no academic value"—which could have served as grounds for its removal—it was at one time considered worthless.

Then, the A-bomb Dome became a symbol of the horrors of war, and this led to arguments for its preservation. As long as the Dome continues to be a symbol of the horrors of warfare and A-bomb damage, it would be understandable if A-bomb victims continue to doubt the permanent existence of those gut-wrenching ruins or request their removal. On the other hand, there is the idea that the preservation of such ruins could 'carry over' or transmit the disaster of the war, actually promoting the recurrence of war in the future. Since both Hiroshima Prefecture and Hiroshima City would incur financial burdens as a result of preservation efforts, the preservation issue had been placed on the 'backburner' for over 20 years after the atomic bombing.

Years later, the A-bomb Dome became a symbol of peace movements—such as that undertaken by *Orizuru no Kai*—or of campaigns against A- and H-bombs and nuclear weapons. Preservation efforts were eventually undertaken, on account of civil movements, such as preservation campaigns; technical innovations for architectural preservation; changes in feelings toward A-bomb victims over time; and prospects for fundraising for preservation, following a period of economic growth. Finally, the A-bomb Dome was inscribed on the World Heritage Site List as a symbol of anti-nuclear weapons and permanent peace; at the same time, it has independently come to be seen as a symbol of Hiroshima itself.

Bar-Tar and Bennink remark that "the will wishing for peace is supported by elements such as motivation, goal, confidence-building, and sensitivity. Those elements are the very products of reconciliation" (Bar-Tar and Bennink, 2004, p. 17). If the mental goal of reconstruction is found in a growing wish for peace or reconciliation, then the A-bomb Dome has affected the people who are oriented toward that goal, in precisely that way. This wish had been identified by the results of opinion polls during the time when people considered that atomic bombs could 'provide peace.' The example of Hiroshima shows that peace monuments have a strong impact on the mental goal of reconstruction.

If peace monuments contribute to peace—and peace, in turn, contributes to economic prosperity—it will be possible to establish peace monuments using Official Development Assistance (ODA). This article was written as a part of research that aimed to support the primary research proposition "Peace monuments contribute to peace". A nominal peace monument can be built even in one night; however, a real peace monument influencing people in the sense of peace needs a longer time to be developed.

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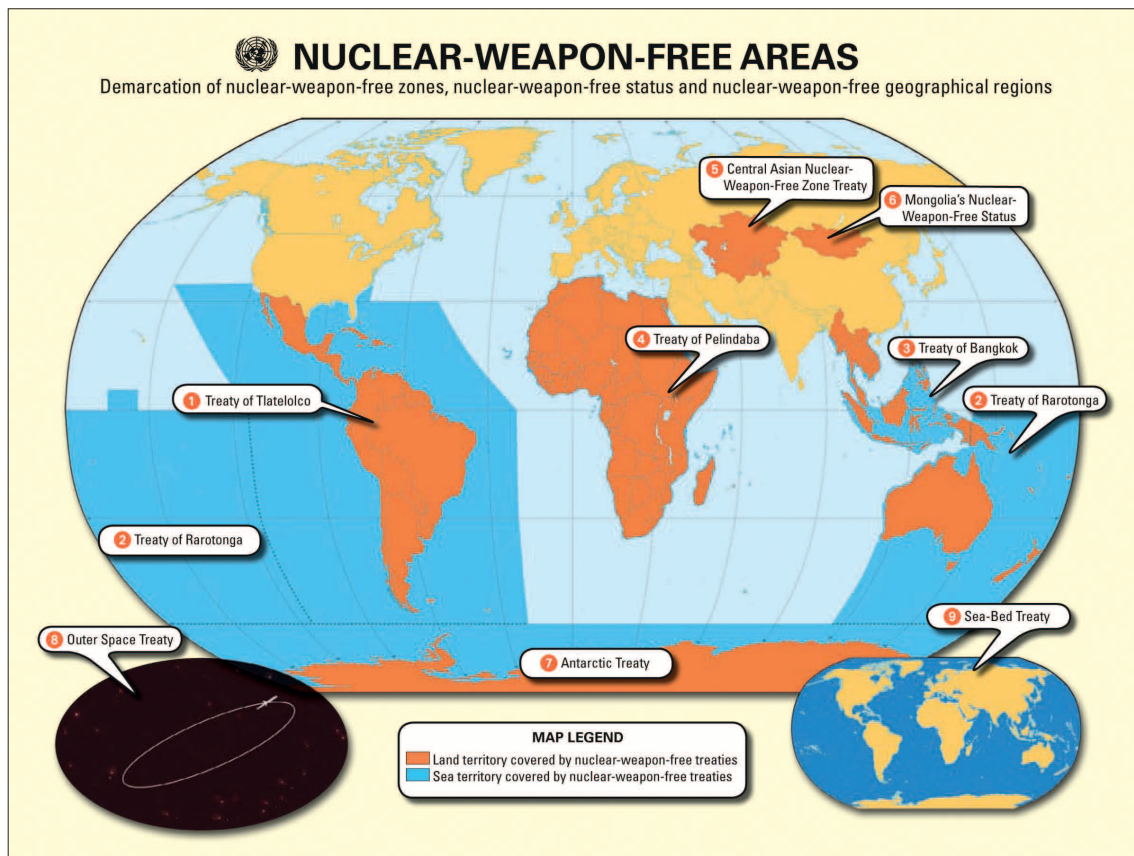
# Building a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East

Laura Vittet-Adamson, France

## Introduction

The General Assembly of the United Nations defines a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) in its resolution 3472 B (1975) as: “any zone recognized as such by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which any group of States, in the free exercise of their sovereignty, has established by virtue of a treaty or convention whereby: (a) The statute of total absence of nuclear weapons to which the zone shall be subject, including the procedure for the delimitation of the zone, is defined; (b) An international system of verification and control is established to guarantee compliance with the obligations deriving from that statute.”<sup>52</sup>

Figure 1: Atlas presenting the NWFZs around the world



Source: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs website, <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NWFZ.shtml>

As of today, five NWFZs have been established: Latin America and the Caribbean (1967), the South Pacific (1985), Southeast Asia (1995), Africa (1996), and Central Asia (2006). Within each of these NWFZ, their respective treaties ban nuclear weapons, including the acquisition, possession, placement, testing and use of such weapons. In addition, other geographic areas, such as Antarctica (1959), the sea-bed (1971), and even outer-space (1967) have also been declared nuclear-weapon-free. It is also interesting

52 United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs website. Available at <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NWFZ.shtml>



and relevant for this study to note that the states of North Africa, while technically belonging to the African NWFZ, are still often included in the discussion of a Middle East NWFZ, for cultural and political reasons.

The establishment of a NWFZ is a regional approach to strengthen global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament norms and to consolidate international efforts towards peace and security. And while the concept of a NWFZ was elaborated by the United Nations in the Cold War and post-Cold War era, the adoption of the UN's NWFZ concept should be decided by the nations and regions themselves. However, for several decades now, the UNSC and the UN-associated IAEA have been lobbying for Middle Eastern states to become a NWFZ, often resorting to threats and even sanctions when certain Middle Eastern states refuse the discussion of a NWFZ. In this respect, the UN seems to contradict the aforementioned resolution 3472 B, whereby states or groups of states choose to establish a NWFZ "in the free exercises of sovereignty".

Indeed, this issue raises many ethical, political and diplomatic questions regarding the international community's strong-handed approach to building a NWFZ in the Middle East. Can the UN and other international actors build a NWFZ in the Middle East? Or should a Middle East NWFZ only be built by actors within the region using national and regional impetus? In order to frame this discussion, it is necessary to clarify the nature of the discussion. Building a NWFZ in the Middle Eastern is a question of politics and international relations far more than a question of nuclear science technology or even military strategy. And from within the Middle East, the decision to adopt or refuse the establishment of a NWFZ is a question of foreign policy far more than a question of domestic (nuclear) policy for the Middle Eastern states involved (Sayigh, 1992).

First, this paper will briefly outline the actors, both regional and international, that are involved in promoting (or blocking) the building of a NWFZ in the Middle East, as well as trace the attempts thus far at creating a Middle East NWFZ. Second, this paper will present the obstacles that are hampering the creation of a NWFZ in the region, including instability in the region, Western attitudes, and ethical obstacles. Finally, this paper will conclude with a discussion of the feasibility of a Middle East NWFZ as well as proposals for international policy alterations that could encourage the building of a NWFZ in the Middle East.

## Actors and Background

### *International Actors*

The United Nations (UN) has in many ways spear-headed most - if not all - projects to create a NWFZ in the Middle East, either through the United Nations Security Council or through the IAEA. Established in 1957 through its own international treaty (the IAEA Statute), the IAEA is an autonomous organisation that nevertheless reports to the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council. It was established in order to promote the safe and peaceful use of nuclear technology, and to regulate (or inhibit) the use of nuclear technology for military purposes, including nuclear weapons. Under the leadership of its former Director-General, Mohamed ElBaradei, and its current DG Yukiya Amano, the IAEA has been fighting for the establishment of a Middle East NWFZ for over a decade.

Working in tandem with the IAEA, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed on 5 February 1970 in order to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. The NPT was initially ratified by the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, and since then 189 states have signed on as party to the NPT. The NPT is loosely based on a three pillar system: non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to peaceful use of nuclear technology. In 1995, the NPT issued a resolution for a NWFZ in the Middle East; however the 1995 NPT was not put into motion, calling only for "practical steps towards a zone, leaving open how and when it would come into existence."<sup>53</sup>

53 UN backs 'nuclear-free' Middle East. Al-Jazeera, 6 May 2010. Available at <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/americas/2010/05/2010561726294993.html>

## Regional and National Actors

The regional actors most involved in the NWFZ debate in the Middle East are the governments of nations that either reportedly possess nuclear weapons or reportedly are pursuing a nuclear weapon development program – respectively, Israel and Iran. Despite international pressure, Israel has neither confirmed nor denied possessing nuclear weapons, although it has been widely accepted as a “public secret” by the international community that Israel possesses an arsenal of sixty to eighty nuclear weapons, which it began developing in 1958. Israel is one of only three countries in the world that have not signed the NPT – the other two countries being Pakistan and India, both of which are self-professed nuclear weapon states. Israel’s refusal to sign the NPT and its general “opacity” in regards to its nuclear weapons has raised many eyebrows, especially within the Arab world, as this gesture is perceived not only as a confirmation of Israel’s possession of nuclear weapons, but also as a threat against Arab non-nuclear states.<sup>54</sup>

Iran, on the other, has for years vehemently denied possessing any form of nuclear weaponry. Over the past decade, Iran has been actively developing nuclear enrichment projects in order to boost the country’s civilian nuclear energy supplies. However many members of the international community, including the US administration (since President Bush Senior) as well as the Israeli government believe that Iran’s civilian nuclear energy program is a cover-up for its military nuclear program. Iran has signed the NPT, but was found in breach of IAEA regulations and NPT non-compliance in 2003, after Iran had failed to report its nuclear enrichment program to the IAEA. Tensions peaked when the IAEA ordered Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program, with which Iran refused to comply.<sup>55</sup>

## Obstacles to building a NWFZ in the Middle East

### Insecurity in the Middle East

Can a NWFZ be achieved before peace in the Middle East? Institutions and governments involved in the Middle East NWFZ debate find themselves in a problematic “chicken-and-egg” scenario, wherein nuclear weapons will not be disbanded until the region is stabilised, yet the region cannot stabilise with the threat of nuclear warfare. Israel argues that Israeli nuclear weapons (if they were to exist) would be necessary in order to protect Israel against its “hostile” neighbours (Ben Ami, 2009). The question of nuclear weapons in the Middle East thus becomes embroiled in the Arab-Israeli Peace Process, which in itself is an extremely complex project that has made very little headway since the 1970s. Hans Tolhoek and Arthur Petersen (2007, p. 67) argue that: “the creation of a NWFZ in the Middle East should be considered as a part of a larger peace process.” Moreover, Israel emphasises the alleged presence of nuclear weapons in Iran, which are depicted as a direct threat to Israel. If Iran has them, argues the Israeli government, then we need them.

In the same way that Israel uses regional conflicts and instability in the region to justify its nuclear weapons pursuits, Iran has often alluded to both Israel’s and the United States’ nuclear weapons in discussions of a NWFZ in the Middle East. And while Iran has never admitted to possessing nuclear weapons per se, it has theoretically argued for the right to develop nuclear technology (and nuclear military technology) in the face of its two NWS enemies. What makes any regional or international discussion of nuclear disarmament in the Middle East especially difficult is Iran’s refusal to recognise Israel as a state, which makes dialogue difficult – if not impossible. On the other hand, the international community has often excluded Iran from international discussions on a Middle East NWFZ because of NPT sanctions, thus stalling any attempts at bilateral and multilateral dialogue.

While this paper does not claim causality between a NWFZ and peace in the Middle East, it does argue that regional insecurity, instability and fear fosters the need for – and the arguments behind – maintaining nuclear weapons in the Middle East.<sup>56</sup> Insecurity also offers useful justifications for

54 Cohen, A. & M. Miller. Bringing Israel’s Bomb out of the Basement. *International Herald Tribune*, 25 August 2010.

55 For more information on Iran’s nuclear strategy, see H. D. Sokolski & P. Clawson, eds. 2004. *Checking Iran’s Nuclear Ambitions*. Honolulu, University Press of the Pacific.

56 Tomlinson, H. Nuclear Race Fuels Fears for Stability in the Middle East. *The Times*, 10 October 2010.

possessing nuclear weapons: Israel, for example, is suspected of claiming that its nuclear weapons are necessary for its stability and security in order to couch its aspirations for regional power and dominance. In addition, it is also necessary to take into account the psychological dimension of nuclear weapons. The rationale behind nuclear weapons has not been to actually deploy them, but rather “to deter enemies from launching an attack against us”.<sup>57</sup> The psychology of fear, in this respect, is more potent than the nuclear weapons themselves. It is in this context of fear that the Middle East finds itself: Israel fearing the potential threat of Iran’s nuclear weapons, Iran fearing the potential threat of both Israel and the US’s nuclear weapons, and the other Middle Eastern states fearing Israel, Iran, and each other. The psychological dimension of nuclear warfare, wherein the threat is more powerful than the weapons, exacerbates pre-existing tensions in the region and prevents the creation of a stable and secure Middle East.

### **Western and international attitudes towards a nuclear Middle East**

Both Western governments and international institutions have maintained a very wary attitude towards any type of nuclear development program in the Middle East – from military to energy technology. The IAEA has kept a particularly close eye on the development of nuclear technology in Syria, Libya, and Iran, often resulting in punitive measures. Yet despite their suspicious stance towards some Arab states, Israel has received clear preferential treatment and leniency from both international institutions and Western governments (especially the US government). While other Middle Eastern states are pressured into exposing their nuclear technology programs and facilities, Israel has refused to cooperate with the IAEA on numerous occasions and is in clear violation of IAEA regulations, yet has not been sanctioned for its obstinate refusal. In addition, as mentioned previously, Israel has also refused to sign the NPT, and has nurtured a sense of opacity in regards to its nuclear weapons program.

The US government has remained a staunch political supporter of Israel since its foundation, and a staunch defender of Israeli military nuclear capabilities. The Obama administration has implemented a shift in nuclear policy, including the New START treaty to dismantle American and Russian nuclear arsenals, and is leading a movement towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, in the interest of the United States and of the other UN Security Council permanent members.<sup>58</sup> As part of this effort, Obama has adopted a more strict approach to Israel’s nuclear weapons program. However, generally speaking, Israel still maintains its preferential position within the region – thus wholly undermining the international institutions (the UN, the IAEA) that demand a NWFZ in the Middle East yet practice a policy of exceptionalism towards Israel. After a disastrous 2008 UN nuclear assembly meeting, when almost all Arab League states stalked out of the Vienna assembly hall before a vote over Israeli-sponsored amendments pushed through by Western states, an Arab diplomat made the following point: “How could we approve a call on us to obey our international obligations when Israel itself refuses to adhere to any non-proliferation standards? This undermines the IAEA’s credibility.”<sup>59</sup>

On the other hand, both the international community and Western governments have adopted an extremely hard-line approach vis-à-vis Iran and its potential nuclear threat, compared to the international attitude towards Israel, and towards other NWS such as Pakistan and India. For example, not only has India confirmed its position as a NWS, but it has also refused to sign the NPT. Nevertheless, the US government along with the UN approved plans to increase India’s nuclear capabilities by running a nuclear fuel bank.<sup>60</sup> Nor has the international community ever called upon the creation of a NWFZ in South Asia. For political and social reasons, Iran has been targeted above all other countries in the region as a nuclear threat with potential nuclear weapons. Political gaffes, which are revealing of underlying perceptions of Iran, only exacerbate the negative nuclear image of Iran in the West and in international institutions. Here I refer, for example, to British PM David Cameron’s faux-pas, when he professed his dismay at “the fact that Iran has a nuclear weapon” in a speech in August 2010. Instances such as these, as well as the international community’s comparatively tough stance on Iran (in comparison to their

57 Kaplan, F. No More Nukes? *Time Magazine*, 27 September 2010, p. 30.

58 Sanger, D. E. With Nuclear Summit Over, Hard Part Awaits. *International Herald Tribune*, 15 April 2010.

59 Heinrich, M. Arabs Boycott IAEA Nuke Vote. *Reuters*, 23 September 2008.

60 Delhi Happy to Host Nuclear Fuel Bank. *Gulf News*, 20 April 2008, p. 29.

stance on Israel, Pakistan, or India) send a negative message to the Arab and Muslim world and ferment an attitude of distrust and skepticism towards the NWFZ enterprise.

### Ethical Obstacles

Writing in the context of “Ethics and Climate Change in Asia and the Pacific (ECCAP): Energy Ethics After Fukushima”, it is also necessary to articulate the debate in terms of ethics and ethical obstacles to building a NWFZ in the Middle East. The first, and perhaps most blatant, paradox in the international community’s calls to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons is the fact that all five permanent members of the UN Security Council are not only nuclear weapon states, but also major arms exporters and suppliers of very expensive and advanced nuclear technology. Both Russia and the United States possess the lion’s share of the world’s nuclear weapons, as demonstrated in the table below, which illustrates the size of the world’s nuclear arsenals (in weapon units) in 2010, before the New START dismantling project.

**Table 4: Number of Nuclear Weapons (in weapon units) per Nuclear Weapon State**

States	Russia	U.S.	France	China	Britain	Israel	India	Pakistan
Nuclear weapons (in units)	8,074	5,000	300	240	225	80	80	70

Source: Kaplan, F. “No More Nukes?” *Time Magazine*, 27 September 2010.

The fact that Security Council members are in possession of thousands of nuclear weapons between them clearly undermines the ethical legitimacy of the UNSC’s calls for the Middle East to rid itself of nuclear weapons, and strengthens the position of those in the Middle East who are opposed to a NWFZ. China, for example, has spoken out against the presence of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, arguing that the region should be a NWFZ because it is a “zone of tensions”. However China, a nuclear weapon state and a permanent member of the UNSC, is itself a “zone of tensions” involving territorial disputes, alleged human rights abuses, and a history of controversial nuclear testing in its Western provinces. Such ethical paradoxes are not lost on governments and institutions (such as the Arab League) in the Middle East, and add fuel to the fire of anti-NWFZ sentiment in the region.

The top-down, hegemonic approach that has been adopted by several Western institutions as well as the United Nations has also received a fair amount of criticism from the region. Critics argue that forcing a NWFZ onto the Middle East (before the region itself is ready to adopt it, and before other states and regions in the world have rid themselves of nuclear weapons) is fostering a new form of “orientalism” or even colonialism. On the one hand, we see the developed West (via its institutions) dictating the terms of energy supply and defense strategy of the Middle East. On the other hand, we see the developing, Muslim-majority Middle East struggling against powerful international institutions for autonomy over its nuclear technology development program. This dichotomy, which has been taken up by opponents to international intervention into regional nuclear affairs, is indeed powerful, and could undermine the UN and the IAEA’s strategy of regulating and disarming nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Certainly on a public appeal level, the UN’s proposal for a NWFZ in the Middle East has lost public support – not because the population of the Middle East is dead-set against a NWFZ, but rather because the West-East, developed-developing approach has offended and alienated the population at large.

### Conclusion

Is a NWFZ in the Middle East nothing more than a “pipe dream”<sup>61</sup>? Will the Middle East forever be plagued with undisclosed nuclear weapons, to the dismay of the Western and international community? This paper argues that, while previous attempts to create a NWFZ in the Middle East have failed, the situation is nevertheless still hopeful. If international institutions and Western governments are willing to reconfigure their approach to building a NWFZ in the Middle East, then the stalemate situation we find ourselves in now could be replaced by meaningful dialogue and productive communication.

61 Butters, A. Is a Nuclear-Free Middle East a Pipe Dream? *Time Magazine*, 23 September 2009.

A first, and perhaps most urgent step must be taken in regards to Israel: the UN, the IAEA, and Western governments must make Israel accountable for its nuclear weapons, and must hold Israel to the same standards that these institutions hold other potential NWS of the region, in particular Iran. Secondly, creating a NWFZ must be included in international negotiations towards a peaceful Middle East, and must be seen as an intrinsic part of the peace process rather than an impediment to it. However, the recent upheavals of the Arab Spring have created a state of governmental chaos in the region, which will most likely delay any discussion of a NWFZ, including the upcoming Egypt-based talk that were to be held in 2012. And finally, the impetus for creating a true, stable and reliable NWFZ in the Middle East must come from within the region. That is not to say that international institutions cannot or will not play a part in the process; however regional representatives should be included in the discussion of a NWFZ and their voices must be heard. In order to endorse, legitimise and promote the adoption of the international concept of NWFZ in the Middle East, the drivers behind the NWFZ project must be representatives of communities and states of the Middle East.

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# Some Examples of the Failure to Observe Cultural Values and Human Dignity during the U.S. Occupation of Iraq after Gulf War II

*Lana Issa Le Blanc, Iraq*

## Introduction

The U.S. invasion of Iraq was a disaster from a number of important aspects – political, military, sociological, strategic, humanitarian, and cultural. Although the U.S. and its allies (Ricks, 2007, pp. 115-116) quickly won a quick military victory against Iraq's armed forces during what we can call Gulf War II, the aftermath of the war proved to be chaos. This action (Hersh, 2007, pp. 253-254) was in a sharp contrast to the rapid commencement and quick, stunning end of major combat operations with the complete collapse of social order in Iraq. Although the strategic military plan featured planning and execution, there was a lack of any post-combat plan on how to govern Iraq. This event was not even treated as an afterthought. The question "What would happen in Iraq after it was conquered?" did not appear to be considered adequately by the U.S. government or its allies. At best, the scenario was covered by wishful thinking on the part of the Bush Administration; i.e., that Iraq's government would simply return to normal functioning, that people would return to their jobs and offices and continue operation of the country's administration.

What happened next (Ajami, 2006, p. 84; Ricks, 2007, pp. 150-152) were instances of widespread looting, pillaging, destruction of important records, and a collapse of public order and civil control. Also compounding this error (Ajami, 2006, p. 132) was the lack of information, or appreciation and understanding, of Iraq's well-established and deep cultural values. This lack of understanding also frequently included a disregard of human dignity by the US military forces since the invasion. Iraq has had a long, rich tradition of societal mores, rules and customs deeply imbedded in the nation's interpersonal relationships. Any violation of these tenets was deeply resented by all Iraqis. Whatever good will or appreciation the U.S. and its troops received by overthrowing Saddam Hussein (Hersh, 2004, p. 58), especially by the majority Shiite population of Iraq, was rapidly squandered by its ham-fisted approach in dealing with the Iraqi people. In treating all Iraqis as the "enemy" only earned the U.S. a staunch and protracted opposition that grew quickly and became widespread.

The real problem for the Americans was that it made the occupation of Iraq infinitely harder than it needed to be. Everyone understands that outsiders cannot know everything about a country's social customs, nor even with time and knowledge will anyone be fully conversant any the country's culture and values. However, to be seen to deliberately ignore them, or even worse, act completely counter to them, needlessly caused great hardship amongst the Iraqis and caused a great groundswell of resentment, opposition and hatred of the American occupiers that did not need to occur. Everyone appreciates being treated with a measure of human dignity and respect. Iraqis, like any other people in the world, will respond warmly to being treated with respect and courtesy. However, the US military disregarded all these important tenets in an effort to militarily secure Iraq. In fact, they made Iraq more insecure by their actions and far harder to govern.

## The Cultural Values that were ignored and the Human Dignity Violations that occurred

### *Negotiations*

In Iraqi society (Iraq Country Handbook, 2003, p. 63), it is the tribal and community affiliations that are always given priority over individual rights or concerns. The primary focus on the tribe or community and their needs helps explain the primacy of informal over contractual obligations and commitments. This is accomplished through the use of negotiators or mediators in an effort to resolve conflicts or sharp differences of opinion. Thus almost all conflicts are solved on an informal, or rarely formal, basis. Although this custom has been time-proven and followed, in more recent decades it has become the norm, as many Iraqis revert back to tribal or traditional forms of conflict resolution.

There are a number of basic principles that govern any negotiations or efforts at mediation. Actually, these four principles stem from the Koran as influences that govern the interactions between parties attempting to do a conflict resolution. These four are: 1) civility and respect: most actions are condoned if they are shown to be civilized and they show respect and deference to others, especially the elderly and those of higher status; 2) tolerance: showing a consideration of others and tolerating differences; 3) humility: avoiding speaking loudly or in a harsh manner to others, also not to contradict or disagree with superiors or elders, and 4) moderation: placing a high value on moderation and deliberation while avoiding becoming angry, abusive or arrogant.

There are two accepted types of negotiation methods to resolve problems. They are mediation and deliberation in council. Both are very time-consuming, but Iraqis are not pressed for time as Americans always seem to be to fix problems quickly. Unless the matter is urgent or pressing, then the Iraqis will take some time to resolve the issue at hand. Normally on a matter of local importance the matter will be mediated inside the community with both parties and mediators appointed. On any matter of grave or critical importance, Iraqis declare in advance and the issues clearly defined and posted.

However, Americans always value speed and efficiency over any other concern or matter. That Iraqis, as with many of the world's cultures, do not place the same emphasis on time as do Americans is a given. Thus the American troops quickly grew impatient and very frustrated at what they perceived the painfully slow pace of negotiations. In their American, Western culture, it is time that is the most precious commodity after life, and thus not to be wasted or misused. This usually caused the Americans to force a solution to a perceived problem whether rightly or wrongly, and not wait for a mutually-agreed upon solution just to move matters along to the next problem.

### **Conflict Resolution**

In western countries conflict resolution and negotiation is markedly different than in Iraq. The most important aspects of conflict resolution and negotiation (Iraq Country Handbook, 2003, pp. 63-65) are the maintenance of preserving their honour, correct behavior and politeness. If confronted with criticism, whether justified or unjustified, Iraqis will always try to protect their status and avoid receiving any negative judgments. This concept will manifest itself in an Iraqi either using creative descriptions of known or implied facts or in the dismissal of conclusions in order to protect one's reputation.

There is always the desire by all Iraqis to avoid shame and humiliation. This can also lend to the tendency to compartmentalized information. One manifestation of this is shown by the habit of saying "yes" when one really means to say "no". Iraqis will always try to take personalization out of confrontational or contentious conversations in an effort to minimize conflict. However, this tends to lead to vagueness and an effort not to speak in absolutes. Fear of shame also leads to compartmentalization of knowledge. It is also considered very disrespectful to contradict, correct or disagree with a person of superior rank, age or position.

However, speed and authenticity is of the utmost importance to Americans. To all Americans “yes” means yes; “no” means no. Anyone who does not state what they mean, even if it is offensive to the other party, is considered deceitful; this shilly-shallying is a grave offense to Americans. Most Americans like an openness of purpose and meaning. They frown on compartmentations of knowledge and vagueness. Many Americans have few qualms disagreeing with, or even contradicting, a person of superior rank if they believe that person is in error or wrong.

## Honour of the Family

The honour of the family (Hourani, 2002, p. 105) is one of the other paramount considerations that all Iraqis will adhere to. “The family is the center of honor, loyalty, and reputation.” (Accent on Iraq, 2003, p. 9) Maintaining or preserving the family’s honour will often time supersede or override other considerations regardless of future problems this action is likely to cause (Iraq Country Handbook, 2003, pp. 69-71). So when confronted with a threat to the family honour, the family will suppress, ignore or spin a fanciful tale to outsiders, all in an effort to outwardly try and maintain the family’s honour in spite of evidence or information that is contradictory to the actions or behavior of that family member. This is all understood by Iraqis, but to a foreigner, usually a westerner, this is outright lying or a smokescreen to someone from a culture that places faith in truthfulness and accuracy.

In one story, there was a loud commotion in a liquor store very early in the morning in one unnamed Iraqi city. The Iraqi police and U.S. military troops were then summoned. Inside the locked store they found a drunk Iraqi male had fallen asleep. He was duly taken to the police station where his family was then summoned to take custody of the man. When the American asked the Iraqis, through interpreters, what the man was doing in the store, the family incredulously explained that the owner of the store had asked the man for some help in re-stocking the shelves. Although it was obvious the man was an alcoholic and looking for some spirits to drink, the family was vainly attempting to save the man’s reputation with a story no one believed, but that the Iraqi police accepted as part of their culture. For the Americans, this was simply incredulous behavior. But to the Iraqis this was an example of the family attempting to save their honour.

## Social Customs

Even simple social customs have significant differences between Iraqis and the U.S. troops. Such matters as handshakes are one point in question. In Iraqi culture handshakes are never firm, but considered soft. In American culture a firm handshake is considered proper, whereas a soft handshake is considered unmanly.

Left-handedness is another point of contention. The left hand is considered unclean and is used only for the toilet. Whereas using the right hand is for eating food and performing all other manual activities. There were a number of violations during Ramadan when U.S. troops were seen by the Iraqis as eating, smoking and drinking during the hours of sunrise and sunset, a violation of propriety for Iraqis who understand that non-Muslims must do this out of sight of Muslims, if only out of respect.

## Sanctity of the Home and Visiting

In general, Iraqis are quite generous with their hospitality. This hospitality is very often expressed with food and drink, coffee or tea, for any visitors. This custom is an outgrowth of the culture of the desert, where nomadic travelers had to depend on the hospitality and generosity of others to survive. Thus hospitality and generosity are considered expressions of personal honour and never to be taken lightly. When an Iraqi visits another person in their home or business they will expect the same level of attention and courtesy that they would offer themselves.

Another very important aspect of Iraq’s culture is privacy. Nowhere else does this importance mean more than at someone’s home. It is considered rude to look into someone’s home which can be considered



the same as trespassing. No one would think to enter a home without being invited in by the host. Even standing outside the doorway in a place that might allow someone to look into the home is considered quite rude. The host expects that everyone will remove their shoes just prior to entering the home, which shows respect for the host.

Additionally, if space is available in a home, a *dewaniah* room is designated for male visitors only to congregate to talk and eat. This typical gathering place is always exclusively male, while women and their guests meet in another room separately. If guests are sitting on pillows, if a room does not have couches or chairs, it is considered quite rude to point the soles of your feet at anyone. Coffee and/or tea are always served upon a guest entering a home or office and it is considered rude to refuse to partake. But it is also considered equally rude for a guest to take more than three cups of either beverage.

However, all the U.S. troops consistently did not ask permission prior to entering someone's home. They would frequently kick in the door without warning, usually at night, while being heavily armed, and always shouting orders or commands in English which few people understood. No one would remove their shoes, or boots, as is customary. Then the troops would gather everyone in the same room while searching the rest of the house, usually ransacking it. More than not, valuables and other objects were seized without recompense or explanation. Often there were times when the U.S. troops would use dogs to search a home. Iraqis believe dogs to be unclean and are never allowed inside a home under any circumstances.

Since family honour is sacrosanct in Iraqi custom, one of the most damaging actions the U.S. frequently took was the humiliation of the head of the household in front of his family, especially if he is taken into custody for any reason. Iraqi customs dictate that this be done out of sight of the family, but often times the head of household was taken into physical custody in front of his family thus humiliating the patriarch and the remaining members of his family. This unpardonable sin only caused bitterness and a commitment to extract revenge against the humiliations the Iraqi heads of household suffered. Unbeknownst to the U.S. troops this would complicate their lives in unimaginable ways.

## Revenge killings

In many parts of the Middle East the unlawful killing of someone demands vengeance against the other party. Iraqi customs are no different. This blood feud, or vendetta, can only be resolved in one of two ways. The first is by killing a member of the wronging tribe or group by the wronged party. This sworn revenge could last for generations unless it mitigated or negotiated to some end. The second is through a negotiated settlement, or the *sulh* process. This process is done either totally or partially. In either case special mediators are called in and a *hodna* (or truce) is declared. The mediators will initiate a fact-finding process. The ultimate duty of the mediators is to preserve the honour of both parties involved in the dispute while the negotiators work out a means to settle the dispute before them. When a settlement has been successfully negotiated, then an agreed-to price, called a *diya* (or blood price) is paid to the offended party, or the family of the victim. The *diya* or exchange of money or goods is symbolizing for the exchange of death. This process ends with a public ceremony of reconciliation, called a *musalaha*. The families of both parties exchange greetings and accept apologies. In any event this is all done in the community at large and never on a one-to-one basis.

However, it was rare when the U.S. offered monetary compensation for accidental killings of innocent people and then only on application for redress. U.S. troops only considered slain Iraqis during battles as "collateral damage", an assessment that might fit the description of inanimate objects, but not to human beings. The Iraqis noted the total callousness of the U.S. troops and the disregard these troops showed to slain or wounded Iraqis for the most part. It was just another example of a lack of understanding of Iraq's culture.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the Iraqis have a very well-defined, fairly rigid set of social codes and customs. Unfortunately, the invading American troops did nothing to try and understand these social mores. In fact, they seemed to go out of their way to violate all of them, much less try to adhere or even understand their meanings and the significance they play in the lives of all Iraqis. Had the American troops done so then the occupation of Iraq definitely would have gone smoother, ended sooner and caused less damage, destruction and chaos. But by only using the matrix of Western culture and imposing it unilaterally on the Iraqi people without any regard for Iraq's culture, the Americans did both themselves and the Iraqi people a great disservice. It was, in the end, all unnecessary.

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# Democracy of One World

*Jitendra Nath Sarker, Bangladesh*

The contemporary literature of political philosophy draws our attention to the following two controversial and contradictory assertions: 1) globalization challenges democracy, and 2) globalization is being challenged in democracies.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is to solve the dispute. And in order to do this I need to explain the different meanings of the terms concerned and thereby to explore the suitable and ideal form of globalization, which can be expected to be conducive to the well being of humankind.

Joseph Stiglitz is one of the exponents of the second view, because he believes that there is and can be no other alternative form of globalization except an economic one; and to him the present form of democracy seems to be satisfactory. But I strongly adhere to the view that neither economic globalization nor any form of democracy can solve the global problems, *de facto*, which have become common to all of humankind.

Whether we want or do not want globalization, however, has revealed itself in the world-community as no more than a myth or a utopian concept in our time. The questions, therefore, of "Should it or should it not come into existence?" or "Should we welcome it or not?" do not arise. But the question "How and which form of it should we welcome?" is to be asked. Due to social turmoil, political conflicts and threats of war and poverty, the peoples of different creeds, colour and communities have come and are coming now to such a close contact of each other that it is not possible to enclose them by any tie of attachment where they are born. Moreover, today no nation-state alone is able to solve the problems caused by evil consequences of worldwide industrialization and undesirable scientific research. Because these problems are global and common to all of humankind, there is no other alternative way to solve them except globalization. It is to be noted that due to the ever changing nature of global problems, globalization itself as a movement by no means can avoid its dynamic character – it is an ongoing process of social evolution.

Now to explore whether globalization challenges democracy or whether it is being challenged, we need to explain what is meant by the terms concerned. The term democracy is used mainly in two senses in the present political world. In one sense, it refers to such a system of government that aims at political equality of all citizens of a nation-state. While in the other sense, democracy aims at economic equality of all people of the world. The former is called liberal democracy, because in addition to a large measure of individual liberty, such a system of power allows citizens to earn as much property as they can. It clearly adheres to capitalism, which has already extended its paws all over the world by establishing competitive market societies and worldwide industrialization since after European renaissance. The latter, on the other hand, is called socialism, which is asserted by Karl Marx as democracy as well. The two forms of democracy, however, are antagonistic and neither of them bears the full import of the term. Each of them conveys the incomplete meaning of it and partially complies with the principle, "All people are equal."

It is to be noted, as the context demands, that the concept of democracy originates from the Biblical principle of "equality of all people". But neither capitalism nor socialism strictly adheres to the principle. Democracy, in the true sense of the term, therefore, refers to the combination of both political as well as economic equality and even more than that. If so, globalization in its wider sense is definitely a challenge against both forms of democracy *de facto*, because it aims at solving political crisis and reducing economic disparity among different communities with a view to bring about social and political equality along with religious harmony among different groups of peoples. In this context, Dr. Kavaljit Singh says: "Broadly speaking, globalization refers to intensification of trans-border interconnectedness in all spheres of economy, politics, society and culture" (Singh, 2004).

Although globalization may be understood in its wider sense, it bears different specific meanings to different persons as well. Geographers, for instance, define it as time-space compression, economists

as deepening financial integration, sociologists as cultural convergence political scientists as “world system” and so on. “All, however, are describing what is essentially the same phenomenon ...is the emergence of one world” (Rapley, 2005). A philosopher in his habitual comprehensive view takes up the term ‘globalization’ in its wider sense. “One world”, therefore, to him means a cultural understanding that leads to economic equality and political adjustment having common measure to solve the new problems as well as to meet the needs of the modern man, which no nation-state nowadays can do alone. One world is the demand of the present era, neither visionary nor utopian at all, because the whole world has physically become one and is being guided almost by the same culture and outlook. Neither nationalism nor any form of prevailing democracy of nation-states can work well in this complex set-up of world society. “To cope with the basic need of man today,” says Dr. G. C. Dev, “we must develop a world outlook based on a world-philosophy of life and this is what one-world really means.”<sup>62</sup> Bertrand Russell refers almost to the same thing by the term “world government” - an all-comprehensive governmental agency but which by no means can avoid or abolish regional and local bodies of administration.

Now we shall discuss Joseph Stiglitz’s notion of globalization and democracy. “Today,” he says, “globalization is being challenged around the world. There is discontent with globalization, and rightfully so” (Stiglitz, 2002, p. 248). He also says: “We cannot go back, our globalization; it is here to stay” (p. 222) because he is to believe that there is only one form of globalization and it is nothing other than an economic one which has been working around the world “to serve the interests of the advanced industrialized countries rather than those of the developing world” (p. 214). He fails to conceive of globalization in its wider sense. What at best he believes is that we can make it work by reforming certain international financial institutions. He accordingly offered some reform-proposals (pp. 236-243) so that “globalization as largely an economic phenomenon” (p. 247) can work better. He says that “the problem is not with globalization, but with how can we make it work” (p. 247). But Stiglitz seems to be unaware of the fact that most of the international financial organizations along with the economic globalization itself, are the contrived outcome of manipulations of capitalism and all of them have been working for it. No reform proposal can, therefore, be expected to do away with the worldwide evil consequences of economic globalization under the extreme form of capitalism.

We shall now explain the nature of democracy as understood by Joseph Stiglitz. He understands democracy in its common and traditional sense. He does not seem to think of democracy apart from nationality or nationalism. “Globalization,” says Stiglitz, “often seems to replace the old dictatorships of national elites with new dictatorships of international finance” (p. 247). Again, the nation-states, according to him, are “basically forced to give up part of their sovereignty” (p. 247). Here by the term “sovereignty” he means state-sovereignty, not the popular one. The former is more concerned with and emphasizes upon the feeling of nationality; the latter, on the other hand, with democratic rights of citizens of nation-states. But it is to be noted that democracy basically is of international character and egalitarian in outlook. Moreover, Stiglitz seems to equate democracy with the right to vote only, because he interprets globalization as if “it represents a disenfranchisement” (p. 248). Right to vote, no doubt, is a democratic right, which is concerned with political equality but this is not all about democracy. With regard to spiritual values of people Stiglitz seems to be indifferent and silent. We can, therefore, realize that it is economic globalization, which is being challenged by the traditional forms of democracy de facto of developing nation-states as well as socialist countries.

But globalization in its wider sense, the aim of which is an ideal one-world is not being challenged; rather it challenges traditional forms of democracy of nation-states. Because the viability of existing forms of democracy depend entirely on nationalism and because they cannot meet the needs of one world, they are being challenged by globalization, which we look for. One world requires a type of democracy, which must be free from the narrowness of nationalism and which means more than the combination of economic and political equality of man.

Joseph Stiglitz (2008, p. 247) says: “One of the reasons globalization is being attacked is that it seems to undermine traditional values” (p. 248) But it can be asked: Which form of globalization undermines traditional values? Definitely the reply would be that it is economic globalization, because it brings about economic disparity and leads millions of people to suffer from hunger. It can similarly be said that

62 Dev, Chandra G. 1969. *Buddha, the Humanist*. Dhaka, Paramount Publishers, p. 180.

democracy *de facto* also is being attacked, because it is now being claimed after logical positivists as a value-free system of government. Willmoore Kendall (1950) says that democracy as a “political theory is itself value-free.” Anthony Downs (1957) upholds the same view and says: “To avoid ethical premises, we define democratic government descriptively.” But it can be said in response to the above comment that what is done for humans in society can never be value-free or devoid of moral values, because democracy is not only a form of government; it is a social ideal too. No ideal can be devoid of moral values. Moreover, none can deny that democracy originates from the Biblical principle of equality of all people.

So, globalization and democracy must be reformed and morally enriched to meet the demand of one-world. It is the principle of equality on the basis of which the universal adult suffrage is accepted in democracy. Every adult person has the equal right to vote. No one can cast their vote more than once and each vote is of equal value. Political equality, according to Ranny and Kendall (1956), “is generally regarded as an essential element of democracy.” According to them, political equality means more than the classical slogan, “one man one vote”. Both political equality and economic equality, as we said earlier, ultimately are derived from the Biblical principle of “equality of all man”. To deny the moral basis of democracy is, therefore, to deny democracy itself. C. B. Macpherson’s (1960’s) comment, in this context, is noteworthy. He says: “For now on, power and influence will depend on moral advantage.” To do away with economic discrepancy or to establish economic equality, a political scientist advocates for socialism and claims it to be both social as well as political ideal. Similarly, on the other hand, out of the aspiration for political equality majority rule has been chosen as the only means to achieve the goal. From this consideration it can definitely be said that democracy in both its socialistic and capitalistic form must have a philosophy, which is based on a social moral foundation.

The moral foundation of democracy, however, is being gradually weakened, because from the beginning the concept of economic equality is being neglected and swept away rapidly by the tide of economic longing of a market society in the name of the right to unrestrained liberty to earn, which later on stimulates unhealthy political competition to win an election in any way and demoralizes citizens of democracies. Moreover, a socialist or a communist country, on the other hand, deprives their citizens from the right to liberty and other natural rights as well. What the one world needs is for the belief in the equality of humankind to be recovered and strengthened. At the same time this concept of spiritual equality needs to be transformed into spiritual identity. Chandogya Upanisad declares the identity of all phenomenal selves irrespective of the physical forms that they are to take. The doctrine is best explained in Esha Upanisad in the following words: “One who beholds all living beings in himself and himself in all living beings cannot hate anybody.”<sup>63</sup>

This state of mind is known as spiritual identity, in which one identifies himself with any form of living being and he feels equally for others as he feels for himself. This is what a bio-ethicist calls love of life (Macer, 1998). Now a question may naturally arise, “Is love of life concerned with globalization or democracy?” If so, then how are they related? The reply in response to the second question is that both democracy and globalization aim at human welfare, which is simply a part of and dependent on welfare of all living beings. From ecological point of view the contemporary ethicists, therefore, assert that humans cannot live on earth without other forms of life around them. Because, humans are one of the members of a unique biotic community: our existence, progress and welfare of all kinds cannot be conceived apart from those of other living beings. In this global community the happy living of all people cannot be ensured without happiness of other forms of life, because all life is intrinsically unique and identical. In this context a remark of J. B. S. Haldane, a distinguished British microbiologist, is noteworthy. He says: “The distinction between you and me or the nearest mosquito and me is nothing absolute either... Anyone who has the concrete and detailed notion of the unity of life... will at least have some respect for a life.”<sup>64</sup>

I would like to conclude that the only form of democracy, which can be expected to comply with the Biblical principle of spiritual equality but to end up in spiritual identity, is suitable for and conducive

63 Atul, Ch. Sen, ed. 2000. *The Upanishads*. Kolkata, Harap Prakashani, p. 12.

64 Cited in Swami Ranganathananda. 2002. *Democratic Administration in the Light of Practical Vedanta*. Chennai, Sri Ramkrishna Math Press, pp. 84-85.

to our desired “one world”, because love of life, the moral essence of democracy emerges only from spiritual identity, which can be attained through spiritual practice within any creed.



## Commentary

*Johan Hattingh, South Africa*

In a paper rich in content and in terms of the theses argued for, Dr. Sarker develops two lines of thinking, supporting two different, but related theses. In the first line of thinking that amounts to a problem statement, arguments are developed in support of the following thesis (Thesis A): globalization and democracy (as we currently experience them) must be transformed and morally enriched to meet the demand of one world. In the second line of thinking, Dr. Sarker makes the proposal that this transformation and moral enrichment can be attained through love of life. Love of life, he argues (Thesis B), is the moral essence of democracy, and as such emerges only from spiritual identity – that can be attained through spiritual practice within any creed.

The questions I would like to pose regarding this paper relate to the two lines of thinking emerging from this paper, and the respective theses that they support. In the first part of his paper, Dr. Sarker advances reasons why it is important to meet the demand of one world – which is understood as political and economic equality. The first reason is that living in one world is already a physical reality, illustrated not only by the movement and interactions of humans across borders, but also by the movement of plants and animals across borders. The factual possibility of one world, however, is not yet translated into political and economic reality. Accordingly, Dr. Sarker argues in the second place that one world (i.e. political and economic equality) is a prerequisite for human dignity.

As Dr. Sarker sees it, the current economic models that we know (capitalism and socialism), as well as the current political models that we know, based on the idea of nation-states and national identities, cannot bring the equality of one world into existence. Why not? Dr. Sarker answers that they work with narrow and morally impoverished notions of globalization and democracy: where globalization merely amounts to the promotion of the interests of the industrialized world, and democracy is defined as a system of “one man, one vote” within the borders of nation-states.

Instead of making proposals to transform these narrow notions of globalization and democracy to make them function better (i.e. make them more efficient), Dr. Sarker introduces wider notions of globalization and democracy respectively. Globalization, he argues, should be seen as the promotion of economic equality, while democracy should rather be seen as participation in the community of life – where everyone has the status of an equal citizen.

Against this background, my first question regarding this paper is this: How would it be possible to ensure global economic equality if we take seriously and really show respect for what could be described as the economy of the earth? What exactly is the notion of economic equality evoked here, and how does this notion correspond with, or clash with the reality of ecological limits?

My second question relates to the notion of democracy as participation, as an equal citizen, in the global community of life. This notion clearly challenges the idea of human beings as the only, or the highest members of the community of life – which is to be welcomed as a counterpoint to human arrogance and dominance – but at the same time it poses the very pertinent question how it would be possible for humans to give an effective voice to all citizens of the global community of life in the decision-making structures of humans. Formulated differently: how should the challenge of effective participation and procedural justice be reformulated in this morally enriched notion of democracy where the whole of the community of life constitute its citizens?

In the second, but related line of thinking in this paper, Dr. Sarker refers to two prerequisites to start the process of transformation to a wider and morally enriched notion of globalization and democracy. The first prerequisite is a belief in the spiritual equality of man (which he interprets as a biblical notion central to Christianity). The second prerequisite is spiritual identity - that is "the identity of all phenomenal selves irrespective of the physical forms that they are to take." Following The Upanishads in this regard, he characterizes this spiritual identity as a state of mind, as love of life, as respect for the unity of life, as well as respect for every life. As such, Dr. Sarker argues, this state of mind can be attained through spiritual practice within any creed.

With reference to this line of thinking, the second set of questions that I would like to pose, focus on this practice of spiritual identity – that could also be seen as a process of attaining spiritual identification. My questions in this regard relate to the nature of the spiritual practice through which this spiritual identity can be achieved, and the practical implications that this practice may have. Does spiritual practice as envisaged in this paper entail a process of meditation in which self-identity is dissolved, and if so, meditation of this kind understood as something that cannot be legislated, decreed or engineered into existence? If the latter is indeed the case, the question arises how, from this spiritual platform, could wider concepts of democracy and globalization be articulated and promoted that at the same time can yield political and economic equality as well as the welfare and dignity of the community of life? Formulated differently: How, from this spiritual platform, would it be possible to build a new economy and new structures of decision-making that promote the democracy of one world?

As such, these questions do not aim to shoot down Dr. Sarker's vision; instead they are aimed at soliciting a further clarification and filling out of the basic ideas sketched in this paper. I would like to conclude, however, with the observation that Dr. Sarker has built much of his argument on a critical discussion of Joseph Stiglitz, and in particular his book *Globalization and its Discontents* (2002). The question that I have in this regard is what, if anything in this discussion of Stiglitz would change if later works of Stiglitz were also taken into account, in particular *Making Globalization Work* (2006), and *Freefall America: Free Markets and the Sinking of the World Economy* (2010).

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# Three Ways of Conceptualizing the Global: The Universal, the Holistic and the Macrocosmic

Philip Cam, Australia

## Introduction

Globalization is often seen as a contemporary economic development, involving such things as the growth of multinational companies, the increasing interdependence of the world's financial systems, and the unprecedented dependence of countries upon one another when it comes to the supply of resources, manufacturing and trade. As is generally acknowledged, however, it is not an entirely recent phenomenon. Ancient as well as modern empires have involved far-flung economies, and extensive trade routes have existed for centuries. Nor is globalization confined to the economic sphere. Mass communications have added a cultural dimension to globalization, global industrial relocation is beginning to shift the world's political axis, and globalization has seen the advent of both political institutions such as the United Nations and legal institutions such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

In this paper I will attempt to conceptualize globalization in the broadest possible terms by turning to some notions that are cognate with the global—the universal, the holistic, and the macrocosmic. Each of these notions occupies a significant place in the history of philosophy,<sup>65</sup> and each implies one or more contrasts: the universal contrasting with the particular and the relative; the holistic with the individualistic and reductive; and the macrocosmic with the microcosmic. These notions will enable me to depict globalization on a broad canvas so as to enlarge our view of it. Such a brief review as I am able to offer here can be little more than a gesture in the direction of the contribution that philosophy can make to thinking about globalization. Even so, it can stand as a reminder that philosophy still has a significant role to play in thinking about world affairs. Having said this, even in such a short exploration, I have also felt the need to warn against philosophy's tendency to fall prey to one or another kind of intellectual folly.

## The Universal

The term “universal” has many meanings. In metaphysics, the universal is commonly conceived of as that which contrasts with its instances—liberty, for example, as distinct from the concrete particulars of which it might be predicated. In logic, a universal proposition asserts something of all members of a class, as opposed to a particular proposition, which predicates something of an individual or individuals. As I will be using the term “universal”, however, the universal is opposed to the relative. To go to examples: this is a distinction underlying the claim that there are universal moral laws or values that transcend particular times and places—as opposed to the view that morality is inevitably relative to context—to history and culture. Immanuel Kant provided us with a famous instance of this kind of claim when he laid down his categorical imperative in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. There he argued that the only morally acceptable maxims are those that could be rationally willed to be universal law.<sup>66</sup> In other words, Kant implied that all genuinely moral decisions and judgments must be able to be universalized. A second example is furnished by the concept of natural rights. When John Locke argued that humans by nature have the right to preserve their “life, liberty, and estate,”<sup>67</sup> he was appealing to a concept of natural rights that makes such rights universal and inalienable. That is to say, they could not be relinquished through the social contract and were meant to apply to all people in all circumstances—applying not in virtue of a body of law, and hence relative to it, and not just to those upon whom social and historical circumstances had conferred such blessings.

65 My references will be to the history of Western philosophy because that is what I know. I must leave it to those with a better knowledge of other traditions to trace whatever parallels exist elsewhere.

66 Kant, I. 1964. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. by H. J. Paton. New York, Harper Torchbooks, p. 71.

67 Locke, J. 1960. *Two Treatises of Government*, Peter Laslett, ed. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, p. 368.

The influence of Locke's account of natural rights upon subsequent political thought is well known.<sup>68</sup> Briefly, however, it is the conception taken up by Thomas Jefferson in drafting the United States Declaration of Independence of 1776 and immortalized in the words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." It is the conception that reappears in Article I of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights." These were to include "natural and imprescriptible rights" to "liberty, property, safety and resistance against oppression" (Article II), spelled out in terms of such things as equality before the law (Article VI), freedom from arbitrary arrest (Article VII), free communication of thought and opinion (Article XI), and rights to enjoyment of property (Article XVII). Since the general populace actually enjoyed few if any rights under the *ancien régime*, the declaration heralded momentous changes for those living in France. As with the declaration on the other side of the Atlantic, however, it is important to note that the document is universal in conception rather than relative to a specific social and historical context.

These documents are, of course, forerunners of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. As its Preamble states, this declaration was put forward in "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family".<sup>69</sup> Here "members of the human family" has replaced the word "man", making it clearly audible to modern ears that the declaration is to include women and children, and thus to be manifestly universal.<sup>70</sup>

The point of reciting these momentous historical applications of the concept of natural rights is to remind us of how this philosophical idea gained currency, so that what was universal in conception in the Enlightenment has become all but universal in practice today. What began as a philosophical conception, brought to life and nurtured in conditions now remote, eventually grew and blossomed. Its transformation from a guiding ideal of social and political life in the New World and in France into something approaching a living reality across large parts of the globe is a sign of globalization no less significant than that of the transformations which have been taking place in the economic order. Let us not forget that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is itself a product of a global organization. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine such a declaration gaining almost worldwide assent without the formation of some such organization. Both the declaration itself and the organization from which it sprang are an expression of the moral will of a globalizing world.

In saying this, I do not mean to sweep aside the fact that the concept of natural rights has been the subject of significant philosophical criticism. In the history of philosophy, one has only to think of Jeremy Bentham. When Bentham wrote that talk of "natural rights is simple nonsense: natural and imprescriptible rights, rhetorical nonsense, —nonsense upon stilts"<sup>71</sup> he was directly attacking Article II of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. This is not because, according to Bentham, there are no such things as rights. Rather, he is arguing that "there are no such things as natural rights—no such things as rights anterior to the establishment of government—no such things as natural rights opposed to, in contradistinction to, legal (rights)".<sup>72</sup> Bentham's claim is that talk of natural rights is "merely figurative" and that such rights as exist have their existence only within and relative to a social

68 Less well known, however, is the suggestion that Locke's account of natural rights may have been influenced by the conception of inalienable rights in Islamic thought through his acquaintance with English oriental scholar Edward Pococke. See Christopher Gregory Weeramantry. 1997. *Justice Without Frontiers, Vol I: Furthering Human Rights*. The Netherlands, Kluwer Law International.

69 From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the 10th of December 1948.

70 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, together with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, formed the basis of the International Bill of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly in 1966, and took on the force of international law in 1976, after ratification of the Covenants.

71 Bentham, J. *Anarchical Fallacies: Being an examination of the Declaration of Rights Issued during the French Revolution*, [www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/lpw/documents/Bentham\\_Anarchical\\_Fallacies.pdf](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/lpw/documents/Bentham_Anarchical_Fallacies.pdf) . To call rights "imprescriptible" is simply to say that they cannot be taken away by means of the law.

72 *Ibid.*

and political setting. Indeed, showing his utilitarian colours, Bentham goes so far as to say that just as “there is no right, which ought not to be maintained so long as it is upon the whole advantageous to the society that it should be maintained, so there is no right which, when the abolition of it is advantageous to society, should not be abolished.”<sup>73</sup>

I say that I do not overlook the controversy over the concept of natural rights because when we are thinking about globalization we are not in fact concerned with the metaphysical status of rights. It is sufficient that rights once acknowledged in particular social and historical circumstances should begin to spread to other societies or peoples over succeeding generations. Talk of rights as natural and hence universal in concept may be “merely figurative” rather than literal as Bentham maintained—or an expression of moral will rather than the assertion of a metaphysical truth, as I am suggesting. All that really matters in the broad sweep of history is the progressive acknowledgement of human rights, so that what began as universal in theory becomes increasingly universal in practice. Given that the modern world has witnessed something of a global shift in that direction, we can say that the spread of human rights is in the process of becoming universal. Their universalizing tendency is all we require in order to point to their globalization.<sup>74</sup>

Let me now return to Kant and his first formulation of the categorical imperative in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*: act only according to those maxims that you would will to become universal laws. The categorical imperative is a universal prescription. Such maxims as it endorses are in turn universal in at least two senses. First, they are universal in that they are supposed to apply simply in virtue of reason and irrespective of one’s role in or relationship to the particulars of the case. We might say that they are in that sense impartial or not relative to the situation of those making the judgment, so that anyone who followed the dictates of reason would make the same judgment. Secondly, a morally acceptable maxim must be universalizable in the sense that it could be prescribed as a rule of conduct without fear of contradiction. To take one of Kant’s examples, suppose we proposed as a maxim that it is permissible to try to secure a loan without any intention of paying it back. To be a morally acceptable maxim, we must be able to universalize the prescription and thereby make it permissible for anyone and everyone to attempt to secure a loan in that way. This faces the obvious problem that the very institution of money lending could not survive if people were generally to act like that. The maxim makes it impossible to engage in the kinds of practice that it is supposed to make permissible. It involves what Kant called a contradiction in conception. Hence it is not a morally acceptable maxim.

These brief statements remind us of the centrality of the universal in Kant’s ethics. It may be far less clear how any claim to a universal ethics can be relevant today, when we are accustomed to live with differences in ethical outlook and when part of the problem in this globalizing world lies with those who still fiercely maintain the tenets of an absolutist ethical vision. In response, let me make the same point that I made above about human rights. For progress towards a universal ethics, it matters not at all whether Kant was right in thinking that such an ethic could be established from first principles by reason alone. Progress towards a universal ethics depends upon the world as whole—or large parts of it—becoming collectively engaged in the moral evaluation of human conduct. In other words, the globalization of ethics depends upon global ethical dialogue and decision-making, and not on preparing the ground for the metaphysics of morals. What Kant saw as a purely rational project is thus supplanted by a dialogical one, in which the expression of different points of view, and even open disagreement, are a vital part of an inclusive ethical practice through which we learn to be reasonable with one another. To take one example, debate about whaling practices before the International Whaling Commission often takes a moral tone. That is as it should be. It is all too often forgotten, however, that dialogue and thoughtful decision-making rather than abuse and attack is the moral route to the resolution of such issues. Dialogue is a form of moral praxis that can help to resolve what we should and should not do; and the establishment of global dialogue to resolve moral issues is a step in the direction of a universal ethics, even if all metaphysical claims to moral universality are forlorn.

73 *Ibid.* Nor do we want for contemporary critics; see W. Walker. 2003. “Historical Perspectives on Human Rights.” In Philip Cam, ed. *Philosophy, Democracy and Education*. Seoul: Korean National Commission for UNESCO. Also available at <http://hist-phil.arts.unsw.edu.au/append/publications/>

74 It may muddy the waters to talk about animal rights as a further extension of the globalization of rights. Still, the argument can be made. For the classic attempt to extend rights to animals, see P. Singer. 1975. *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for our Treatment of Animals*. New York, Random House.

Let me now sum up this part of the discussion. The great philosophical constructs of the past are in ruins. While we can admire them, they are no longer habitable. Locke's idea that human rights should be universally acknowledged in practice because they are universal in theory may have provided an intellectual warrant for the historical movement through which human rights gained ground. Yet the historical development of human rights does not depend upon the validity or otherwise of Locke's argument.<sup>75</sup> Universalizing human rights is a pragmatic project, which takes succor where it can, and it matters not whether we side with Locke or Bentham on their metaphysical status. Kant's notion that any rational individual can readily determine to what moral commands all should adhere appears to be naïve in face of the fact that on-going debate and disagreement is almost the *sine qua non* of the moral domain.<sup>76</sup> Rather than having recourse to a simple rational test, an individual's moral pronouncements are subject to the experience and perspectives of others. That is the key. It is through social intelligence rather than the Kantian applications of abstract reason that we can best determine how we should deal with our moral differences and disagreements. And it is the application of social intelligence on a global scale that will pave the way for a universal or global ethics, irrespective of any intellectual proof that an acceptable ethic must be universal.<sup>77</sup>

## The Holistic

Whether we think of Parmenides' claim that nothing is created or destroyed and that all is one, of Spinoza's view that all the modes in which the world presents itself are but aspects of an imminent God, or of Hegel's account of the inexorable unification of oppositions, holistic conceptions have been recurrent in the history of philosophy.<sup>78</sup> The classical conception of holism is that an entity or system is more than the sum of its parts, as when Aristotle speaks of "all those things which have several parts and in which the totality is not, as it were, a mere heap, but the whole is something besides the parts."<sup>79</sup> On a more radical interpretation, holism involves the claim that the parts of whatever is in question are ultimately only aspects of the whole and have no independent reality. In Spinoza, for example, all the finite modes of existence—that is, particular entities or events—are transient forms of the one necessary, indivisible, eternal, underlying substance, which is God or Nature as an active principle (*natura naturans*).<sup>80</sup> In the end, this implies: a double-aspect theory of mind and body in which

75 In any case, Locke's account of human rights depends upon Christian premises that cannot ground the assertion of natural rights in a global context or in a secular state.

76 In case it should have escaped, notice how readily unaided reason is supposed to be able to determine such maxims, it is worth quoting Kant's statement of the matter: "Thus I need no far-reaching ingenuity to find out what I have to do in order to possess a good will. Inexperienced in the course of world affairs and incapable of being prepared for all the chances that happen in it, I ask myself only 'Can you also will that your maxim should become a universal law?'" *Groundwork*, p. 71.

77 We could have looked at further ways in which philosophy's concern with the universal is relevant to the topic of globalization, had space permitted. Of particular note is its long standing interest in universal propositions, systematic treatment of which goes back at least to Aristotle. Aristotle's interest in universal propositions was not just for logical purposes, of course, but also for the purposes of science—at least, for the demonstrative paradigm of science that we find in the *Posterior Analytics*. The treatment of universal propositions within the Aristotelian paradigm may have been long overturned, demonstrative knowledge having been replaced by what Karl Popper called "essentially conjectural knowledge" (in *Objective Knowledge*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1972, p. vii.). Yet the search for the universal has been preserved, science being interested in relations between events that remain constant and in methods that can help to reveal such relations. Particularly in its experimental mode, it is essential that its methods are replicable and that its results are communicated. Progress in experimental science depends upon procedures that can be repeated and the results obtained by anyone with the appropriate training and apparatus. This includes those who entertain rival conjectures. It is therefore no surprise that, with the growth of science in recent centuries, it has come to provide us with a significant example of a worldwide community. The idea of the world's scientific community seems to have been recognized first by Charles Sanders Peirce in the 19th Century, and while Peirce did not employ the concept of globalization, he furnished us with an example of it. See Struan Jacobs. 2006. "Models of scientific community: Charles Sander Peirce to Thomas Kuhn." *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*. Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 163-173.

78 Forms of holism under discussion today include semantic holism in the philosophy of language, epistemic holism in confirmation theory, holism about mental contents in the philosophy of mind, and metaphysical holism in the philosophy of physics. For a recent account, see Michael Esfela. 2001. *Holism in Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Physics*, *Synthese Library*, Vol. 298. Dordrecht, Netherlands, Kluwer Academic Publishers.

79 Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Book H 1045a, 8-10.

80 Spinoza, B. de. 2000. *Ethics*. Trans. and ed. by G. H. R. Parkinson. Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press.

mind and body are one; an epistemology in which reason reveals knowledge of the world not as a succession of particulars, but as an eternal whole (*sub specie aeternitatis*); a thoroughgoing determinism in which the individual is completely entangled in the universal web of necessity; and a politics in which individual power, which obtains in a state of nature, is transformed into the legal and moral power of society as a whole. Spinoza's holism, in short, pervades his philosophy. To take another example, the logic of Hegel takes our notions of Being to involve internal contradictions or relations of opposition, in which one notion inevitably leads to its opposite, only to end up united with it in a higher or more complex whole. This applies to things as well as to thought, making logic the mirror of metaphysics. In Hegel's metaphysics, all oppositions ultimately find their resolution in the Absolute—the one true unity in which all things move and have their being. It means that history involves a dialectical movement inevitably leading through the “strife of opposites” to ever-greater unity. Everything from individuals to whole civilizations is an instrument of the Absolute, with each successive age—the ancient Orient, Greece and Rome, Hegel's Germany—progressing to a more complex unity. This applies, in particular, to successive intellectual achievements down the ages, which turn out to be but phases through which the Absolute expresses itself as Absolute Idea. For Hegel, the inexorable march of history also represents a progression from slavery to freedom, which is progressively achieved as the desires of the individual are integrated into the unified system of the state, in which the will of each is replaced by the will of all.

Spinoza's method in his *Ethics* is a curious thing for modern readers whose conception of argument in regard to such things as cosmology and mind-body relations is conditioned by the model of testing hypotheses against empirical evidence. Proceeding as in geometry, Spinoza begins with definitions and axioms from which propositions are deduced, supposing that the most startling and fundamental truths about the universe can be derived from what is allegedly self-evident. This appears far less surprising in his system because thought or ideas and extended nature are but two aspects of the one thing, through which the human mind is directly furnished with all manner of appropriate cognitions through the application of reason. On Spinoza's account, we can produce a satisfactory theology, a true foundation for physics, and a comprehensive morality by merely thinking about it. As we all know, however, an adequate theoretical basis for physics cannot be constructed by deduction from tautologies and synthetic apriori claims, and it is high time we realized that neither can an adequate morality. That unaided reason can deliver such things from axiomatic truths is a mistake of truly historical proportions.

Things are no better when we come to Hegel. Given the paucity of evidence for thinking that human history is ruled by the dynamic he proposed, it is astonishing to gaze upon the extent of Hegel's influence on the history of thought and action. This is especially true of political thought and action, where two great roads lead from the Hegelians of the Left and the Right to communism and fascism. Hegel's metaphysics is frankly anthropomorphic, with reason writ large and made the moving force of ultimate reality. While Hegel's insistence upon the history of things has continued to gain momentum, from Darwin's account of the evolution of species to the “big bang” theory of physical cosmology, the knowledge that they supply shows reason and consciousness to supervene upon a world of mechanism in which mindedness is a local and recent excrescence rather than the essence of things. For us still to cling to a philosophical system that is inconsistent with what we know on the basis of our most powerful forms of inquiry and adjudication of evidence (viz. on the basis of scientific inquiry) would be to forfeit any claim to intellectual seriousness.

These critical remarks on method and metaphysics are not meant to show that we have nothing to learn from their proponents. When stripped of its metaphysical pretensions, the holistic vision of Spinoza and Hegel is in many ways suggestive. For example, the basic idea in both thinkers of increasing the power of the whole through the integration of conflicting forces is of general significance. When it comes to globalization, it suggests, for instance, that the integration of our national economies could bring a more powerful order to human productive effort and strengthen the world's economy. This will not happen of necessity and it would not involve the growth of a world spirit in any deep metaphysical sense. In the face of integration, we might quite properly come to speak about the growth of such a spirit, but only after the manner in which we talk about the development of team spirit. Such a development would lead people to more deeply identify with a world community and may see the withering away of the nation-state. Even so, such a phenomenon is not evidence of the truth of a radical holism. Whether or not it is viewed as such depends upon which aspect of an ambiguous figure strikes the eye. From one perspective, all the elements are subsumed in the whole, whereas from another the whole can be analyzed into its parts without remainder. As is typical in traditional metaphysics, *a priori* arguments for

either view of such matters are always inconclusive—and more importantly, they are beside the point when it comes to what is real in any sense that is worth worrying about. The development of a global spirit of collaboration that breaks down national and other barriers between peoples may promote the kind of synthesis that paves the way to a peaceful world future; and if it does, we should do what we can to foster it irrespective of whether radical metaphysical holism is true or not.

There are many humdrum ways of expressing something of the notion behind Hegel's dialectic without entering into his metaphysics. We may think of the old adage that, in matters of opinion, the truth lies somewhere in the middle, or the idea of unity in diversity, to which recourse is often made in cultivating a sense of identity amongst diverse populations.<sup>81</sup> To take the first of these, as globalization has gained momentum in a world of diverse populations and cultures, it has become increasingly common for people to come into contact with foreign values and ways of life. This confrontation with difference shines a light back upon our otherwise unreflective ways, making us more conscious of them and ourselves. Such encounters can nurture prejudice and hostility, but they can also lead to a genuine engagement that ultimately produces a degree of fusion or blending, as that which was once foreign becomes familiar and congenial. While this has an air of the Hegelian operation of Reason about it, no weighty metaphysic is needed to comprehend it. For all the heavy lifting, the metaphysics does no effective work in enlarging our notions and modifying our practices.

'Unity in diversity' is a holistic notion in at least the sense in which it recognizes that a whole can have a property distinct from those of its parts. To take just one example of its application, consider the Javanese phrase "*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*" (literally "in pieces, yet one") that is usually translated as "Unity in Diversity", which is the official motto of Indonesia. The phrase comes from a 14<sup>th</sup> century Kakawin poem, employing poetic devices that derive from Sanskrit literature. The stanza in which the phrase occurs (in the last line) is worth quoting. Here it is in translation:

"It is said that the well-known Buddha and Shiva are two different substances. They are indeed different, yet how is it possible to recognize their difference in a glance, since the truth of Jina (Buddha) and the truth of Shiva is one. They are indeed different, but they are of the same kind, as there is no duality in Truth."

It may be that acceptance of the holistic metaphysical claim made in this passage would have been necessary for it to have the practical effect of promoting tolerance between Hindus and Buddhists, which was no doubt the poet's intent. Yet to set out with this intent to persuade people that the truth of the two religions is the one Truth only serves to remind us what a barrier to toleration metaphysical religious beliefs can be. And while trying to convince people of different faiths of the truth of certain metaphysical claims is one way of promoting toleration, it is unlikely to be as effective as, for example, finding practical ways for members of the two faiths to live together on an equitable basis. That would surely be a more robust measure.

The processes by which we might achieve a greater unity in diversity in a globalizing world may follow a dialectical logic, regardless of whether it is the work of the *Weltgeist*. For example, vast populations within China and India that until recently were living in the poverty of largely pre-industrial economies have begun to experience a belated industrial and post-industrial revolution, with rapid increases in their material standard of living. While the large-scale relocation of manufacturing and associated industries from the developed world have overtaken old ways of life, the new way of life also carries the seeds of its own destruction. In a world that finally has to face the threat of climate change, it is clear that the vast increase in greenhouse gas emissions is unsustainable. This does not mean returning to an agrarian past, but rather the creation of a new technological age on a global scale. Such a move forward does not imply uniformity across the planet, but as with a global system of carbon credits, it will demand unity of purpose to be achieved through cooperative mechanisms that allow for the different conditions in which local economies find themselves. To take another example, the more robust forms of individualism that have developed in the social and historical conditions of the West are increasingly being brought into contact with traditions of greater social conformity in other parts of the world. While this can have dislocating effects, in the longer run the encounter may prove to have a moderating

81 For example, "Unity in Diversity" is the motto of Indonesia, the Republic of South Africa, and the European Union. A similar conception occurs in the Latin motto *e pluribus unum* that is inscribed on the seal of the United States of America and appears on all its coins.

influence all-round and lead to beneficial social transformations. Finally, in a lighter vein, the essentially British food that was all we knew when I was growing up in Australia was largely overtaken by an array of foreign cuisines brought into the country through successive waves of migration in the 1970s and 1980s. Then a kind of blending began to occur and for the past decade or more various kinds of fusion food have become popular. In its own modest way, the blending of cuisines demonstrates that the “dialogical movement” between oppositions can indeed be a creative force and a source of richness. Many examples of this kind of synthesis can no doubt be found in all manner of things, from farming or business practice to the visual arts and music, and such syntheses are among the fruits of globalization.

## The Macrocosmic

The macrocosm contrasts with the microcosm.<sup>82</sup> In the history of philosophy this pair has been employed not merely to mark a distinction between the large and the small order of things, but to imply that there is a parallel between the nature of human beings and the world in which they live. We find two examples of it in Plato. In the *Philebus*, Plato has Socrates suggest that not only are our bodies composed of the same elements as we find in the universe at large, but that just as we have a soul, so the universe must have a soul, albeit one superior in all respects to our own.<sup>83</sup> To see the human soul as a pale reflection of this “wondrous regulating intelligence” is to see it as a microcosm of that which resides in the macrocosm. A second example is to be found in *The Republic*.<sup>84</sup> There Plato reasons that there must be a parallel between the state and the individual in regard to justice because things called by the same name must be alike, regardless of whether they are big or little. So the just man and the just state must be alike in that respect. According to Plato, there is a threefold division in the human soul, with analogous division to be found in the state. In the soul, one part is rational, another appetitive, and the third spirited. In the state, we have the counselors representing its rationality, artisans and merchants its appetite and the military its spiritedness. In a just state, each of these classes performs the function for which it is suited and does not attempt to usurp the powers of the others, and so it is with the just individual. A just individual is ruled by his reason rather than by his appetite, and his high spirits do not conspire with his desires to thwart reason.

The tendency to see the world in which we live as a macrocosmic parallel to ourselves is all the more readily illustrated outside of philosophy. The constellations of the zodiac provide a well-known example. As George Boas remarks:

“However absurd these correlations may be, men cast horoscopes, saw psychic traits in the spatial relations of the planets and constellations, and . . . saw their destiny written in the stars. The projection of the human body in the heavens, the endowment of the planets with emotions, all made the solar system . . . a great man in contrast to us little men.”<sup>85</sup>

Even though the idea of a parallel between the macrocosm and microcosm may have largely faded from view, and we recognize what John Ruskin called the ‘pathetic fallacy’ in our tendency to assign human traits to nature, we still apply the categories of folk psychology as freely to institutions and groups as we do to individuals. We speak of what the company or the market believes, of the aspirations of nations and political parties, of the wishes of the meeting or the electorate, and of what NGOs or governments are trying to do. Nor is it clear that we are speaking merely figuratively when we apply such terms to supra-personal entities. These ways of speaking are equally explanatory and predictive of the behaviour of such entities as they are of human individuals, and it is by no means obvious that we can reduce these accounts to statements about what individual members of such bodies believe, aspire to, wish for, or are trying to do.<sup>86</sup> This suggests that when it comes to the social domain, we still recognize a parallel between the microcosm and the macrocosm, allowing that mindedness is in some sense social as well as individual.

82 For an extended discussion of the history of the idea, see G. Boas. 1969. *The History of Ideas: An Introduction*. New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, pp. 212-238.

83 *Philebus*, 28e-30a.

84 *The Republic*, Book IV, pp. 435-441.

85 Boas, p. 227.

76 For an argument to that effect, see A. Clark. 1994. Beliefs and desires incorporated. *Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 91, No. 8, pp. 404-425.

The idea that the individual is in many ways a microcosm of the larger social terrain is relevant to thinking about globalization. For globalization is a process marked by large-scale social transformations. Whole populations that formerly had relatively little acquaintance with one another, or that could effectively treat each other's differences as distant curiosities, are being confronted by exotic political, cultural and religious practices that increasingly impinge upon their world. Whether it is an issue about religious attire in France and Belgium, the uneasy imposition of democratic government in Afghanistan, teenagers dying their hair and listening to heavy metal music in Tokyo, or political concerns in China over the free expression of ideas through the Internet, the social terrain all around the world is undergoing transformation as a result of such things as mass migration, global conflict, and social and cultural diffusion in an electronic age. While this is a source of all kinds of issues and problems, my present purpose is merely to point to the parallel between the upheaval and transformation of the social and political landscape and that of the mental landscape of its inhabitants. In a distant echo of the ancient idea of the macrocosm and the microcosm, globalization involves not only large-scale adaptations but also the small-scale adaptation of the individuals who are subject to them.

## Conclusion

We have glanced at three concepts—the universal, the holistic and the macrocosmic—that bear a relation to the global. These concepts have been central to theories and arguments that helped to shape the history of philosophy. In the cases we touched upon, I suggested that the work of the philosophers was a more or less mistaken attempt to provide a basis for political or moral life or to see the universe as rational and to model it in our image. In this respect, if I may say so, the history of philosophy is by and large a litany of mistakes—as with the history of ideas more generally. My particular concern, however, has been with two related presumptions that continually reappear. They involve the assumption that what are properly matters for social determination must have their blueprint in the natural order of things, and the supposition that matters of such moment can be ascertained through pure intellection. The history of philosophy to which I refer is therefore not just a chronology of particular mistakes, but of systematic error. We need to dispense with these presumptions. First, we need to acknowledge that such things as human rights, moral conduct, the relation of the individual to society, and indeed the whole course of human history, is not foretold in the nature of things or written in the stars. It is up to us to resolve and determine such things. Second, we need to turn away from the idea that *a priori* philosophical arguments and theories contain the solutions to social, moral and political problems. The resolution of these problems must be worked out by reflecting upon our experience and engaging in dialogue rather than by the construction of castles in the air.

In the history of philosophy, so many towering intellectual edifices have been built upon unsound foundations. Even so, we can return to these ruins in the hope of finding something useful. Reworking the intellectual materials of the past can help us to gain our bearings when we try to think about contemporary issues and problems. Today I have tried to show that we can renovate the notions of the universal, the holistic and the macrocosmic to help us think about globalization within a more pragmatic philosophy.





*Isham B. Pawan Ahmad, Malaysia*

Philip Cam's reexamination on the ways of conceptualizing the global from a philosophical perspective through analyzing three cognates with the global: the universal, the holistic and the macrocosmic is extremely thought provoking. Cam's attempt to evaluate what most see as a contemporary economic development, globalization through the lenses of philosophy not only reconnects the global experiment to the development in human thought but also raises again the questions of the very foundations that form the basis of human concepts of right and wrong and the role the acceptance of Western concepts of human rights that has restricted other possible interpretations of human rights from even entering the debate. Is the Western metaphysical status of rights the only way to establish rights issues? Hadn't this Western metaphysical status of rights undergone a progression of development before they became widely accepted and therefore should have been affected and bound by time and place limitations? Cam raises these questions not in order to undermine the importance of rights but rather to explore if we can expand this basis of rights to include multicultural perspectives rather than to impose and be dogmatic about it in insisting that all must conform to these principles and no other basis. Cam proposes global dialogue and thoughtful decision making as an alternative and his solution to the dogmatic insistence on universal moral overtone. Cam says, "To take one example, debate about whaling practices before the International Whaling Commission often takes a moral tone. That is as it should be. It is all too often forgotten, however, that dialogue and thoughtful decision-making rather than abuse and attack is the moral route to the resolution of such issues. Dialogue is a form of moral praxis that can help to resolve what we should and should not do; and the establishment of global dialogue to resolve moral issues is a step in the direction of a universal ethics, even if all metaphysical claims to moral universality are forlorn."<sup>87</sup>

Cam points out that in today's multicultural world, we need to be more open to other perspectives and other historical experiences that color and shape different peoples outlook and perceptions instead of assuming our perspectives and our experiences are the only valid experience and therefore must be universalize making it form the universal basis for universal ethics. He says it may be far less clear how any claim to a universal ethics can be relevant today, when we are accustomed to live with differences in ethical outlook and when part of the problem in this globalizing world lies with those who still fiercely maintain the tenets of an absolutist ethical vision.

Cam argues that by reexamining the Western metaphysical status of right, he revealed that this idea had gone through a progression of development within the context of Western history and experience and thus should be seen contextual and not made adamant on its universal application. It is this insistent on its universal application that has stumbling block for open dialogue and moral praxis. Thus we should not begin our dialogue with others from a moral high ground of universal ethics but instead open and free dialogue. Cam calls on the figuring tower of Jeremy Bentham for support that rights are contextual. When Bentham wrote that talk of natural rights is simple nonsense: natural and imprescriptible rights, rhetorical nonsense, nonsense upon stilts,<sup>88</sup> he was directly attacking Article II of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. This is not because, according to Bentham, there are no such things as rights. Rather, Cam is arguing that there are no such things

87 Philip Cam. 2011. Three ways of conceptualizing the global: The Universal, the Holistic and the Macrocosmic, in this volume, pp. 83-92.

88 Bentham, J. 1998. *Anarchical Fallacies: Being an Examination of the Declaration of Rights Issued during the French Revolution*. [www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/lpw/documents/Bentham\\_Anarchical\\_Fallacies.pdf](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/faculty/lpw/documents/Bentham_Anarchical_Fallacies.pdf)

as natural rights—no such things as rights anterior to the establishment of government—no such things as natural rights opposed to, or in contra-distinction to, legal rights. Cam writes: “Utilizing the ever growing acceptance of utilitarianism in today’s ethical arguments, Bentham’s argument that human rights should not be base upon natural rights which he condemns as rhetorical nonsense, merely figurative and thus removes any need to refer the argument to God. Instead the body of men is sufficient to grant and maintain these rights within the context of the society. . . . that such rights as exist have their existence only within, and relative to, a social and political setting. Indeed, showing his utilitarian colours, Bentham goes so far as to say that just as there is no right, which ought not to be maintained so long as it is upon the whole advantageous to the society that it should be maintained, so there is no right which, when the abolition of it is advantageous to society, should not be abolished.”

Cam concludes what we need in order to progress towards a universally acceptable ethics matters not on what basis we establish rights, metaphysical or otherwise, but rather in the human collective engagement. For progress towards a universal ethics, it matters not at all whether Kant was right in thinking that such an ethic could be established from first principles by reason alone. Progress towards a universal ethics depends upon the world as whole—or large parts of it—becoming collectively engaged in the moral evaluation of human conduct. In other words, the globalization of ethics depends upon global ethical dialogue and decision-making, and not on preparing the ground for the metaphysics of morals.

I must admit I find Cam’s argument for collective dialogue to the means for progress towards universal ethics extremely inviting and tempting. It is inviting because it seeks to involve and engage all and also therefore, for these very same reasons, it is tempting for it is inclusive and can cater, respect and gain from the diverse multicultural world we all find ourselves in everywhere and anywhere today. However, the devil is always in the details, or in this case, in the lack thereof.

If we decide to boldly cast off the shackles that metaphysics has imposes on making human rights basis as the sole basis for universal ethics, and instead replace it with collective engagement, collective dialogue among men, what would form the new basis of this collective engagement of men with diverse experiences and perspectives? Could men of such diverse experiences and perspectives come to accept and agree to one set of universal ethics or is it acceptable to all that we reach some sort of range of acceptable behavior, instead of a universal ethics, a toleration of ethical views. It cannot be live and let live or a free for all, which would result in moral relativism, another impracticality given that we now live next to the others, and thus are affected by each other’s actions.

Would metaphysical dogmatism be replaced by utilitarian expediency and thus the new basis becomes mutual advantage? As the allure of utility as the measure of ethical judgment and action gains wide spread acceptance in contemporary times, could this form the new basis of ethical universalism, the basis for collective dialogue? If this becomes more acceptable, then we are face with the same ethical dilemmas that all utilitarians face, the majority may oppress the minority. Since there are no absolute rules to refer to and use as a means of protection (i.e. certain rights as incontrovertible), the majority could decide anything that is to its advantage. For example history has taught us that more than once the majority is neither always right nor kind to minorities. In fact more than not, human history is flooded with examples of the strong oppressing the weak. Western history itself is replete with history of discrimination even to extend of making the other, the minority, sub-human and enslaving them. It was not that long ago that the American laws enforced discriminations against Blacks, or European laws against Jews. One can hope that mankind has outgrown this oppressive tendency but without an absolute principle to refer to and constraint them, can we be sure the ugly head of expediency will not rise again? It is such fears that make us cling to the consolation of natural law, which makes us all equal.

# Goals of Education of Philosophy and the Culture of Peace

*Darryl Macer, UNESCO Bangkok*

This paper will discuss the goals of philosophy with special emphasis on the *Regional Action Plan on the Promotion of Philosophy Teaching in Asia and the Pacific* (UNESCO, 2009). Although the action plan was developed at a meeting not focused on the theme of culture of peace, the action plan specifically mentions promotion of tolerance, peace and understanding as goals of philosophy. As we explore philosophical literature, we can find a number of philosophers have focused their work on promotion of a culture of peace. The foundations of that view in ethical principles and worldviews will be explored with examples from different cultures.

The Paris Declaration for Philosophy (Droit, 1995) states that development of philosophical debate in education and in cultural life makes a major contribution to the training of citizens in two major ways. First, it exercises their capacity for judgment, which is fundamental in any democracy. Second, it affirms that philosophy education prepares everyone to shoulder their responsibilities in regard to the great questions of the contemporary world - particularly in the field of ethics - by training independent-minded, thoughtful people, capable of resisting various forms of propaganda. Specifically it states that:

*“Every individual must have the right to devote his time to the free study of philosophy, under any form and in any place in the world;*

*Philosophy teaching should be maintained or expanded where it exists, introduced where it does not yet exist, and designated explicitly as ‘philosophy’;*

*Philosophy teaching ought to be taught by qualified and specifically trained teachers, and not be conditioned by economical, technical, religious, political, or ideological considerations;*

*While remaining autonomous, philosophy teaching ought to be linked, as far as possible, to academic or professional training in all fields.”*

In 2010 UNESCO held a series of regional high-level meetings on the teaching of philosophy. In the Asia-Pacific meeting, the participants decided to include in their action plan a specific set of goals of teaching of philosophy. Before going on to discuss in detail the action plan from Asia and the Pacific, called *“Thinking for the Future: An Action Plan for the Promotion of Philosophy Teaching in Asia and the Pacific”*, some reflection is also made on some of the other action plans.

In the action plan from Latin America, the participants urged member states to articulate types of “teaching philosophy which take into consideration historical references, text analysis, methodological approaches, and makes reference to issues of vital importance, not only for the individual, but also in an effort to contribute to the potential development of the society to which they belong and to foster awareness of the new challenges that humanity faces today”. The topics of history, and the various textbooks used in each country reveal a great deal of diversity.

In the action plan developed at the meeting of Arab states in Tunisia, they call to “Create a national database on philosophy teaching, including the curricula, schools manuals, activities related to philosophical reflections, teacher training programmes, etc. and to link them through a network.” This recognizes the importance of systematic approaches to evaluation of goals and expertise.

Let us consider the Asia-Pacific Action Plan adopted at the UNESCO Regional High-level Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Asia and the Pacific, held in Manila, Philippines, 25-26 May 2009. The first section considers the Rationale for philosophy education. The start of the action plan sets broad goals for teaching philosophy, saying: “Philosophy can contribute to reflections on every avenue of society.” This is in the spirit that philosophy should encompass all areas of social reflection and activity. The role of philosophy is given to allow “people to have opportunities to think about the direction, purposes and goals of social development.”

The future direction should be set in a foundation of ethics including justice, as written: “Societies and communities progress in a more just, equitable and sustainable direction if the cultural, ethical, and spiritual values of those societies are central determinants in shaping their futures.” The action plan repeatedly states that philosophy is a way to develop concepts of justice, in line with the UNESCO vision that philosophy is a “school of freedom” (UNESCO 2007).

In Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we read that: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” This is recognition of a right to do philosophy, and is a basis across all countries of the essence of human dignity. To teach a greater appreciation of human dignity, freedom of thought is important.

The UNESCO *Intersectoral Strategy on Philosophy*<sup>89</sup> stipulates that “philosophy develops the intellectual tools to analyze and understand key concepts such as justice, dignity and freedom. It develops these skills by building capacities for independent thought and judgment, by enhancing the critical skills to understand and question the world and its challenges, and by fostering reflection on values and principles.” Pillar 2 of the above mentioned Strategy urges UNESCO to encourage the teaching of philosophy in all countries, through the development of policy recommendations on the teaching of philosophy at the secondary and university-level and on comprehensive curriculum development, which would include the teaching of different philosophical trends as well as comparative philosophy.

Participants in the Asia-Pacific high-level meeting aspired to establish clear goals and strategies for achieving these goals. These were summarized as:

### 3. Goals and Aims of Philosophy Education

The outcomes<sup>90</sup> of Philosophy Education include:

a) *Understanding and a search for wisdom. To this end we encourage:*

- *Development of trans-disciplinary knowledge.*
- *Clarification of concepts.*
- *Enhancement of the ability to integrate knowledge, principles and argumentation in rational discussion.*
- *Understanding the power of questions.*
- *Broadening intellectual horizons.*
- *Knowledge of cultural values in different communities.*
- *Search for meanings.*
- *Living a better life.*

b) *Development of capacities for:*

- *Quality thinking and reflective processes.*
- *Wise judgment and decision making skills.*
- *Formulating appropriate questions.*
- *Creative thinking.*
- *Foresight.*
- *Reasoned choice.*
- *Interpretation, construction and communication of knowledge.*
- *Respect for reasons and evidence.*
- *Better understanding of reality.*

89 UNESCO. 2005. *Intersectoral Strategy on Philosophy*. Paris, UNESCO. (Adopted by member countries of UNESCO).

90 While it is desirable to find culturally appropriate terms to refer to philosophy, such as thinking for the future, at each level of education these goals apply to broader goals of education and development of thinking in general.

c) *Development of a disposition to:*

- *Use knowledge and skills for good.*
- *Increasing respect for all forms of life.*
- *Take into account the interests of others and the environment in the spirit of solidarity.*
- *Have empathy and compassion.*
- *Be tolerant, inclusive, and reasonable.*
- *Understand better the diversity of views of different persons (listen to others).*
- *Respect different points of view, people and culture, and their values.*
- *Reflect upon values.*
- *Consider alternative possibilities and world-views.*
- *Build and improve other virtues.*

As we examine these goals, we can see some similarity to the goals of the UNESCO Regional Action Plan for Teaching of Bioethics in Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO, 2005),<sup>91</sup> that states:

Research has shown that there are a number of goals of bioethics education including:

a) *Knowledge*

- *Development of trans-disciplinary content knowledge.*
- *Understanding the advanced biological concepts.*
- *Being able to integrate the use of scientific knowledge, facts and ethical principles.*
- *and argumentation in discussing cases involving moral dilemmas.*
- *Understanding the breadth of questions that are posed by advanced science and technology.*
- *Knowledge of cultural values.*

b) *Skills (capacity building in skill acquiring should be multi-faceted or many-sided, and the goals include):*

- *Balancing benefits and risks of Science and Technology.*
- *Being able to undertake a risk/benefit analysis.*
- *Develop critical thinking and decision making skills and reflective processes.*
- *Develop creative thinking skills.*
- *Develop foresight ability to evade possible risks of science and technology.*
- *Skills for developing "informed choice".*
- *The required skills to detect bias in scientific method, interpretation and presentation of research results.*

c) *Personal moral development*

- *Understanding better the diversity of views of different persons.*
- *Increasing respect for all forms of life.*
- *Elicit a sense of moral obligation and values including honesty and responsibility.*
- *Being able to take different viewpoints to issues including both biocentric and ecocentric worldviews rather than only anthropocentric perspectives.*
- *Increasing respect for different people and culture, and their values.*
- *Developing scientific attitudes, reflective processes, and an ability for holistic appraisal, while not ignoring the value for reductionist analysis.*
- *Knowledge about bias in the interpretation and presentation of research results, benefits and risks of technology and bioethical issues, and how to detect bias.*
- *Exploration of morals/values (values clarification).*
- *Values analysis and value based utilization of our scarce natural resources*

91 [http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/shs/BEfiles/BioethicsActionPlan.pdf](http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/shs/BEfiles/BioethicsActionPlan.pdf)

The tripartite division of goals is similar with the philosophy action plan categorizing the goals under the terms, "Understanding and a search for wisdom", "Development of capacities", and "Development of a disposition." Whereas in the Bioethics Action Plan the terms used are: "Knowledge", "Skills (capacity building in skill acquiring should be multi-faceted or many-sided)", and "Personal moral development". These goals are also seen in existing curricula to some degree. Basic knowledge is a foundation for human mental activity, but skills are needed to process information and data. The target of the education system is to develop moral citizens, which have the dispositions of an ideal citizen.

Detailed analysis can see further similarity within each category. The term "wisdom" implies also a sense of mental skill as well. For example, "Enhancement of the ability to integrate knowledge, principles and argumentation in rational discussion", suggests integration of different forms of knowledge, such as cognitive as well as facts is important. Both action plans encourage multidisciplinary studies, which is important in the reform of educational systems that have often compartmentalized data into different class subjects. The goals, "Broadening intellectual horizons" and "Knowledge of cultural values in different communities", suggest greater emphasis on inter-cultural communication than appears in many national curriculum.

We need to consider the broader implications of knowledge. The search for wisdom is somewhat broader than knowledge also, as we can see in the goal "Understanding the power of questions". A questioning mind is also an attitude or skill, which is a process for empowering the mind to gather new knowledge.

The ability to measure knowledge is not too difficult in an examination-based system. There are, however, challenges to measure skills, and it is almost impossible to measure quantitatively personal moral development. Although it will require life-long assessment to live up to the goals of most education systems, some degree of measure could be made over youth years. We need further reflection of how we want to measure these types of goals.

An analysis of how these goals are found in national plans for teaching of values and philosophy is made in the paper by Wolf and Macer (2011, pp. 100-104). Some additional goals were also commonly found in national action plans, and these are discussed in that paper.

UNESCO shares these goals, and in addition works on behalf of member countries for the goal of building capacity in the region for teaching philosophy. The participants called for increased support in implementing philosophy education at all levels in culturally appropriate ways. Sound discussion of the underlying values and cultural factors in setting these targets is important, and at the international level UNESCO is one of the bodies that acts as a forum to share knowledge on these goals. In the action plan there were also specific tasks suggested, including:

*The participants agreed to work to implement philosophy education by utilizing the following methods:*

- *Training more teachers to teach philosophy.*
- *Providing attractive salaries for all teachers at each level of education.*
- *Providing employment to philosophy teachers*
- *Elevating the social status of philosophy teachers.*
- *Developing a wider range of appropriate support materials for different contexts/situations.*
- *Establishing teaching resource and research centres and/or facilities open to all.*
- *Considering carefully the time allocated to the teaching of philosophy.*
- *Increasing the value or credit given to philosophy components of courses or philosophy courses.*
- *Developing teaching and learning methods that encourage motivation to learn about philosophy.*
- *Integrating the goals of philosophy, and philosophy education into the core goals of the curriculum at levels appropriate for each culture.*
- *Researching the best methods and materials for teaching philosophy.*
- *Using objectivity in evaluation.*

There are many target groups for these activities, listed as: “a) educational institutions including: pre-schools, primary schools, high schools, and universities; b) academia; c) student and youth clubs; d) parents of students; e) the general public; f) government officials and ministers; g) media and journalists; h) legal professionals and administrators; i) publishing companies.” Each of these target groups will have their own particular needs and goals.

The action plan also states: “Research is critical to development of appropriate education. This includes a needs assessment as well as an analysis of the impact that values education has on learners’ psychology during moral development. A contextual analysis is especially necessary in order to recognize distinct and varied needs. Continued research is needed into appropriate assessment methods for a philosophy curriculum, student learning and behavioural outcomes, and teaching practices. Ongoing research and assessment of curriculum and continuing modification. Conducting research to find the optimum methods and materials for teaching philosophy. Stimulating comparative research on the above mentioned topics for the purposes of deeper understanding, increased dialogue, and sharing of research.” In the past many institutions will have just made a list of goals, and hoped they were achieved. In modern education systems influenced by scientific analysis, research is a norm. The sharing of the results of research between different institutions is very important to consider, and that is also the purpose of this conference and publication.

As the action plan said: “evaluation methods for the effectiveness of philosophy education need to be developed urgently in many dimensions such as: knowledge, understanding, wisdom, developing capacities, skills, personal values, disposition and character building.” The design of evaluation instruments needs to be done considering the types of goals. Unless we have measurable and specific goals, we cannot evaluate them (Macer, 2008).

Curriculum development was considered in all regional action plans. The Asia-Pacific Action Plan simply states: “Philosophy curricula based on research needs to be developed, adapted to local needs and integrated across all levels of education. Cooperation between different academic disciplines to encourage thinking and development of a transdisciplinary curriculum that achieves the above aims.” These goals to have experts in different fields working together to devise new curriculum is quite important

In the “Recommendations to Member States”, the action plan states that they should “Adhere formally to the importance and relevance of philosophy teaching as a discipline having its own methods and diversely articulated contents to develop a quality education system.” Also each state was suggested to elaborate their own National Action Plan on Philosophy teaching at all levels of education. “This would allow for international comparisons and knowledge sharing, with the intent to encourage interested countries to promote comparative research, share perspectives and projects. Promote an interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophy and other disciplines, since the philosophical inquiry and analysis allow students to become better thinkers while shedding light on the modalities of knowledge acquisition.”

In order to achieve these goals, there are also a set of “Recommendations to UNESCO”, which are listed in full below:

- *Continue its promotion initiatives and advocacy action in favour of the teaching of philosophy at all levels of formal and informal education.*
- *Strengthen its initiatives aimed at creating links and establishing networks between philosophers, teachers and students of different regions of the world.*
- *Continue and reinforce its actions in favour of a philosophical reflection that is open and accessible to the general public, notably through the celebration of the World Philosophy Day.*
- *Continue to act as a clearing-house for exchanging the best practices in the field of philosophy teaching, through events at the national, regional and global level.*
- *Provide special support to countries willing to set up regional exchange programmes between universities and training institutes, in order to build the capacities of philosophy teachers.*

- Create dynamics of exchange and interaction between regional networks, national and regional associations of philosophy, experts, UNESCO Chairs of Philosophy, etc. in different regions, so as to encourage the establishment of exchange programmes for students and philosophy teachers.
- Elaborate anthology and commentaries of Asian and Pacific philosophical texts deemed important by the countries' community of philosophers, so as to facilitate the development of school books and manuals for both students and philosophy teachers. Networks such as the Asia-Pacific Philosophy Education Network for Democracy (APPEND) can be a privileged partner in this task.
- Work in partnership with other organizations, such as the South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) in order to study the possibility and the relevance of introducing philosophy in the curricula of the different educational levels in the countries of the region. Have a focal point in such organizations in charge of initiatives related to philosophy teaching in the region.
- Foster translation and dissemination of philosophical texts.
- Encourage countries to develop national strategies aiming at enhancing philosophy teaching at all levels.
- Provide special support to countries willing to engage in the process of national policy formulation on philosophy teaching at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- Provide assistance, as much as possible, for the implementation of national policies in favour of the introduction of philosophy in curricula. Foster the sharing of experiences between countries which are at different stages in the process of policy-formulation, notably through expert meetings.
- Make expertise available to all countries on practices, pedagogy and material development for philosophy teaching. Make expertise available to interested countries on the practice of learning to philosophize. Help elaborate, produce and make use of educational materials, including resources already available in the country, or translation initiatives.
- Support the gathering of pilot experiences and case studies in the field of philosophy teaching, particularly concerning the learning to philosophize in primary schools.
- Work together with teachers, philosophers, institutions and member states to continue the ongoing work to elaborate the summary documents on goals of philosophy education in each state.
- Work together with teachers, philosophers, institutions and Member States to collect philosophical texts that are specific to the countries of Asia and the Pacific region, in order to value and exploit philosophical texts that belong to the country's intellectual heritage.
- Help member states access anthologies of materials and philosophical texts from all regions and traditions of the world. Further expand an anthology of philosophical texts from across the region that are deemed important by the countries' community of philosophers, so as to facilitate the development of school books and manuals for both students and philosophy teachers. Networks such as the Asia-Pacific Philosophy Education Network for Democracy (APPEND) can be a privileged partner in this task.
- Foster multilingualism in philosophy teaching.
- Encourage philosophy departments in universities to address contemporary stakes and challenges in the region.
- Holding a regional and an inter-regional meeting on the teaching of philosophy at all education levels, as well as a follow-up.
- Support the exchange, dissemination and circulation of knowledge and practices relative to the learning to philosophize in primary schools, at intra-regional and international levels.
- Develop and support exchange systems between universities in the region so as to foster and disseminate best practices in terms of philosophy programmes and pedagogical training.
- Carry on the Inter-regional Philosophical Dialogues.



Coming to the specific goals linked to the culture of peace, there are many dispositions that are linked to this, in fact all but the last one are linked to the culture of peace:

*Development of a disposition to:*

- *Use knowledge and skills for good.*
- *Increasing respect for all forms of life.*
- *Take into account the interests of others and the environment in the spirit of solidarity.*
- *Have empathy and compassion.*
- *Be tolerant, inclusive, and reasonable.*
- *Understand better the diversity of views of different persons (listen to others).*
- *Respect different points of view, people and culture, and their values.*
- *Reflect upon values.*
- *Consider alternative possibilities and world-views.*

The synergy between the goals of teaching philosophy and culture of peace is surprising in hindsight given that the high-level meeting did not feature the theme of peace directly at all. It seems that the education specialists and philosophers assembled, saw philosophy as critical for peaceful existence within and between communities. This is not because people in each country are taught their own ideas alone, but rather because they are taught questions and answers to common issues that the human mind may ponder. If we have tolerance of different ways to arrive at answers inside each community, we will also have tolerance to find the different answers between each community, and nation.

In conclusion, we can see a growing cooperation in the international community at high level for the elaboration of specific curriculum to teach rather similar goals of philosophy. There is a call for dialogues between countries and experts in different regions of the world to ensure knowledge sharing. The adoption of goals-based approaches has transformed educational systems into more democratic ones. The information age is also reinforcing this. A broader globalization of these goals of teaching to assist in the development of mature citizens is important. This has accompanied the increasing debates over the use of technology and decision making.

UNESCO has played a key role in the promotion of democratic values and principles, and on the debates to ensure that cultural diversity is protected. Its constitution upholds the democratic ideals of justice, liberty, equality and solidarity, and considers these principles as fundamental factors in the building of peace. Development of the tools to enhance personal, and community, decision-making has gone hand in hand with the recognition of human rights, and philosophy is indeed a school of freedom that is the foundation for a culture of peace. Perhaps that is the overarching goal of philosophy education.

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# Conceptual Maps of the Goals of Teaching Philosophy and Human Dignity

Arthur Wolf and Darryl Macer, UNESCO Bangkok

## Introduction

The setting of goals in education is ubiquitous and there are specific goals associated with the teaching of any subject, including philosophy.<sup>92</sup> Goals are specific sets of learner outcomes the curriculum aims to work towards over a period of time. These educational goals can be on the behavioural, thinking, and/or social level. Goals can be combined with a particular vision of any Ministry of Education (MOE) but are usually especially applicable to the various levels of education. The more specific the level, the more specific the goals.

Goals often represent the view of how the leaders of a country would like to imagine their future citizens. It can be used for preparing a new generation to deal with the demands of society, to infuse in them a mode of thinking about themselves, society and its people, and also to give them basic skills and knowledge like those of mathematics or geography. But how about more complex goals like, for example, the development of critical thinking, caring, creative thinking and cooperative thinking? These are philosophy related goals that are essential to quality thinking in education.<sup>93</sup>

One of the first to formulate such ideas in education and whose educational thought is still with us in its fundamental outlook and method was John Locke. In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*<sup>94</sup> he distinguished between, first, aptitudes, capacities and idiosyncrasies (tailored to the individual), second, health of the body and sound character ahead of intellectual learning, and third, use of children's natural good spirit, game-play and sense of humour. The subjects in school he emphasized were geography, arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, history, ethics and civil law. But besides these "standard" subjects he also encouraged the learning of a manual trade, some accounting and, in moderation, dancing and music. A final recommendation by Locke was to travel. These ideas are still of value today.

The importance of philosophy in education was emphasized by the publication of *Philosophy: A School for Freedom* by UNESCO in 2007, which gave an overview of the state of philosophy teaching in the world. It cites many particular cases, organisations, institutes and schools. It was followed by a series of high-level regional meetings on the teaching of philosophy, among them the high-level regional meeting on the teaching of philosophy in Asia and the Pacific. The outcome of the Asia-Pacific meeting was the regional Action Plan for the Promotion of Philosophy Teaching in Asia and the Pacific (APPPTAP).<sup>95</sup> The APPPTAP mentions specific goals of the teaching of philosophy, which we used as a framework for analysing to what extent these goals have been implemented at the national level in primary and secondary educational curricula in member countries of the region.

## The Conceptual Maps and the Country Reports

The conceptual maps are based on the draft country summary reports on the teaching of philosophy. These reports provide a first overview of the extent to which philosophy-related goals are present in the curriculum. The structure of the reports is based on a top-down method, meaning that the highest level of goal-setting, in this case the MOE, is mentioned first. This allows for establishing a connection between goal-setting at the highest level and ultimately its implementation at the local level, the classroom.

92 Macer, D.R.J. 2011. *Goals of Education of Philosophy and the Culture of Peace*. In this volume.

93 Lipman, M., 2003. *Thinking in Education*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.

94 First published in 1693.

95 <http://www.unescobbk.org/rushsap/philosophical-reflection-and-the/philosophyteaching/>

**Table 4: Goals in the APPPTAP\***

Understanding and the Search for Wisdom	Capacities	Dispositions
A.1 Trans-disciplinary knowledge	B.1 Quality thinking and reflective processes	C.1 Use knowledge and skills for good
A.2 Clarification of concepts	B.2 Wise judgment and decision-making skills	C.2 Increasing respect for all forms of life
A.3 Integrate knowledge, principles, and argumentation in rational discussion	B.3 Formulating appropriate questions	C.3 Take into account the interests of others and the environment in the spirit of solidarity
A.4 Understanding the power of questions	B.4 Creative thinking	C.4 Have empathy and compassion
A.5 Broadening intellectual horizons	B.5 Foresight	C.5 Be tolerant, inclusive and reasonable
A.6 Knowledge of cultural values in different communities	B.6 Reasoned choice	C.6 Understand better the diversity of views of different persons (listen to others)
A.7 Search for meaning	B.7 Interpretation, construction and communication of knowledge	C.7 Respect different points of view, people and culture, and their values
A.8 Living a better life	B.8 Respect for reasons and evidence	C.8 Reflect upon values
	B.9 Better understanding of reality	C.9 Consider alternative possibilities and world views
	B.10 Physical labour	C.10 Build and improve other virtues
	B.11 Values clarification	C.11 Love of country
	B.12 leadership	C.12 Labour
	B.13 National language	C.13 Personal identity
	B.14 Self-sufficiency	C.14 Eagerness for physical labour
	B.15 Skills	C.15 Respect law and Human Rights

Note: \* In the APPPTAP goals B10-B15 and C11-C15 were not included. These were added in the conceptual maps afterwards because they came up regularly among the national goals.

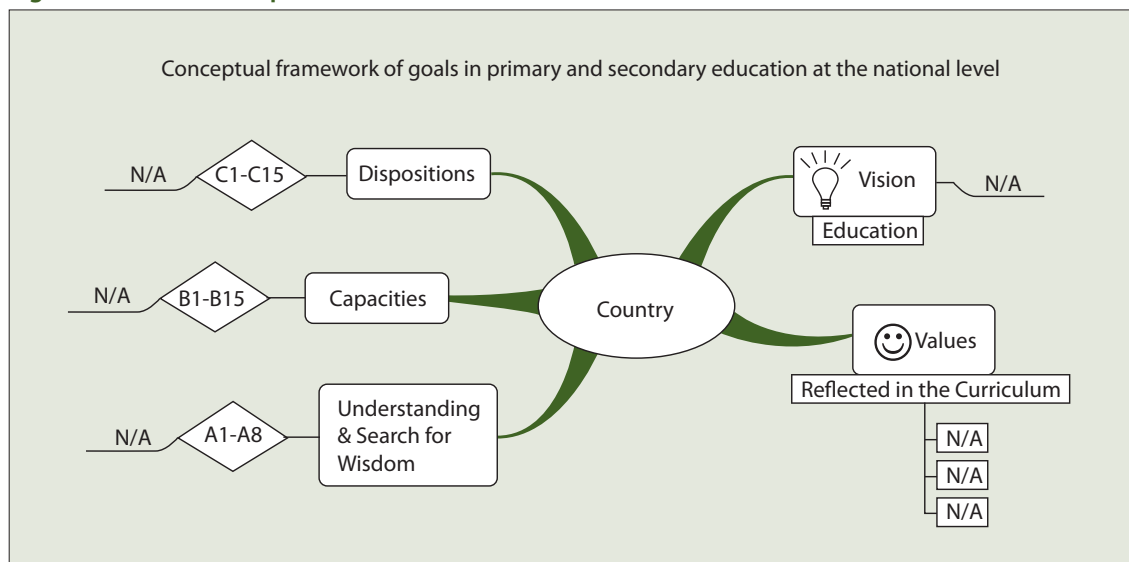
Philosophy-related goals at the national level are divided into primary and secondary education. They also include a section on assessment and case studies on courses called “philosophy” and philosophy-related courses. The final part of the summary report includes a section on educational programmes that can provide potential teaching materials in philosophy.<sup>96</sup>

The master map scheme can be seen in Figure 1. On the left is the tripartite classification of outcomes according to the APPPTAP into dispositions, capacities, and understanding or the search for wisdom. On the right is the *vision* on education of the MOE and *values* reflected in the curriculum. Vision and values were often mentioned by the MOE and we therefore included them in the maps. The vision of the MOE sets out in broad lines what the government tries to achieve with education in society, i.e. what it wants for the next generation of school leavers. It can relate the influence of education on the individual to the larger structures of society or vice versa. It is an image of what the future could be like.

<sup>96</sup> These draft summaries are still being updated online on <http://www.unescobkk.org/rushsap/philosophical-reflection-and-the/philosophyteaching/>

Overall the 47 countries in Asia-Pacific region that were studied, under “Dispositions”, “use knowledge and skill for good” (C.1), “respect different points of view, people and culture and their values” (C.7) and “love of country” (C.11) were mentioned much more frequently than others. Examples for C.1 are “moral and ethical integrity” (Australia), “moral values” (Bangladesh), “solidarity” (Cambodia) or “desired moral values” (Malaysia). Examples for C.7 are “respect for human values” (Nepal), “respect” (New Zealand) and “culturally rooted but understanding and respecting differences”. Examples for C.11 are “appreciate the national constraints but see the opportunities” (Singapore), “appreciation of the contribution made by the different ethnic groups to the national culture” (Sri Lanka), and “sense of civilization and patriotism” (Tajikistan).

**Figure 2: Master Conceptual Framework of Goals in Education**

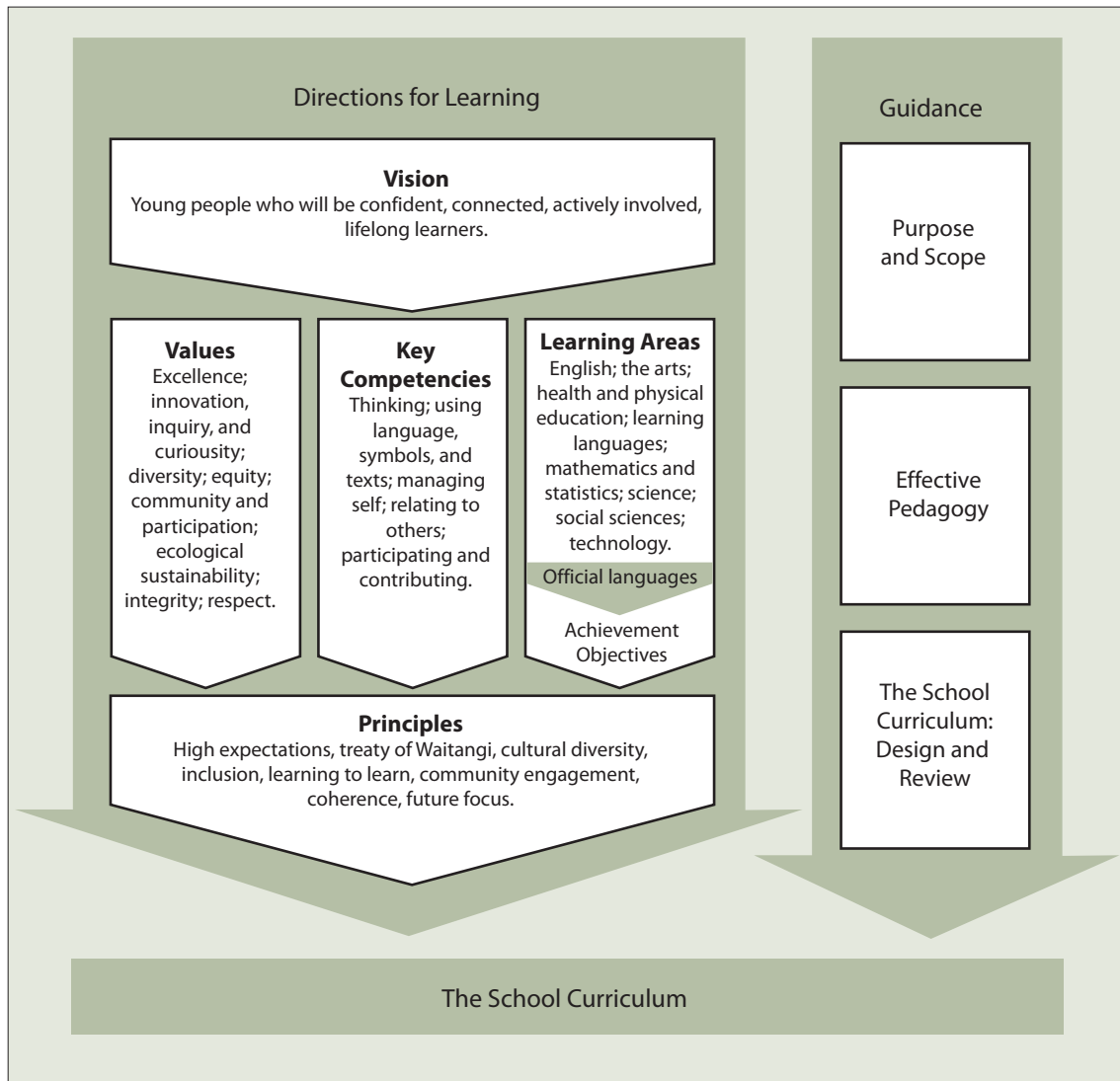


“Quality thinking and reflective processes” (B.1), “wise judgment and decision-making skills” (B.2) and “creative thinking” (B.4) were most frequent in national plans under “Capacities”. Examples of B.1 are “analytical skills” (Thailand), “raising the people’s intellectual level” (Viet Nam) and “thinking and excellence” (New Zealand). Examples of B.2 are “self-esteem and self-discipline” (Nepal), “social justice and equity” (Maldives), and “autonomy” (Lao PDR). Examples of B.4 are “creative abilities” (Kazakhstan), “creative and innovative” (Brunei Darussalam), and “creative innovative and resourceful” (Australia).

Under “Understanding and Search for Wisdom”, “trans-disciplinary knowledge” (A.1), “broadening intellectual horizons” (A.5) and “living a better life” (A.8) were seen most frequently. Examples of A.1 are “scientific outlook” (Bangladesh), “firm foundation of knowledge” (Fiji), “having basic knowledge and techniques” (Lao PDR), “develop skills in a holistic and integrated manner” (Malaysia), and “mastering literacy, numeracy, applying scientific, mathematical and technological understandings, and creating and working with design, agricultural, digital and engineering technologies” (Nauru). Examples of A.5 are “intellectual skills in diverse academic fields” (Republic of Korea), “spirit of continual improvement, lifelong learning and an enterprising spirit” (Singapore), and “spiritual development” (Sri Lanka). Examples of A.8 are “hygiene” (Thailand), “acknowledge the important role of parents in the child’s emotional, social and physical development, and realise his or her potential as a human being living a self-fulfilling life as a worthy member of Tongan society and of the wider world” (Tonga), and “able to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being” (Australia).<sup>97</sup>

97 For all the maps and report and further background information, please visit: [www.unescobkk.org/rushsap/...and-the/philosophyteaching/](http://www.unescobkk.org/rushsap/...and-the/philosophyteaching/)

**Figure 3: The New Zealand Curriculum**



Source: Adapted from <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum>

## Conceptual Mapping in Education

These conceptual maps provide a first overview. They show if the MOE is setting goals with a particular vision at all. This can be especially important in countries, which have scarce financial and intellectual resources. Setting out specific goals at the national level can then provide an educational direction. The APPPTAP needs to be promoted further in the future. We need to move away from a knowledge-based curriculum and instead move towards a curriculum that is based on key concepts and criteria. One such example from the Asia Pacific region might be New Zealand.

The New Zealand curriculum as set out by the MOE distinguishes between “directions for learning” and “guidance”. These are both trans-curricular and therefore not specific to one subject. The directions for learning include a vision for young people in three subsets, which are values, key competencies and achievement objectives for the different learning areas, and a set of principles upon which the curriculum has been developed. The guidance part consists of the purpose and scope for the curriculum, effective pedagogy and the design and review of the school curriculum.

In this case the main key competencies have been mapped as the goals of education. They are applied across the curriculum and each of them consists of a set of more specific competencies depending on the course and the level at which it is taught.

Comparing concepts across nations is complex. Although the same concepts might be included at the national level, its interpretation will depend on the local meaning. Concepts are, after all, constituents of thought.<sup>98</sup> By continuing to promote the APPPTAP we can infuse curricula with universal concepts that educate students to become citizens who contribute to the development of healthy sustainable democracies and the well being of humankind.

## Final Review

This research attempts to link conceptual mapping of the content of national goals of teaching philosophy in different countries with the recommendations of high level officials on the goals of teaching philosophy as stated in the APPPTAP that were agreed upon during the High-level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Asia and the Pacific held in May 2009. We have constructed a conceptual framework for goals in primary and secondary education based on the three main goals and sub-sets of philosophy education according to the APPPTAP. The goals are “Understanding and Search for Wisdom”, “Development of Capacities” and “Development of Dispositions”. Apart from these three sets of goals we have added the “vision” of the relevant country’s MOE and the set of values upon which the curriculum is based.

The conceptual maps of goals in primary and secondary education at the national level provide an overview of the extent to which educational systems in Asia and the Pacific comply with the goals agreed upon in the APPPTAP and show which concepts are emphasized and which are not. The conceptual maps complement the country summary reports on the teaching of philosophy in Asia and the Pacific, which also include philosophy related courses and materials used. Combining these sheds light on the connection between concepts at the national level and their implementation in the classroom. They provide opportunities for analysing inferential practices in education and how they conform to the concepts emphasized in the relevant educational system. Finally, they shed light on the understanding of concepts in different cultures. This will help to better understand the local meaning and to use these particulars to look for common ground in how we perceive the meaning of key concepts.

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98 For more information, see: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/concepts>

# The Creation of Public Reason

*Zosimo Lee, Philippines*

John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice*<sup>99</sup> tackles the problem of how it may be possible to arrive at a common understanding of a societal perspective such that, having been able to arrive at such a perspective, citizens can make the same judgment on the social situation and thus help reform institutions to conform to that judgment. But the awareness that would be necessary for citizens to attain to that kind of understanding and perspective is so difficult to achieve, one would have to describe in considerable detail what might be the processes that could contribute to such an understanding and perspective.

There are several presuppositions in Rawls' theory. First, he assumes that citizens agree that society is a cooperative enterprise, that we are in society so that we are better able to respond to our needs, because no one person can fully satisfy his/her own individual needs. We need others not only to survive but also to develop ourselves emotionally and socially. Cooperation here means recognizing that individual projects cannot be fulfilled and reach success unless and until there are others who also contribute their share towards making my (individual) project viable. Cooperation is important because one has to recognize the social nature even of what are considered individual undertakings.

Second, Rawls also assumes that there will be comprehensive doctrines that individuals in their exercise of their moral powers will adhere to. These comprehensive doctrines define what, for the individual are worthy of pursuing - the pursuit of which defines what a meaningful life will be for that individual. Provided further that each one is entitled to an equal set of basic liberties such that in a society of free and equal persons there will be incompatible and even competing comprehensive doctrines. One problem that will arise is, in the presence of these competing and incommensurable comprehensive doctrines, is it possible to have consensus on fundamental principles governing just institutions in society. While holding on to my comprehensive doctrine, and believing that it is indeed true and right, am I just the same admonished or instigated to agree to an overlapping consensus that will allow reasonable pluralism to prevail. Other comprehensive doctrines are allowed to flourish and yet all citizens will agree to a set of principles of justice to govern citizens' interactions with one another.

Third, Rawls assumes that it is possible for all citizens to agree on an index of primary goods such that regardless of one's comprehensive doctrine these primary goods are what all of us would accept as necessary for our pursuit of our individual comprehensive doctrines. The index of primary goods includes: basic rights and liberties, authority and power given to those in positions of responsibility such that, under conditions of fair equality of opportunity, those who are most qualified will be the ones who will be placed in positions of power and authority, wealth and income as means for the pursuit and fulfillment of individual and social goals provided that these are considered as means for autonomy and not dependency or servitude, the social bases for self-respect.

Rawls assumes that regardless of one's comprehensive doctrine, one would agree to this index of primary goods as having commensurable value for every one. Hence it will be possible to use objective indicators of these primary goods as a basis for citizens to make judgments on their social institutions. It is possible to use an objective criterion to measure to what extent basic rights and liberties are being respected, just as it might be possible to measure the human development that occurs within a particular society. For example, the Human Development Index (HDI) has been developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to measure in more than a hundred countries the extent to which governments have responded to imperatives of supporting human development initiatives. Hence it is possible to have agreed-upon objective criteria for measuring human development and for societies to have objective criteria for evaluating for themselves to what extent their societies have measured up to the agreed-upon criteria. The process of arriving at the criteria themselves is already a process of construction.

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99 Rawls, J. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Belknap, Harvard University Press.

The possibility of having objective criteria for measuring human development across societies, and within particular societies, is an instance when it could be said that there has been public reason. "Public reason" means, on one hand, that there has been agreement, across comprehensive doctrines, on what can be considered objective measures, that are reasonable because they can be communicated to others, and they are comprehensible to others, and can then also become the bases for common judgment and appraisal.

Public reason also means that by being communicable and reasonable these ideas and appraisals can gain currency and adherents beyond particular comprehensive doctrines. Muslims and Christians, for example, can both agree that there is this much percentage of poor people within a particular society and also both agree on the social judgment that the roots or causes of this much poverty must be addressed, regardless of who are the poor. The possibility of having common understanding of the criteria, as well as the process of attaining to that perspective on which a majority of citizens can view what the over-all situation of the society is, is what public reason can aspire to. It is this attainment of the level of awareness of the criteria, as well as the possibility of a common judgment, that enables citizens to thus view where their society is, or the level of development of their social institutions, and arrive at a consensus.

Public reason thus presupposes the possibility of agreeing on criteria that will be recognized by all, that are communicable and understandable to all, and hence provides the cognitive ramparts for judgment on social situations and facts. Regardless of one's comprehensive doctrine, even when there are competing and incommensurable comprehensive doctrines, public reason presupposes the possibility of individuals "getting out" of their comprehensive doctrines and viewing situations from outside their own comprehensive doctrines. For example, while Catholics will recognize what apostasy within their religion means, the most that they can fear is excommunication, not the death penalty (even if some will say that social death is worse than physical death). Similarly, when the institutional church will only levy such (meager) punishment on erring priests, who commit physical and sexual abuse on children and minors, civil society will require further restitution for the victims, outside of what the religious institution will impose. And the priests, as citizens, will have to submit to civil, not just canon, law.

In other words, outside of the comprehensive doctrine that someone adheres to, there are social criteria by which errors or infractions will be judged, separate from and independent of, the institutional arrangements of comprehensive doctrines. Why will these social criteria hold sway even for those who believe that their comprehensive doctrines are true and right? We are faced with at least two perspectives that take one's comprehensive doctrine as still only possible within a larger arena that give respect and legitimacy to all reasonable and rational comprehensive doctrines. An initial answer is that the social criteria are what allow for the possibility of the comprehensive doctrines in the first place. Without the possibility of allowing for and respecting all comprehensive doctrines provided these are rational and reasonable, no comprehensive doctrine seeking dominance or supremacy will be stable. It will always be challenged.

When there are social criteria that are recognized that cut across comprehensive doctrines, the experience of being able to communicate and agree across comprehensive doctrines is thus made possible. Dialogue and continuous constructive engagement are crucial experiences, not only for peace building but also for social construction. The experience of Muslims and Christians in Mindanao, for example, experiencing what it means for each to respect the other's beliefs, and even come to an appreciation of one's religion better because of the interaction with the other, makes for realizations that while one is fully convinced about the correctness of one's beliefs, it is also possible to recognize the right of others to have their own convictions. It is in the possibility of agreeing to objective criteria that public reason is enhanced.

Public reason presupposes the possibility of arriving at conclusions through evidence, inference and judgment. Are there social facts supported by evidence that will then be the grounds for common judgment? When statistics for example demonstrate that, in the case of Philippines, the number of families (composed of five members) surviving on USD \$60 a month has gone up, reflective citizens will ask, why? When social arrangements are questioned because they violate the sense of justice that individuals have, it should not be too long before citizens question the legitimacy of social institutions that engender these kinds of injustices.



But the important thing is that there is common understanding of the same objective criteria, and then the common judgment that is made based on the common criteria. Based on evidence, inference and judgment, it is possible for citizens to arrive at a common perspective, and by having been able to arrive at that common perspective, the bases for the inference and judgment become constitutive also of public reason. And the citizens understand further the social bonds that exist among them.

In Philippine history, the Revolution of 1896, when Filipinos rose up against the Spaniards who had colonized the country since 1578, stands out as an instance when Filipinos conceived of themselves as belonging to a nation. And by having realized that they were a political body separate from the Spanish colonizers, they were able to first defeat the Spaniards before the Americans took over, and then to fight the Filipino-American war, in what some call the “first Viet Nam”.

What enabled the Filipinos to rise up and unite as a nation was the awareness that they could better respond to their needs as a people by overthrowing the Spaniards. But for that realization to have galvanized a people enough to want to fight off the colonizers needed a long process of politicalization. But it was fundamentally a process that involved becoming aware of the criteria to make a judgment, and for the judgment to be made by a sufficient number of people so that they would then act to fight off the oppressors.

What was important and significant in Philippine history was that the nucleus of the social movement that initiated the Philippine revolution was an organization of patriots that also saw itself as being moral and true to indigenous concepts of the Filipino worldview that saw goodness and uprightness as essential virtues, and that society was understood to be a “caring and benevolent” arrangement that saw the protection of the weak, for example, as a crucial component. Hence the criteria that were evoked seemed to strike at a deep chord, which would then motivate them to engage in the social and political revolution. Similar political and social movements existed in other colonized countries that eventually shook off their colonizers.

Due to the awareness of the deep criteria that existed in Filipino society, it was possible to galvanize citizens’ sentiments, judgment and resolve, to participate in a social upheaval that would henceforth change the course of historical events. That collective decision and action was a product of judgment, and could be said to be a demonstration of public reason, as the citizens understood it. Another Filipino hero who saw government as necessarily moral, and could only govern with authority if it was moral, later on articulated the political and constitutional ideas of the Philippine Revolution. “Moral” was understood in the sense of being upright and just, and for the welfare of all citizens.

There will always be fundamental disagreements between those in government and society, who see State authority as being fundamentally for the welfare of the whole of society, and those who would seek either to favor a particular class over another, or more specifically who would seek State power to pursue social agenda other than what would be beneficial for all. Of course it is always a contested issue what “beneficial for all” will mean. But there are certain essential requirements of governance that, if they are not fulfilled, or even acknowledged, will always lead to instability. One is the perspective that government should take the welfare of the people as its essential mandate. A different perspective that might cover the same intention is the perspective that takes the welfare of the nation as paramount; the perspective that the nation taken as a whole should benefit from social decisions.

What are the sources for discernment as to how the nation is to be understood? And what will the good for the nation consist of? The concept of a society that is caring and looks at the welfare of the whole is not new. Each one is considered as having a significant contribution to make towards the development not only of him but also of others, as well as the whole of society. This was not only the dream of the 1896 Philippine Revolution. In contemporary political philosophy we are going back to the notion of a cooperative society, wherein each individual is entitled to a meaningful existence and that it is not necessarily a contradiction to have productive individuals and a cooperative society that nurtures the flourishing of its members as a primary goal.

Here it is essential that basic rights and liberties are recognized and respected so that what are considered moral powers are nurtured and exercised. When these moral powers are developed the welfare of the whole society is also developed. We are all connected and we need each other in the

process of building our national communities. We conceive of and create our nations through the care, concern and goodwill we extend to our fellow citizens.

What then will be our criteria that we can agree to so that we can decide what will be acceptable as reasonable and just in making judgments about the state of our nations?

First of all, the criteria need not be only objective and measurable. Even when the indices for example of human development or the degree of fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals are not satisfied, there may not be indignation or a sense of injustice that can prod citizens to action. In the case of the Philippine Revolution again, the work of the propagandists in arousing the people's sense of indignation and injustice was crucial so that the citizens would come to a point that they would judge: "This has got to stop, this is already too much, change must come." It is the moral appraisal rooted from a conception of what is right and just that can trigger citizens' action.

In the case of Philippines, aside from the objective criteria that can be used to make the judgment whether society fulfills its function in giving satisfactory responses to the needs of its citizens, the judgment can also be based on an implicit social understanding that it is imperative that society provide a measure of wellness and sense of freedom to its citizens. It is not just being able to provide the basic necessities (when that is difficult enough to attain, but even more than that, and even the poor will be willing to remain impoverished for it), but also a sense of being able to pursue the kind of meaningful existence that each would like to carve out for herself.

As a consequence of this, the individual will tend to associate with others who either share similar elements and components of that project, or can provide the support environment that will enable individuals to pursue their individual goals, and by so doing create support communities and structures, at the same time providing similar conditions for all.

Plato in the Republic says that justice points to the design of the whole society. John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* focuses on the basic structure of society as the object of the principles of justice.

What does it mean when the basic structure of society is guided by principles of justice? First, the society under principles of justice is a society that is well-ordered. This is a good that is achieved when the citizens know, understand and accept the reasonable and just demands of the principles of justice. The whole of society guided by the principles of justice is a good society. It is not therefore just the separate institutions that function well but how all the institutions in a society fit together, in the basic structure, such that the whole of design of society conforms to principles of justice.

Citizens, guaranteed in the exercise of their basic rights and liberties, are able to exercise their moral powers and pursue their comprehensive doctrines regarding what meaningful existence is for them. Even with competing and incommensurable comprehensive doctrines, citizens agree that there are necessary conditions for them to be able to pursue their comprehensive doctrines. These conditions can be labeled as primary goods, and which can be the ground for a social contract regarding what the goals and purposes of a just society can be. Dialogue and cooperative action are imperative for society to fulfill its goals and purposes. They also provide the preconditions for peace and stability.

Citizens using objective criteria as well as their moral powers can attain a perspective from which they can judge whether their society is just and fair. And when their judgment is that social institutions are iniquitous and unfair, there can be collective action to reform these institutions. This judgment is an act of public reason.

A just and fair society is the product of rational and reasonable design, and it is achieved when citizens will have attained a perspective, using objective criteria as well as their moral powers, making judgments as to the justice of their institutions, linked with one another by the basic structure of society.



### *Samsul Ma-arif Mujiharto, Indonesia*

Reading Professor Lee's paper on "Creation of Public Reason"<sup>100</sup> I would like to link with *Pancasila*,<sup>101</sup> the religion-state relation debate and Rawlsian public reason in the Indonesian context. I will start by dealing with Indonesia's *Pancasila* as a common ground in very diverse religious backgrounds. I also emphasize the importance of seeing how religion and state took dialectical processes in Indonesia's early history. In this way, I will also produce the possibility of *Pancasila* as public reason and how religion, as a comprehensive doctrine, should play a role in the public arena, including its difficulties.

### **Pancasila as the Common Ground**

The long history of Indonesia has always been overwhelmed by ideological debates, especially the most striking one between the Islamic and nationalist groups during BPUPKI (The Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence) meetings to formulate Indonesia's state ideology. Fortunately, this debate achieved a "sweet ending" as appeared in the Jakarta Charter when all groups agreed and decided on erasing the seven words in the first principle of *Pancasila*, "... the obligation to carry out Islamic sharia for all adherents". Interestingly, an article that required Indonesian presidents to have a Muslim background was also erased. This decision is understandable as a great respect to equality within society with multi-religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Indonesia. This is then set as the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia as we see now.<sup>102</sup>

Long after that sweet ending, however, the debate reappeared during the Old Order (Orde Lama) and New Order (Orde Baru) Era along with its politically biased interpretation of *Pancasila*. In the Orde Lama, *Pancasila* was used as the compromise agreement for all ideologies.<sup>103</sup> *Pancasila* in this era was also used to "delegitimize" Islamic groups. For this purpose, Soekarno<sup>104</sup> declared that Islamic groups still strongly tried to impose Islam as the ideology of the state.<sup>105</sup>

During the New Order, Soeharto<sup>106</sup> argued that *Pancasila* was the only state ideology and used it as a tool to perpetuate his rule. He tried to monopolize the interpretation of *Pancasila* so that *Pancasila* had a homogenous, Manichean interpretation and belonged only to the ruling regime. People were forbidden from interpreting *Pancasila* and at the same time people including students were obliged to participate in the national program dubbed the "Guidelines for Understanding and Carrying out the Principles of Pancasila" (*Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*) as the only way to interpret *Pancasila*. All mass organizations as well as political parties had also been required to declare *Pancasila* as their only ideological basis. *Pancasila* was even used as a means to prevent individuals from speaking critically and advocating their own ideas; those who were different from and opposed to the government's interpretation were regarded as non-*Pancasilaists*.

100 Zosimo E. Lee. *Creation of Public Reason*. In this volume.

101 *Pancasila* is the official of philosophical foundation of Indonesian state, which is taken from two Sanskrit words; *panca* (five) and *sila* (principle). *Pancasila* means five principles including: 1) Belief in God, 2) Just and civilized humanity, 3) The unity of Indonesia, 4) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, and 5) Social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia.

102 Suwarno, P. J. 1993. *Pancasila Budaya Bangsa Indonesia*. Yogyakarta, Kanisius, p. 76-77.

103 Nasution, A. B. 1992. *The Aspiration for Constitutional Government in Indonesia: A Socio-Legal Study of the Indonesia Konstituante, 1956-1959*. Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, pp. 52-118..

104 The first president of the Republic of Indonesia.

105 Ramage, D. E. 1995. *The Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*. London, Routledge, p. 29.

106 The second president of the Republic of Indonesia.

In early Indonesia, we can see that *Pancasila* has functioned as a “meeting point”, “common ground”, “*kalimatun sawa*”<sup>107</sup>, which successfully bridged the variety of religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, especially when it comes to the decision to erase the seven words above. As a point of convergence, then there is no group that is considered as a coercive force in public discourse. If Islamic groups, for example, successfully forced their “reason”, *Pancasila* as set out in the Jakarta Charter must be very different from what we encounter today. The seven words are probably still put in the first principle.

Coming back to Rawls, their success to have a “meeting point” was because they recognized their own and respected other people’s “original positions”. It is the position where the status quo of each person involved in the negotiations or discussions about the rules disregards attributes of tribes, religions, and cultures. By this, all parties must set aside their interests for the sake of achieving the most acceptable agreement. Although some moralists criticize the “non-possibility” of this theory for its intention to clearly separate between “good” and “bad”, the most important point of Rawls’s original position is that the original position should be taken as a prerequisite in talks with others. It was the greatness of Muslim leaders that enabled the seven words to be erased as a matter of fact of an unavoidable plurality of Indonesia. It also means that political tradition must be based on the necessity that each person is always in a position of “free and equal”<sup>108</sup>.

## Religion in the Public Arena

It is clear that religion has the potential not only as a source of social cohesion but also social conflict. This raises a question of how religion should be positioned, especially when religion is in public arena. The following question is then whether or not *Pancasila* can bridge the debate between the religious and nationalist groups, and how does it matter to *Pancasila*.

Although religion cannot enter all public discourses, Rawls does not negate the important role of religion in public discourse because his focus is not on testing or attacking any comprehensive doctrine.<sup>109</sup> Rawls basically emphasizes that rationality is absolutely necessary in a democratic society. Consequently, public reason needs substantiation for the sake of the finest extract rather than formalization so that religion should be formulated in its most substantive form. This is necessarily required for what Sweetman called the equality of idea transaction where people must accept a secular worldview as equal as they accept a religious worldview.<sup>110</sup>

The key point for this acceptance is true pluralism when a person or a community can come out from the communal identity to recognize and follow the rational truth due to cross-tested subjects by the community. This rational justification is considered the only way for pursuing common ground acceptable for all parties. Rawls really appreciates that one of the obligations of Christians is acknowledging the ethics of Jesus, but that is not clear to him why the “recognition of the ethics of Jesus” should be implemented in the very narrow and sectarian way.

Public reason, once again, is not concerned with determining the “good or bad” of a public decision, but it is more settled on the case of how a model of reason can answer the question. Muslims, for example, must rank Islamic values before the values presented in public discourse. Therefore, using Rawls’ words, it is unclear why Muslim politicians prefer using a narrow and sectarian interpretation

107 Same language.

108 Grcic, J. 1999. Rawls and the Equal Worth of Liberty: The Right to Political Leave. *The Journal for Peace and Justice Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 18-19.

109 Rawls, J. 2001. The Idea of Public Reason Revisited, Samuel Freeman (ed.) *John Rawls Collected Papers*. Cambridge, University Press, p. 575.

110 Sweetman, B. 2006. *Why Politics Needs Religion: The Place of Religious Arguments in the Public Square*. Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, p. 141.

of Islam. This also invited Abdurrahman Wahid<sup>111</sup> to raise criticism that Muslims are "lazy" to translate the messages of Islam into "human language". Not very relevant, he added, contrasting *Pancasila* with religion because religion cannot be sabotaged by *Pancasila*. In this sense, *Pancasila* then becomes the "traffic cop" of religious life. Rawlsian public reason is not to ignore any claims of religious groups that religion has a set of reasons that could be the basis of argument. He does not also dismiss the influence of comprehensive doctrine on individuals' ideas. But the point is that we are in a plural society where each person can use only their religious reason. To avoid the "crash of reasons", we need a "bridge". My questions are then: 1) How far a reason is public?, and 2) How do we keep public reason clean from any "non-public reason"?

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111 The fourth president of the Republic of Indonesia. He has also served for the Head of Nahdlatul 'Ulama', Indonesia's largest Muslim-based organization.

# Nurturing the Culture of Peace

*Issa Abyad and Alexander Abyad, Jordan*

## Construction of Peace

*“That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed;*

- That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;*
- That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;*
- That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;*
- That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.”<sup>112</sup>*

In a recent address<sup>113</sup> Mrs. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO reminded her audience of the words of UNESCO’s constitution, penned in the aftermath of that “great and terrible war”. In the sixty-five years since they were first written they have lost none of their original potency (and poignancy), indeed one might go further and state that their power has increased with the passing of time. The above clauses contain the core conditions, which must be met by any attempts to promote a Culture of Peace.

Firstly, a meaningful and lasting peace can be constructed only “in the minds of men”, which is to say, a change in people’s thought patterns and values that leads to a change in their actions is required for a true peace and that the direct implementation of external actions (political/economic arrangements, laws, ruling etc.) without these corresponding internal (ideological/philosophical/mental) changes, we cannot hope to create a stable and lasting peace. Laws are not sufficient, as quoted: “The best that can be said for ritualistic legalism is that it improves conduct. It does little, however to alter character and nothing of itself to modify consciousness.”<sup>114</sup>

Secondly, ignorance and its maleficent progeny are among the greatest opponents of peace and they can only be nullified through a process of education and understanding. Thirdly, a Culture of Peace cannot survive without a universal acceptance of the equality of all of humanity. In addition it should be stressed that equality here should not be taken to mean that humanity should be viewed as a homogeneity of finite values but rather that it be recognized as a heterogeneous system of abstract values of equal worth. To accept and celebrate the differences between different peoples, cultures and beliefs and, most critically, to recognize their equal validity within the framework of the human race is the key to eliminating prejudice and to establishing a state of “mutual respect among men”.

112 Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Available at [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=15244&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

113 Addressed by Mrs. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of LKY School Public Lecture on UNESCO’s role in the 21st century: Education, Science and Culture for sustainable development, peace and dialogue, Singapore 30 April 2010. Available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001877/187786e.pdf>

114 Huxley, A. 1945. *The Perennial Philosophy*. New York, Harper and Row Publishers.

Fourthly, and perhaps most critically the assertion that: "peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind."<sup>115</sup>

In light of these conditions this paper intends to outline the importance of nurturing future generations in order to promote the "Culture of Peace". We take note of Gandhi: "If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children." However, in order to do this and now that we have established what conditions are necessary to bring about the desired result we must give thought to the nature of the goal itself. We must first consider; 'what is meant by the term "peace" in today's society?'

## The Meaning of Peace

The meaning of peace has evolved as the human race itself has evolved; today human understanding of the concept of peace is evolving beyond the notion of the absence of war and towards rejection of violence in all of its types and levels. A clear indication of this is the significant increase in the number of internationally operating NGO's (estimated to be around 28,000), and civil societies dealing with peace and humanitarian initiatives in the last 40+ years, and the increase in the number of UN bodies, agencies and programmes. So if we accept peace to be a rejection of violence what then is violence?

According to Johan Galtung's definition of violence, violence can be:

- Direct (overt) violence: Direct attack, massacre, etc.
- Structural violence: Death by avoidable reasons such as malnutrition. Structural violence is indirect violence caused by an unjust structure and is not to be equated with an act of God.
- Cultural violence: Discrimination, prejudice, nationalism, etc.

So if we take peace to mean the absence of these things and make their eradication our goal we are then left with the question of how we should go about achieving this. Which particular sections of society should be our primary targets?

Do we target all societies equally or do we focus first on those societies that are more susceptible to violence? Do we focus on men, women, adults or children? Once we have selected an area of society to focus on how do we intend to attempt to spread the Culture of Peace? As previously stated this paper intends to outline that, while we should aim to spread the Culture of Peace to all areas of humanity, the youngest generations are the key if we want to promote the Culture of Peace. If these new generations can be nurtured into developing a set of values, attitudes and a way of life that rejects violence then it is our hope that these new generations will then be in a position to hold up alternative attitudes and behavior patterns to those held by so many of the older generations, which are currently maintaining the culture of patriarchy, bigotry, ignorance, violence, discrimination and separation.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal." The most critical factor in the effort to establish a universal Culture of Peace is that any such effort be founded upon the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind." This concept is entwined at the core of all the other conditions and without it none of them can truly be satisfied. Yet what exactly does it mean? Let us consider the key words in the sentence quoted above.

"Moral" could be defined as: "Concerned with principles of right and wrong or conforming to standards of behaviour and character based on those principles."<sup>116</sup> However, closer inspection reveals the wealth of complexity that can arise when different sets of moral principles conflict with one another. Here let us assume that the word in this context refers to a collection of principles/values that hold thoughts and actions that spread and foster peace as "right" and those which threaten or hamper it as "wrong".

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115 This condition together with the second shall be the main focus of this paper.

116 <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=moral>

“Solidarity” could be defined as: “A union of interests or purposes or sympathies among members of a group.”<sup>117</sup> In this case a union whose purpose is peace is united behind the same set of moral principles.

So, then, we may state that a Culture of Peace will only be achieved when humankind, the group to which we all belong, is united by a state of mind that values thoughts and actions that promote peace as “right” and “good” and deems their opposite abhorrent. But what is this state of mind and what are these moral values, behind which humankind can unite in its quest for peace? We shall return to these questions in a later section. For the time being let us focus on the idea of moral codes in general.

## The Quest for Moral Solidarity

Gandhi said: “Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being.” We all have a moral code of some description; it may be a structured personal code arrived at through reflection and introspection; an existing code we have chosen to follow; or a loose collection of moral beliefs we have accumulated over time. Whatever its nature, our moral code, to a greater or lesser extent relative to the weight we attach to “right” and “wrong” in our decision-making process, will have an affect on how we decide to act. So how then do we acquire these moral codes?

The four main sources from which an individual often gathers their moral information are: their parents, religious teachings, popular culture, and the educational system. While this process is one that continues throughout life it can be stated with some certainty that the foundation of any individual’s morality is laid down in childhood and if we wish to influence this process for the better it is here we must focus. Let us glance at each of these sources in turn.

For decades, parenting theory and practice have been discussed/debated/written about/examined and re-examined. Many consider parenting to be an art as well as a science. As a science, the concept is one of natural and logical consequences, developmental stages, punishments, rewards and family rules; as an art it incorporates the sharing of emotions and values. Parenting is enjoyable, yet it also serves as evidence of the will of the species to survive the most grueling of times. Parenting means feeding children, changing their diapers, getting them to bed, getting them up, giving them a bath, paying them an allowance, reading them stories, telling them what to do and what not to do, and worrying about them when they get old enough to begin to do things for themselves. In short parenting consists of preparing one’s offspring for adulthood and the challenges of the world. The values we acquire from our parents are perhaps the most strongly rooted in our psyche and yet these values will differ widely from one set of parents to the next.

Religion is the second way in which moral values are passed from generation to generation and can continue to affect a person’s moral orientation long after they have reached adulthood. However it needs to be recognized that the role of religion in society has undergone changes in recent times with the distinction between church and state widening vastly in many areas of the globe and a general weakening of the hold of religious moral codes on people and governments. Nonetheless these moral values are a part of the cultures that exist around them, whether a person is a believer, agnostic, or atheist they will at some point have come into contact with aspects of a moral code from at least one religion. Furthermore whether it is in the form of stories, parables from a religious cannon, or other more indirect methods, this exposure will help to construct a person’s sense of right and wrong.

There are many ways in which popular culture serves to propagate principles of right and wrong. Of these perhaps the most subtly affective are the stories of our childhood: these folktales, fairy stories and legends often include strong moral themes and messages sometimes with an explicit moral at the end as in Aesop’s Fables, and sometimes less directly. The stories we hear as children help to shape our idea of the world, so it is no surprise that they should affect our sense of right and wrong. The child psychologist and writer Bruno Bettelheim stated that children need “a moral education... [that teaches] not through abstract ethical concepts but through that which seems tangibly right and therefore meaningful.... The child finds this kind of meaning through fairy tales.”<sup>118</sup>

117 <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=solidarity>

118 Bettelheim, B. 1975. *The Uses of Enchantment*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., p.5.



Fairy tales or their equivalents are to be found in every culture and yet as the methods of story telling are changing with advances in technology and shifts in social norms, so too is the relationship between stories and morals changing as other factors become more desirable<sup>119</sup> than deeper moral meanings and messages. As one author put it, "The current trend in popular fairy tales toward moral ambivalence suggests that the foreseeable future looks disturbingly amoral."<sup>120</sup>

The final source we shall consider is the educational system. Schools and teachers set out to provide their pupils with the information and skills they need to survive in the world. One might think that aiding their students in developing a strong moral sense would be a priority and yet, as the following words illustrate, this is often not the case: "When teachers, both in training and in practice, were asked whether they thought values should be taught in schools, a convincing 95 percent of them said, unequivocally, 'yes' (Zern, 1997). Yet the systematic teaching of values in schools remains a relatively rare and a highly controversial matter. Many remain convinced that homes (and churches) should impart values – and that schools should teach subject matter."<sup>121</sup>

Much of the controversy surrounding the teaching of values in schools lies in the problem of which ones to teach. As we have suggested there are many moral principles in existence and, while many are compatible with one another, there are occasions where conflict arises. Yet this paper argues that it is in this method of spreading moral values that we should place our trust. If unified collection of moral values can be decided on and transmitted at this stage, then it will soon permeate the other methods of transmission as today's pupils grow up, take their place and have their effect in and on society, reproduce and pass their values on to their children.

## Education – Nurturing Morality

"Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear." - Mohandas Gandhi

The process of learning and education is one that has been studied and written about for thousands of years and from many different perspectives. Learning has been defined as: "all relatively permanent changes in potential for behaviour that result from experience but are not due to fatigue, maturation, drugs, injury, or disease."<sup>122</sup>

What this paper seeks to highlight is the importance of fostering a system of learning which leads to children developing a greater potential for peaceful behaviours and a lesser potential for violent ones. To quote Mrs. Bokova once more: "It is widely recognized that education is not just about getting a job. Rather, it should empower learners to become responsible and engaged citizens, capable and willing to shape more equitable and sustainable societies. Good education teaches values and stimulates critical thinking, problem-solving, team work and creativity."<sup>123</sup>

We have already taken some steps in this direction with the appearance of some peace-orientated courses and subjects at the higher education level, some educational bodies have even gone so far as to include compulsory ethics or philosophy courses as part of all their degree programs. If this pattern could be made more widespread, formal and informal higher education channels could be instrumental in promoting the Culture of Peace through tolerance, mutual understanding and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Pupils/students could learn about the world, society and themselves in a way with which they can strongly identify. The curriculum would have two sections, academic and social, combined in such a way as to deliver our aimed goals.

119 Or, perhaps more accurately, marketable.

120 Abler, A. 2008. *The Moral of the Story*. Available at <http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/article.aspx?id=153>

121 Lefrancois, G. R. 2000. *Psychology for Teaching*. (10th ed.) Belmont, CA, Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, p. 252.

122 *Ibid*, p. 117.

123 Mrs. Irina Bokova, *Ibid*.

However, while learning at this age level is important it has been proven that things learnt during childhood have a far greater impact on development. We need only consider the unconscious ease with which a child learns its language compared with the conscious study required for an adult or even teenager to acquire a second. Therefore it is the opinion of this paper that we need to seek to instill peaceful values in people from a much earlier age.

Most kindergartens teach children literary and numerical skills, but they do not teach these children social habits. What we need at this phase is to continue the work that should have been begun by the parents at home. We need kindergartens with a curriculum that develops social and moral sets of values, alongside the child's academic education. We can take as an example three types of private kindergartens which operate in many countries and that have a curriculum, which promotes a peace culture based on individual responsibility and common identity.

**Waldorf Steiner Schools:** The curriculum is based on a pedagogical philosophy that places emphasis on overall development of the child, including a child's spiritual, physical and moral well-being as well as academic progress. Learning is done in a very creative and artistic environment. Steiner education respects the essential nature of childhood and enables each pupil to develop the abilities and capacities needed for life.

**Montessori Schools:** Children learn through their own sense of curiosity and from each other as well as from the teacher. The teachers are there to stimulate a love of learning in students and do not use grades as a carrot and stick. The goal is to give the children just enough to capture their attention and spark their interest, thereby refraining from imposing any preconceptions or prejudgments on them. The assessment of children based on tasks and assignments not through normal competitive exams. Montessori promotes collaboration and a strong sense of independence and self-confidence. Children are encouraged to compete only against themselves and are always encouraged to try again if they "fail", without fear of embarrassment. Imagination plays a central role in classes as children explore other cultures and ancient civilizations, and search for creative solutions to real-life problems.

**Robert Muller World Core Curriculum Schools:** Students are encouraged to develop such qualities as cooperation and acceptance, which will prepare them to become conscious, responsible world citizens. The curriculum reflects the universality of life through the concept of The Four Harmonies:

1. Our Planetary Home and Place in the Universe;
2. Our Human Family;
3. Our Place in Time;
4. The Miracle of Individual Human Life.

Students are encouraged to investigate such questions as: Who am I? What relationships do I have with myself, my family, my community, my nation, other nations, and other humans, the Earth? How can I contribute to the world community? Does my work have aesthetic value and human significance? What is my relationship to Life itself?

Children attending the above-mentioned schools often come from the economically better-off parts of society. Their parents have taken the decision to offer them a more inclusive and enlightened education. If similar peace-oriented education were to be introduced within the mainstream education curriculum of any country, a critical mass of people could be educated into such value principles as those enshrined in the Culture of Peace.

## Discussion and Suggestions for Further Research

"You cannot have Liberty in this world without what you call Moral Virtue, and you cannot have Moral Virtue without the slavery of that half of the human race who hates what you call Moral Virtue." - William Blake.

So far this paper has evaded answering the question: "What exactly are these moral principles of peace that we wish to see instilled in the next generations?" It has done so with good reason. The reason

is simple: there is no easy answer to this question. Moralists, philosophers and religious writers have agonized over this subject; numerous codes have been produced, argued over and disputed. Conflicts and wars have arisen over disagreements as to who has the moral right time and time again. Conflicts made all the more bitter by the deep-seated nature of our moral ideologies. How then can we hope to spread moral principles if we cannot identify or agree on exactly what they are?

If a question suggests no correct answer it is often wise to look for fault in the question itself. The use of the word “principles” is perhaps at fault here, together with that of “exactly”. If we asked instead, “What kind of peaceful moral values do we wish to see instilled in the next generations?”, then it becomes much easier to answer. We seek values that promote equality, fairness, honesty, non-violence, fraternity and above all peace. So programs for those in higher education can deal with the specifics of moral principles but we must also give younger children a sense of right and wrong in keeping with our aims, not directly with a list of rules and thou shalt and shalt nots but rather indirectly by exposing them to stories with moral content that will guide them in formulating their own code.

The means to do this have been available for some time, not within the work of any one field of academia but rather scattered across the fields of philosophy, psychology, folklore, religion, ethics and anthropology. We need to look across these fields at the ways different moral values from all cultures are reinforced and transmitted, whether by stories, customs, games or activities, and select from among them those that fit with the ideals of a Culture of Peace and those which compliment each other. These assembled and worked into the educational curriculum will serve to help future generations learn the potential for peaceful behaviour. The diverse cultural sources of the material should also aid in promoting a sense of understanding between cultures.

## Obstacles/Challenges

The following obstacles would need to be overcome when implementing such a plan:

**Content:** As previously stated, a study would need to be conducted to gather the material to be included. This material would need to be carefully selected to maximize its affect and minimize any conflict with existing major moral structures.

**Implementation:** Different societies might need different approaches, although the main goals are the same, but variation on the approach might be required. For example, in some areas it may be possible to adapt existing curricula to the program; in others it might be more productive to commission books or television programs to spread the values; in others theatre groups or story tellers might be utilized.

**Skepticism:** There may be distrust and/or reluctance on the part of the target governments/educational bodies due to the bad image of UN among many nations in the developing world, which perceive it as a puppet of the superpower countries and may view any measure such as this as an attempt to force foreign cultures and values upon them.

## Suggestions

In order to succeed in our aim, the following points should be given some consideration. UNICEF, which has been dealing with children and their parents on an international level for more than sixty years, and has gained an excellent experience in dealing with local civil societies and government bodies all over the globe, is perhaps the most suitable organization for taking the lead role in implementing this plan. UNICEF enjoys a very good reputation and is a very well-respected organization. Of course cooperation with UNESCO, and local and international NGO's (Save the Children, Oxfam, Care International, etc) who also deal with social development issues and who have a presence in many third world countries would be very useful, even essential, because one organization can not hope to handle such a monumental task.

A global research project would help us in gaining better understanding of how people perceive peace/violence and right/wrong, how they frame it in their culture, etc. This will assist us in determining and identifying if different approaches are required in different societies.

## Conclusion

"To the peace that passes understanding, we have to go by the way of the humble and very ordinary peace which can be understood by everybody – peace between nations and within them."<sup>124</sup>

Humans have evolved from cave dwellers to tribal members to the highly developed individuals in the complex inter-connected societies of today. As the way in which our species' lives have changed it is only natural that we must change the way in which our species thinks, especially in regards to how we view one another. If we can aid the younger generations of today to grow into men and women who can extend their sense of identity beyond family, tribe, religion, nation and state to include identification with the human race itself, then can the foundation of the concept Culture of Peace be laid down.

We must keep reminding ourselves that we are humans first, remember that when it rains it rains on all of us, that when a natural disaster occurs it affects all of us, that colour, religion, nationality have no meaning. If we reach the point where we understand that we need to work together in order to achieve peace and prosperity then we are walking on the right path. If we arrive at a place where people act in a peaceful manner not because it is the law or policy but simply because it is right to do so then we will have reached our destination.

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124 Huxley, A. 1945. *op. cit.*

# Moral Education for Global Society

*Jinwhan Park, Eun-Jeong Kim and Gyunyul Park, Republic of Korea*

During the first ten years of the new millennium, rapid globalization has led to changes in all of life spheres. Moral education is not an exception. Democratic values have become the essential elements of moral education all over the world. A number of nations have reflected these changes in their moral education curriculum.

At this moment, we would like to examine why we need to invite philosophical inquiry to moral education instead of a psychological or sociological approach. So far in Korea, the main methodology of moral education has been a psychological one. Could this approach satisfy global democratic citizenship education? We think it is difficult. Why is it difficult? Because we might focus our attention on the wrong things. We are especially likely to concentrate on the moral aspects and ignore the education aspects. We are also likely to pay too much attention to moral action and not enough to moral judgment.

The action children consider taking is already heavily weighted with adult approval or disapproval, regardless of the circumstances in which the child considers acting. The capacity of the child to make an independent evaluation of the action, which might quite possibly involve a defiance of adult value-attitudes, is in most cases limited.

This factor of adult approval or disapproval makes some action initially attractive to children and others initially repulsive to children. On the other hand, children find themselves drawn to some acts they know adults disapprove of, and are repelled by others that adults are known to praise. Children find it difficult to resolve these conflicts, especially if, in moral matters, they are expected to "do as they are told".

The shift from the moral character of the process of moral education requires a shift of attention from the act itself to the reasons for or against the act. It is easier for children to judge the reasons than to judge the acts themselves, for the reasons are less encrusted with prior approval or disapproval. And since it is by means of reasons that acts are justified or not, such a shift is tactically correct. It puts in the spotlight what belongs in the spotlight, if what we are concerned about is truly the child's education, and not merely seeing to it that the child does in this instance what we would like him or her to do.

We must be prepared to understand, therefore, that when we talk about "moral judgment", we generally mean, or should mean, judgment of reasons. Rather than judgment of acts (just as when we talk about moral judgment), we mean judgment of reasons rather than judgment of causes. Suppose there is a parent-child conflict that is about what the child is to do. If the parent asks why the child insists on doing the prohibited thing, the child replies: "Because I want to." And if the child asks why the thing is prohibited, the adult replies: "Because I say so." This is obviously a situation that is going nowhere. It is a standoff. But this is not final: it should be construed as an invitation to negotiation, where such negotiation involves discussion of the problem and inquiry about the circumstances. The phrases "because I want to" and "because I say so" have to be unpacked so as to reveal further reasons: why I want to and why I say so. In the course of such inquiry, both child and parent may arrive at an understanding of whether what the child desires to do is in fact desirable and of whether what the adult orders the child to do is (1) justifiable in this instance and (2) contributes to the child's education and moral growth.

Since the approach outlined above involves both adults and children in an examination of the situations in which moral decisions have to be made, as well as exploration of the moral problems being confronted, it should be clear that what is called for is ethical inquiry rather than merely getting children to accept in an uncritical fashion certain rules or principles that adults themselves may not have examined critically, under circumstances that the children or adults may have failed to take fully into account. The spotlight in ethical inquiry must be on the strengthening of the judgment of reasons, rather than on the judgment of acts or the judgment of causes.

Furthermore, this does not mean that the child is excused from the learning of rules and principles, for this latter functions as criteria for acting, and the criteria represent one of the strongest families of reasons that there can be. If there are rules that are relevant and applicable to a morally problematic situation, they must be taken into account, but there may be other relevant matters that cannot be overlooked if a responsible moral judgment is to be made.

It is sometimes held that, if circumstances are taken into account, there will be a clear drift towards "ethical relativism". Now relativism occurs when any treatment of a problem can be justified. This is just what does not happen. Even if it seems a number of approaches or treatments are appropriate, when we consider circumstance, the really appropriate one perhaps stands alone. On the contrary, if circumstances are not taken into account and rules alone are considered, it turns out that any rule may be quite as good as any others. In other words, indicating to children that knee-jerk obedience to any rule is always the morally correct answer is a clear case of ethical relativism, or of a situation that will shortly lead to relativism. Both moral absolutism, where rules prevail regardless of circumstances, and moral relativism, where any proposed solution is taken to be as good as any other, regardless of circumstances, permit children the luxury of not having to think for themselves and of not having to make responsible ethical judgments. Both are to be rejected in favor of ethical inquiry.

At this point, two questions need to be dealt with. The first is: "What is the difference between the judgment of reason, the judgment of acts and the judgment of cause?" The second is: "How is the judgment of reasons to be taught?"

To ask whether or not a given act is good in itself, irrespective of any justifying reasons, is to ask for an aesthetic appraisal of the act. One examines the act purely on its own terms, seeing how well its parts are related to one another and to the whole. This is what one may do with a painting or a piece of music (although I doubt that one judges paintings solely by what one sees or music solely by what one hears: what one thinks or knows is bound to be relevant.) But to confound ethics and aesthetics is serious business, in ethical criticism, the facts one cites as reason for the performance or non-performance of an act are circumstances in the setting of the act rather than in the act itself.

Judgment of cause must be clearly distinguished from judgment of reasons, because cause carries no justifying or normative authority. When we ask someone for a reason for having done something, we do not want to be put off with a cause. If you ask, "Why did you fire Kim?", then it will not do for me to reply, "I had a bad case of indigestion," nor for me to reply, "I have glandular problems." You aren't looking for an explanation: what you want is a justification. If the judgment of acts errs on the side of aesthetics, the judgment of causal errs on the side of psychology.

When it comes to ethical inquiry, the judgment of reason is not in error. The heart of ethical education involves giving students practice in justifying judgments that are themselves neither judgments of explanation nor judgments of classification. If children are asked, "Are dolphins fish?", they need merely to familiarize themselves with the genetic characteristics of mammals and fish, identify the relevant characteristics of dolphins, and make a determination as to which category they belong to. By and large, such a judgment is not normative (although it may have normative elements).

But a philosophical question cannot be answered by recourse to classification, just as it cannot be answered by recourse to explanation. If someone asks, "Can a kind person perform a cruel act?" there is no way out but to engage in dialogical inquiry, in which the judgment one makes has to be backed up by reasons, and these reasons are then examined. Judgments as results themselves are subject to further appraisal. Students gradually learn that ethical inquiry is not to be taken lightly. Instantaneous judgments, like shooting from the hip, cannot both be quick and misguided.

Ethical inquiry is not reducible to art criticism, or to psychological explanation, or to scientific classification. It is properly a branch of philosophy, because only philosophy concentrates on essentially contestable issues and concepts, those lacking in finality because they lack any explicit decision procedure. For courses on ethical inquiry, stories can be employed. What is wonderful about stories, as opposed to expository texts, is that stories are not abstractions: they give us a concrete slice of life - or thought - that we are then encouraged to examine for its ethical implications. But this great virtue, concreteness, is also

what tells against literature in the long run. Its qualitative thickness defies analysis, and the complexity of the plot compels us to reject every succinct formulation as simplistic. Only philosophy enables us to begin with reflection - upon stories, upon experience - and to move in the direction of greater and greater understanding, all the while realizing that just around the corner is mystery, or the refutation of all that we thought we knew. Doing philosophy is not merely the learning history. When we introduce philosophy into the curriculum, we should not neglect this aspect.

In sum, it seems to me that whenever there is an opportunity for ethical inquiry (and I am ready to concede that there are many occasions which do not represent such opportunities whether it is a matter of parental upbringing or a matter of schooling), the adults can put aside their "it's useless to argue" attitude, and both can concentrate on creating a community of inquiry in which open-mindedness and readiness to listen, deliberate and reflect take precedence over the usual insistence upon adult prerogatives and young people's obedience. The skepticism that is usually voiced about this rejects children's questioning the wisdom of their betters, but in fact it is not an anarchic attempt to overthrow adult authority. It is simply recognition that many seemingly personal problems require democratic means of decision-making in which children and adults work together as co-participants in the inquiry process. The switch of the focus from the authority of adults to the authority of reasons teaches children and adults alike that reasonableness is not beyond their reach, and that one can begin to work towards it. In those situations, the need for action is not urgent and the readiness for deliberation is ripe for implementation.

At first, it may be necessary to rely on one's intuitions as to which reasons are good reasons, and it can come as a pleasant surprise to learn how, when the pressure of tradition, convention and authority are moved, children's abilities to distinguish better reasons from worse can be quite remarkable. Indeed as time goes on, they will become even more practiced in making such distinctions, and in understanding the grounds on which they rest.

They will be able to see, for example, that reasons in the form of assertions cannot be good reasons if such assertions are in fact false, or that reasons in the form of principles cannot be good reasons if such principles are in fact irrelevant. Furthermore, a reason may be largely relevant, yet not good, if it is less credible to us than the claim for which it has been asked to serve as a reason. Good reasons are strong in the sense that they make a stronger appeal to us than that which they are a reason for. Just as an appeals court must be higher than the court that produced the verdict that is being appealed, so should a reason always be considered as an appeal to an authority higher than that of the judgment being contested.

Ethics has always been an essential branch of philosophy, and it is important not to lose sight of this tradition when perplexed about the nature of moral education. Ethics as inquiry into ethical reasons is feasible in the school at every grade level, but it will succeed only if it is offered under the auspices of the discipline of philosophy. Those who despair at the lack of progress in the area of moral education should be prepared to take the following suggestions seriously.

Philosophy isn't just a systematic wonder: it is a wonder that doesn't know where to stop. Critical thinking, in contrast, has its origins in doubt. Unlike philosophy, these other kinds of thinking have an idea of where they might terminate: they would come to a halt when the subject matter of their reflection or inquiry has arrived at the condition of being a unified whole, a condition that is akin to aesthetic contemplation.

In saying that philosophy doesn't know where to stop, I do not mean that it is not a form of inquiry: I mean merely that termination is not essential to it. There is a sense in which aesthetics is the discipline, which unified wholes. It is the study of situations, which are not yet unified, and are not yet "right."

The relationships to obtain between human beings and their natural or man-made setting are bound to reflect comfort or discomfort, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, hopefulness or hopelessness, reasonableness or unreasonableness, just as the gas gage on an automobile shows the gas tank to be full or empty and the heat gage shows the engine to be hot or cold. In other words, the immersion of human being in their environments are appraising those relationships, as well as being expressive of them, in the form of emotional states, and these states are expressive, appraisive judgments.

In short, all judgments are grounded in emotive states such as satisfaction, hopefulness, dissatisfaction, disbelief, love, resentment, etc. And some of these states are meta-judicative: they are judgments of judgments, appraisive expressive functioning whose subject matters are themselves judgments. Thus, when we say that some judgments are in the emotive mode, we do not mean to deny that all judgments emerge from states, which are at least partially emotive. At least one form of judgment is itself emotive.

Since anything that is true or false can be considered as an assertion (some logicians would say "proposition"), questions, commands and exclamations are generally distinguished from assertions, and are therefore thought to be excluded from traditional logic. For this reason, logicians have constructed deontic logic, which formalizes obligation, duty, command, instruction and other forms of rule-governed of authoritative discourse, as well as erotetic logic, for dealing with discourse or astonishment, and these latter terms cannot be standard statement. This does not mean, however, that they have no place on the logic of judgment.

There are, then, four kinds of sentences (assertions, commands, questions and exclamations), represented by statements (whatever is true or false), commands (such as "Go away!"), questions (such as "Do you mean me?"), and exclamations (such as "How sweet it is!"). These sentence-types may give rise to various kinds of crossovers. Thus Collingwood declares that every statement is the answer to a suppressed question. If this is so, it suggests that every command is the expression of some kind of force or authority, and every expression of force or authority is an effort to justify a command.

A community of moral inquiry is first and foremost a complex network of interpersonal relationship. Whether it is a village, a congregation, a classroom or an entire society, it is productive of judgments that appraise the world in which it finds itself as well as its countless relationships to that world. Its judgment also expresses itself.

Four modes or templates shape these judgments: making, saying, doing and feeling, themselves responses to four questions - "What is to be made?", "What is to be said?", "What is to be done?" and "What is to be felt?" An alternative way of expressing this is to label these four modes "creative judgment".

It would be very difficult to say which of these four modes is of greatest importance to the human economy. Art, language, action and emotion all have their claims. Of these, the claims of language are, as might be expected, the most frequently articulated, with the result that language dominates expression and communication - so much so that a case can be made for the superiority of language.

Many distinctions can be utilized for differentiating among types of judgment (agent/patient, manipulation/assimilation, expressive/appraisive) and de-emphasizing certain similarities or dissimilarities among judgments. Thus we might try out some lists, such as :

Doing/Undergoing		Activity/Compliance
Making/Appreciating	Or	Arrangement/Appreciating
Saying/Listening		Assertion/Agreement

Several things might be noted about this listing. For one thing, the category of "appreciating" is persistently common to both lists, suggesting that it may be of greater importance than it is usually thought to have been. For another thing, the mode of feeling has been omitted, and this omission should be rectified by adding a fourth mode of judgment, moving/being moved.

Feeling can be formulated in terms of moving/being moved. We can say critical thinkers are persons who are "appropriately moved by reason." In any case, we should recognize, as the fourth mode of judgment, being (emotionally), moving and being (emotionally) moved. The parenthetical cue need not be retained.

We are now working with four modes of judgment as well as four sentence-types. These can be arranged schematically as follows:



**Table 5: Types of Sentences**

Modes of Judgment	Commands	Questions	Exclamations	Assertions
Making (creations)	Make an apple out of this clay.	What are you making?	How realistically I've drawn it!	You have created an apple.
Saying (assertions)	Ready! Aim!	These men are traitors, aren't they?	They are disloyal!	These men are disloyal.
Doing (actions)	Do as I say, not as I do.	Should I do what you say or what you do?	How sweet this apple tastes!	This is a cooking apple.
Moving (feelings)	Be loyal to your country.	Is this my child?	You've killed him!	He is dead.

This is, of course, an inaccurate one, since only some of the variants are appropriately expressed in language. An action is an action, not a sentence representing an action. A feeling is a feeling, not a sentence attempting to portray a feeling. Nevertheless, the chart is accurate enough to be able to detect various strands of narrative, it might come up in a community of inquiry endeavoring to deal with several ethical and aesthetic narratives and depictions.

It seems to me that this manner of diagramming judgment modes and sentence types is superior to dispensing with the charts and trying to unpack the sentences of their implicit contents. The problem is that we lack, when we do this, adequate criteria for the contents. For example, we may list, as an exclamation "Fire!", and we then claim that this is an abbreviated or telescoped way of asserting: "There is a fire here : please send help at once!" To be sure, these meanings are among a wide swath of meanings that are suggested by the exclamation "Fire!", but the method is one of free-ranging associations that are undisciplined and uncontrollable.

What the chart provides, on the other hand, is a loose-knit fabric of narrative meaning whose warp and woof suggest a texture of experience. If we accept a very broad characterization of thinking as "a processing of experience", we can better understand why this approach is a promising one for arriving at an understanding of multidimensional thinking.

To be sure, the four types of sentences used in the above chart are hardly exhaustive of the schemata which forms the infrastructure of a piece of literature. More schemes can be assigned to students of literary criticism to help them understand how metaphors are constructed and are distributed in the course of an essay. For example, we can consider the four qualities to be found in literary constructions: physiognomic, introjective, trans-sensory and dimensional. The first of these are qualities derived from human beings but have also been exported to things. The second are qualities of things but found in humans. The third are qualities of one mode or perception but found in another. The fourth are spatial qualities identified in temporal objects or temporal qualities found in spatial objects. It may be that tables inter-relating these qualities may be found useful for the stimulation of creative thinking.

A simplified ordering of the modes of judgment would therefore look like this:

Agent	Patient
Doing	Undergoing
Making	Appreciating
Saying	Hearing
Moving	Being moved

Obviously these terms can be combined in numerous ways. Additionally, it must be acknowledged that adding the mode or emotive judgment to the other three modes strongly connects this approach to Harvey Siegel's definition of critical thinking ("Critical thinkers are people who are appropriately moved by reasons"). Presumably if the reasons are convincing, the emotions they stir up are appropriate. A lot depends on the level of appreciative thinking that prevails in the audience. Some people are deeply moved by Schubert's Cello Quintet while others are moved only by "Who Threw the Overalls in Mrs. Murphy's Chowder?" We may argue that both function as causes, but that the Schubert is a better reason for an aesthetic evaluation. This is where expertise in evaluation, particularly in musical evaluation, will have to be relied on.

## No 'Me' or 'Mine' or Religion: Buddhadasa's Contribution to a Cosmopolitan Planetary Life and Culture of Peace: Some Notes

*Tim Rackett, Thailand*

*"All living beings are mutual friends so we should be comrades of Nature" - Buddhadasa Bikkhu*

Alain Badiou said: "Liberal capitalism, as the only way, is a vehicle of savage and destructive nihilism. Evil is the interruption of truth by the pressure of particular or individual interests". In *Dharm* socialism, freedom necessarily involves a sequence of inter-relational matrixes from the atom to the vast reaches of the cosmos. The entire universe is a socialist system. Countless numbers of stars exist together because they follow a socialist system so that they can survive.

In this paper I shall offer the best philosophy of the West and East: a deployment of the Thai Theravada Buddhist thinker Buddhadasa, his demythologizing and anti-metaphysical version of Buddhist Dharma with Bruno Latour's "anthropology of modernity and science". These thinkers differ in their views concerning the role that rational conversation, dialogue, science, forms of religion and the gods can play in the cosmos vis-à-vis achieving, if not perpetual peace, then at least a sustainable and secure peace. Specifically, questions of: to which peace-making "club" do we wish to belong? A faith-based one? The Kant-Habermas cosmopolitan critical reason club? A communitarian-particularism or universal common humanity club? What are the merits of attaching, or detaching, to culture, humans or non-human-things and gods? There are also presuppositions about "nature" and "humanity" and whether they are nouns or verbs? What is the locus and source of peace? Is it all in the mind? A just state of mind or just a state of mind? The latter reflections bear upon key issues and problems concerning a possible Culture of Peace both "inside" (a nation, or particular community), and "outside" (for the international order-society of states).

Dialogue for the physicist David Bohm in its role, transforming culture and liberating creativity, is a "vital process of ethical governance and politics".<sup>125</sup> Undoubtedly, some form of dialogue as a means to the end of building a sustainable and robust universal Culture of Peace is indispensable, but as to whom and which "agents", forces in play and relations are to be evoked in a dialogue to the end of peace making remains an open question. An image suggested by Bohm, Factor and Garrett in *Dialogue: A Proposal* is that of "a river of meaning flowing around and through the participants".

In most political cultures and imaginaries there is a lack of will and ability "to identify, suspend or detach from core beliefs and assumption" (Bohm, et al. 1991). It is vital to be open to other truths, beliefs and values "by letting go of defending one's own position in order to engage in profound inquiry". This did not occur at the Kyoto Summit, what should have been identified were: the models of the environment, the nature of global capitalism and prevalent consumerist way of life driving climate change.<sup>126</sup> I think the challenge to all peoples, populations and governments can be phrased as follows: Can we not just think "outside the box", but live outside the boxes of culture, civilization, sovereignty, nation-states, nationality, ethnicity, faith and religion? Another way of living life as a human may be becoming a re-invented humanity without borders but with boundaries.

### What Are the Main Obstacles to Building a Universal Culture of Peace?

I think the key question, to phrase it in a problematic dualist manner, is whether the barriers and obstacles lie inside or outside nation-states, self and other, language, reason, desire, feeling, a form of

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.ethicalpolitics.net/index.php/Dialogue>

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

life, the human subject, culture or nature. The means of creating a Culture of Peace and techniques of peace-making are critical and turn on the question of what needs to be brought to the peace-making chamber and what needs to be left behind or hung up outside?

Two possibilities need to be taken seriously to understand what is at stake on our fragile ecologically-threatened planet with its many worlds and truths to cope with living in a 'pluriverse': a) a need to abandon culture, especially localism and relativism, and bring in Nature, as a referent and mode of action, to enact peace and live together in a common humanity; b) a need to judge which attachments are good for peace making dialogue. Alternatively, like the Stoics and Buddhists, the option is to reject all attachments on the grounds that they enslaving and cause discord and division.

Latour's Actor Network Theory and Buddhadasa's perspective share some crucial notions. For instance, that things, Nature, discourses, networks are "neither true or false, good or evil, in and of themselves, but thinking and enacting makes them so". An ethic, or methodological imperative, to suspend presuppositions and judgment about what is important: of value, identities and interests. Buddhism advocates suspending thought, stop thinking, and floating truth and attachment to anything as "me and mine". Latour advocates an attitude of evenly suspended attention in analysis about self and others, causes and effects, human and non-human importance. Both agree that ontologically speaking there are no nouns, only verbs in Nature. Thus humans make and un-make the world and themselves.

Buddhist spiritual power can create a means of conflict resolution and durable peaceful co-existence. Buddhadasa's notion of voiding oneself offers freedom from identity, attachment to any religion, culture, tradition besides itself- nation, but still has faith in a perfectible spiritual human subject. The Buddhist gesture is an audacious dare, to not just put aside differences, but dissolve them altogether: to let go of beliefs and blind faith to live a life without any idols, illusions and fetishes. Buddhists, like Stoics after them, see attachment as slavery. Our bad attachments, dualisms, and want-to-be-and-have cause suffering violence and conflict. Buddhism advocates a spiritual cosmopolitan dream in which we all belong equally to Nature and the Cosmos. Whereas, if we follow Bruno Latour we need to build a common world and cosmos, out of our 'pluriverse', by having more faith in non-human actors and agents: gods, animals, things and natures.

A practical imperative for constructing a Culture of Peace and means of peace-making might be that the "gods have to be hung up outside the peace-making chamber". Buddhism makes a radical suggestion that truce and peace making cannot be faith-based - that is in religion, god and gods. From a Buddhist perspective there is 'no-religion' as their common core of wisdom, making morality possible; this is an absolute and ultimate truth. In order for a universal transcultural and supranational sustainable ethic and performance of peace to come into being, local cultures, traditions, forms of belonging and identity supports, may well have to be abandoned. Thus what are seen as the chief negative effects of globalization (up-rooting, lifting out and disembedding) could be an opportunity to re-inscribe and entrench peoples and populations in imagined cosmopolitical communities governed by "equal-liberty"<sup>127</sup> and justice. Or, perhaps, our sameness, lacking an essential human nature or divine spark, has its source, not in brotherhood and sisterhood, but rather in our universal otherhood. As Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic perspective argues, we are all strangers, to others and ourselves. We are all migrant mongrel hybrid creative vulnerable human creatures with the potential for care, compassion and enacting universal truth (Booth, Rorty, Rushdie).

In relation to the powers of rational conversation and dialogue to construct a global "bridgehead" common culture of peace agreement, accord, exploration and resolution of problems, we need to exercise vigilant care and suspicion of the dangers of anti-universal forms of absolutism particularism and communitarianism. We need to open the black box of culture and tradition and ask which forms of life, identities or interests does it fabricate, support and maintain, and to what purpose and with which unintended ethical and political consequences. How is culture mobilized and deployed? Cultures not as a fixed, unitary cause, a primordial mover, but as contingent extemporized in effect of politics, violence, and power-truth relations and forces. What do beliefs, a belief in the belief in truth, and faith permit and make possible? What are their unintended practical consequences? What kind of ethico-political forms of life can they imagine and enact?

127 Balibar, E. 2004. Is Philosophy of Human Civic Rights Possible? New Reflections on Equaliberty. *The South Atlantic Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 103, No. 2/3, pp. 311-322.

I want to push a kind of cosmopolitics: to enact a truth of the exceptional state of peoples vis-à-vis governments market fundamentalism and the global forces of particularism and communitarianism and their destructive absolutist fragmenting forces which have nihilistic and relativist consequences. Against this the powers of the universal practice of human and non-human rights, animals, nature and things should be championed.

Our predicament is that anything is possible and everything is permitted. The twin evils of post-modernist relativism and nihilism destroyed the myth of grand narratives, meta-discourses, debunked legislative epistemology, at the price of exiling, not a mythical sovereign reason, but styles of reasoning and styles of thinking per se: subjecting the authority and validity of scientific truth to the tribunal of faith and belief with dangerous permissive consequences.

## Who and What Do We Think We Are?

Can we become more humane, more human than human by ceasing to be ourselves? Thinking and stepping outside territorial and identitarian boxes through a transpersonal mind free of psycho-affective exclusive forms of attachment: belonging, kin, blood and soil. Perhaps we need to become another kind of human animal in relation to the cosmos - sentient beings, taking plants, minerals, and non-human sub-atomic strings as actors and agents - as a part of that which makes us human. The non-human, things, objects, make us and we make them. We are made from stars, or rather star-stuff.

Buddhism, at least the version articulated by the Thai Theravada monk Buddhadasa, shares a pragmatic notion of ethical truth measured not by doctrine, or authority of the book, but as practical consequences. What ethical and spiritual effects will a particular interpretation of the *Dharma* create when it is practiced? How will it bring about more peace tranquility and lessen suffering in the world? In practices of everyday life, a cultural element (a belief, value, thought, desire, feeling or conduct) will be questioned as to its potential to promote wisdom and dignity when performed. Buddhism in action is a philosophical act shaping life with therapeutic intent, using reason and thought to reach-realize a way of living free from disturbance. A tranquil existence through a renunciation of truth seeking, knowledge quests and identity quests, can cause spiritual *qua* mental disease and disorder.

We need to reflect upon ourselves and how we have been trained to identify with nationalized and racialized bodies and languages, engendered as sexed speaking subjects. To debunk the neo-liberal appropriation of "life as work of art" (endless consumer re-invention of self in apolitical life styling), we should conduct, as proposed by Foucault, a critical ontology of ourselves.

## In the Chamber: Conditions for Dialogue

Subjects in dialogue, boundaries, identities and interests should be stakes in the game: that which is at risk and up for grabs, open to loss and change, emergent products of processes of transference and translation as opposed to being thought as pre-given. Creative inter-cultural narration and experimentation should challenge and detach people from fetishes taking up postures and positions of soft and hard, weak and strong, friend and foe as already decided - the same before and after an encounter and allowing a subject to be closed, set apart from and above others.

Living otherwise as members of a universal community of common humanity without nationalism entails an ability to step outside ourselves: putting ourselves in the others' shoes, skins and sexes. Perhaps Buddhism offers a way to un-make ourselves and dissolve our egos. The Buddhist truth game of liberation offers to free subjects from enslavement to desire and passions by de-conditioning individuals in order to tame the bestial "mad monkey within", disassembling the ego by the impersonal or transpersonal mind and stopping the mind and its craving "swinging like a monkey in the jungle". We need shelter and refuge from suffering and interminable desire, which make life into a ship, tossed about in a stormy sea, that cannot anchor, nor pull into harbour or dry dock, but has to re-build at sea.

The Buddhist gamble and stake, strikingly illustrated by the extreme austere, forest form of meditation upon rotting corpses, flesh and inside the body as an awakening or detachment. The latter is a technique of becoming a selfless person, being nobody, going nowhere. To be a human subject and to be divested

of convention, language, culture, tradition, nationality, marks and badges of identity pinned onto, as individuation and individualization, is part of our training as socio-historical beings.

Humans also can be reduced to naked life as a biological lifeform, equal to other forms in an indifferent Nature.

Performance of Buddhist techniques of dissolution of boundaries, self-other subject-object-thing, animate-inanimate, human-non-human, offer a way of ceasing being ourselves through shaking and shifting the ground beneath our feet and realizing that the 'firmament of the starry sky is fomented' (Goodman) and that there are no laws of nature. Buddhism seems to throw all divisive schisms creating religious identities onto the bonfire of human pride and vanity and claim on a spiritual, non-mundane level that in reality there are no religions.

Strategies of sympathy and forms of transpersonal sentimental and empathic identification are crucial for embracing sameness. In psychoanalytic language not projecting, desires, onto the screen of others, but rather projective identification with a Buddhist twist, is that it is the illusion of not just the Western political fiction of possessive individualism, rational autonomous persons and self-possessed self: His Majesty the Ego, I-you, me and mine. So, identification involves not just objects, partial objects, and subjects, but also: things, machines, animals, and other life forms. Crossing borders inside-outside, human-non-human agents and actors, forms of life and the inanimate, are important. The Buddhist practice of being a selfless person, the transpersonal mind propels the subject into an interzone wherein there is no clash of individual, cultural or civilizational egos, as I's have been suspended from arising and ceasing. This is like a mutual reciprocal relational disappearance of identities based in faiths and beliefs, profane and sacred.

## How Can We Live Together?

As humans we have the power and potential to invent new ways and forms of living together to address the philosophical questions facing existence: What must we do? What can we hope? In Buddhist techniques of peace, truce-making and equanimity have primacy over truth-seeking. Thus, who is right or wrong, culpable as ascertained by a truth commission, "is all in the mind" and "nothing is good or evil, true or false right or wrong, but thinking makes it so". Buddhist morality, for the non-enlightened, does not promote wrong and evil doing, so it needs to be able to care, to think with heart and voided-mind empty of greed, possessiveness and hate.

## No Religion

From the absolute point of view of Buddhist Ultimate Truth conventional language, as a medium or means of world making, is an obstacle that prevents human understanding and living together. It prevents humans knowing beyond the sensible and intelligible the nature of ultimate reality (Buddhadasa, p. 1).

Like Neo in *The Matrix*, we have to wake up from being enslaved by senses and desire. Buddhadasa talks of the mundane everyday language of forms of appearance as "peoples language" and *Dharma* (or inner language), and a wisdom of how things really are: communicated in silence and non-verbal language. People who know and realize the truth. Truth is, as in classical epistemology, a matter of vision with those who practice, knowing the *Dharma* in their minds and hearts through doing have a privileged access the ultimate real reality behind phenomenal forms and worldly illusions. Buddhadasa goes onto argue that from a deep Dharmic point of view at the core or "the essential nature of religion", all religions are the same; behind the names Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, there is actually nothing to individuate and separate them if one knows the Absolute Truth. They share voidness, and there is no religion if we examine what lies beneath their external forms. Buddhadasa used the metaphor of waters forming in nature, reducible to hydrogen and water molecules, and asserted that there is no underlying substance to it, only a kind of nature or natural truth - whether you wish to name it *Dharma*, Christianity, Islam or Buddhism. "In the dictionary of nature there are no nouns, only verbs." People attach to religions proper names, identify and reify them as if substantive things, rather than as practical ways of coping with existential answers to the problem of ethics of how we should live.

The Buddhist ultimate truth of reality is that there are no things, no human, no nationality, phenotypical difference, male or female, Eastern or Western - this freedom from identity and exercise of liberty from religion, religious identities, that we would term identity. At the heart of Buddhism is the truth of non-attachment, not to quest for identity, seize or grasp anything, crave, "cling and forge an attachment to the religion itself, for finally it is seen there is no Buddhism, no Buddha, Dharma, Sangha". Erasing the self by a transpersonal mind to be a "selfless person" (Collins) is the ethical goal of Buddhism. Without an I there is no more suffering. Once this is achieved, then: "It is all over. There is nothing left to be done...nothing to get, have, be-no happiness, no suffering, nothing at all just being void." Everything still exists, but all awareness of them in terms of "I" or "mine" is voided. Void just means voided of ego and identity so the Buddhist subject can be 'No-body going nowhere'. Buddhadasa's innovation is not so much a reinterpretation of the Theravada tradition but a transformative re-invention and intervention into glocal (global local) Thai understandings and practices of the truth of Buddhism by arguing against literal fundamentalist readings that its truth is metaphorical and allegorical. The stake here is that such a translation will have practical ethical consequences upon society, polity and people. Everyday forms of life can become the locus of action. Buddhist Heaven and Hell and re-incarnation and other re-birthing are understood rendered as mental states. Each breath taken can be a re-birth, coming into being, arising, ceasing of an "I" animal, hungry ghost, demonic, god, or human "I" depending on the predominant thought effect and passion governing the want-to-be. I am, I was and will be. Thus it is not literal physical birth that is the cause of suffering, but any experience, consciousness arising into being, becoming an "I". Also different re-born I's will have concomitant forms of suffering attached to them if the ego clings to exist like an angel. It suffers as an angel or a hellish devil suffering in hell. If no I comes into being then Nirvana has been achieved. In this way Buddhadasa eliminates the need for metaphysical speculation about what happens after death. It is simply irrelevant for the here and now, the task of not-being born a kind of death but also like in Christianity to know the eternal life have to die and be re-born in Jesus. Also in 'the Fall' death means the suffering caused by dualism and its introduction into the world. The original sin was eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Both Buddhist and Christians, insists Buddhadasa, miss the deep meaning of their religions which causes arguments and fights. Where there is dualism there is suffering. Death means unease, disequilibrium and mental turbulence. Rather we should be in a state beyond attraction or repulsion good and evil happiness and suffering, where "there is absolutely nothing at all that can be divided and separated into opposite poles...dualism is the basis of all attachment". Such differences are impermanent and should not be fixed upon.

For Buddhism, it is all in the mind. Dualism, true and false, right and wrong are all in the eye, or rather, mind's-eye of the beholder. Nothing is good or evil but does thinking make it so? This means Buddhism entails subjective idealism: analytic frames and individuating forms of reference, *differentia specifae* which make possible ontological distinctions, boundaries, entity formations and difference, are all dissolved into the One, the indifferent justice of Nature.

Work in and of the body and a cool still-detached mind worship is Dharmic practice to gain transcendence in everyday life and activities that materially exist, which can be ethically and spiritually transformed and productive. Christianity teaches non-possession: "Those who have wives, and/or riches should live as though they had none." To be in and act in the world through voiding the mind but not involved with its illusions. To cultivate equanimity, "just act with complete detachment" with no passion in a state of affective equilibrium in selfless state "to yourself you are dead from the very beginning", or "you have been dead inside the body since the start". The I-effect, me and mine, are symptoms of delusion and intoxication, the root cause of suffering mind and body are originally pure but polluted by desire and "mind-forged manacles" of attachment to "everything that is or is not". Eradicating the self is the cure. Of course, conducting everyday life requires using speech - I, me and mine - but they have no meaning in the mind. The inside is different, nothing bankrupt from outward appearances of power, prestige and wealth. Non-attachment is the heart of every religion, the essence of *Dharma*. If there is God, He is to be found here. Nirvana's attainment, open to all, cannot be bought through donations being wealthy as though a sign of virtue; good karma is free of charge and to be gained by giving up by following a way of life - "our loss is our gain". Not knowing is spiritual death being reborn to a life with no go, I is eternal. A life of coolness from the flames of passion and desire to be. Animals are not excluded from spiritual domestication, having their rebelliousness trained out of them, if they are not vicious and bad tempered, dangerous to humans, they have nirvana-cooled down or submitted to human will!

Humans who quarrel, are impatient, interfere with others, argue and fight, driven by egoistic concerns, for Buddhadasa, “are mad”, and not really human beings, but depraved and low. People who think there are many religions, and that other religions are different and incomparable to their own, thereby causing hostility, persecution and mutual destruction, are the most stupid and ignorant of people.

Seeing religions in a relation of opposition and conflict creates a view of people as enemies, e.g. we are right, they are wrong. “Whenever people quarrel people are eating filth, the pollutions of I.” Buddhists in name are nothing if they do not live it: “No Buddhism, no Christianity, no Islam, for how can they exist since there is no “we”, no “they”, no “anybody”. If life is lived as a form of living with a voided mind, “It is the end of everything. There is nothing left to be a problem any more. This life can be called eternal life, for there is no more birth, aging or illness.”

## Latour’s Man-Made Cosmos and Peace

Lastly, we will consider Bruno Latour’s thought on ‘common humanity’ and the politics of Nature and Culture.

The Cosmopolitan concern is to move beyond nations. Nation-states are correct, for Bruno Latour, but they need to recognize that “the global is largely, like the globe itself, an invention of science”. Society means association and thus is not limited to humans can have plant societies and stellar societies (Latour, 2004, p. 450). Levi-Strauss’s use of the Amerindian inter-civilizational encounter with Spaniards while the former were killing the latter, they were “not checking if the conquerors were gods, but simply whether they had bodies” (Latour, 2004, p. 451). Spaniards wanted to know if Indians had souls capable of being saved. Indians had different theories and experimental tools which see all life entities as modeled and organized on humans, having souls; bodies make souls different between palm, peccary, piranha and macaw. “Entities all have the same culture but do not acknowledge, and do not perceive, do not live in the same nature” (Latour, 2004, p. 452). Amerindians were into experimental science testing to see if when immersed in water Spaniards flesh would rot. This was determining bodily presence rather than them being spirits (p. 452). Ironically, as Levi-Strauss notes: “The whites were invoking the social sciences while the Indians had more confidence in the natural ones.” Latour states that what is really at stake in this encounter is different framings and a multitude of “ways to be other” (p. 453).

The trouble with cosmopolitan theorists who want everyone to be recognized as ‘citizens of the world’ like Ulrich Beck, following the Stoics and Kant, is that they take for granted and assume a ‘human’ and ‘cosmos’ as a pre-constructed nature or world. Simply ‘all humans share the same characteristics which makes the world the same everywhere. This makes them ethnocentric. It also limits them in being able to tame animal-man, perversity, acquisitiveness and undisciplined instincts’ to bring about peace. The point is that the peace-making chamber or debating room’s entrance is not limited “to rational agents to pursue reasonable conversation”. Cosmopolitanism can work, argues Latour, when there is confidence in reason and science “to know the one cosmos whose existence and solid certainty could then prop up all efforts to build the world metropolis of which we are all too happy to be citizens” (Latour, 2004, p. 453). The problem is that the ancients possessed a cosmos but such mononaturalism has disappeared, and we need to recognize that the political order is predicated upon that of science.

Cosmopolitics, following Stengers results from our difference from the Stoics and Kant for whom “being a citizen of the cosmos” came before being a citizen of a particular state, religion, guild, profession or family. Stengers’ meaning of “to belong” and “to pertain” have been altered to give us the cosmopolitical cosmos: cosmos and political mutually constrain each other term’s problematic tendencies. The cosmos in politics can be compared with the give-and-take in an exclusive human club. The politics in cosmos resists the cosmos, to mean a finite list of entities that must be taken into account, whilst “the cosmos protects against the premature closure of politics, and politics against the premature closure of cosmos” (p. 454). For Stengers, the Stoics cosmopolitanism is a proof of tolerance, and cosmopolitics serves as a cure for the “malady of tolerance”. Cosmopolitanism, culture, worldview, any horizon wider than that of a nation-state, assumes war and peace are exclusive human affairs because of relativism: different cultural views of the same world, which can be reconciled, giving rise to peace. However, this limits the entities’ place on the negotiating table; “If cosmos is to mean anything, it must embrace, literally, everything -

including the vast numbers of non-human entities making humans act" in a pluriverse (W. James). This will make a difference in how we agree or disagree with each other. Peace will only be possible when our disagreements and disputes centre on secondary not primary qualities' (Latour, 2004, p. 455).

Conflict arises and exists because there is no agreed upon arbiter: "What is at stake is precisely what is common in the common world to be built". Latour, following Carl Schmitt, calls conflict which assumes one nature and an already unified cosmos, is waged under a "police operation", not a war: "Westerners have not understood themselves as facing on the battlefield an enemy whose victory is possible, just irrational people who need to be corrected" (Latour, 2004, p. 455). Now, our wars are "wars of worlds" because the very make-up of the cosmos is at stake and nothing is off limits, off the table to dispute. A politics of world-making, a multiplicity of natures and cultures is the issue. There are different views about things, the world or worlds we inhabit. Any common world has to be built together. As de Castro argues, we should be talking in the idiom of "multinaturalism", not multiculturalism, to engage truth and reality.

## Religion and its Role in Building Real Peace

For Habermas' peace discussions to end conflict, parties have to "leave their gods on hooks in the cloakroom". Latour objects; this will not be a real peace for we cannot ignore religion. I would add on condition its discourses are treated in themselves "as neither true nor false". Latour claims that "humans have always counted less than the vast population of divinities and lesser transcendental entities that give us life. For most people, in most places, during most eons, humans have 'owners'...and those proprietors take precedence over humans at whatever cost" (Latour, 2004, p. 456). For Beck, "gods are no more than representations", but this ignores, putting it into Foucault's terms, a truth-regime in which "the gods are at war" and that, following Stengers, peace settlements are not "between men of good will who have left their gods (their narrow attachments) behind but between men of ill will possessed by super- and sub-humans of ill will" (Stengers, 2004). One dimensional peace-making illustrated by relativism and multiculturalism, is not robust and durable and consists of moving from the particular to the universal and back again whilst a move from naturalism to constructivism is what is needed to build the "same world" for all citizens to inhabit.

Global humanism is weak, appeals to common humanity as good, but "just humans" and emancipating the human as instanced by the UN and UNESCO is hardly enough to construct peace, claims Latour. If in the conference room real peace is to be brokered and attained, negotiations cannot leave gods, incompatible cosmos outside. On the other hand, gods, attachments, and unruly cosmos make it hard to get through the door into any common space. Why is this the case? Latour reminds us that humans with owners or attachments tend not to seek membership in a club as they have reason to believe that they themselves belong to the best clubs already and cannot fathom why others, when invited, have refused to join. For example, animists and the Amerindians, who were already global, can place us into their cosmology BUT we do not like that place! In order to make peace humans do not need to detach. Stoics and Buddhists should note well about detachment from beings and divinities that make us exist. Latour suggests that must decide which are good and bad attachments. For instance, abandon a naturalism "which eliminates entities from the pluriverse" (p. 458).

The discourse of science as a universal property of humankind and that we all share the same biological, physical laws and bio-social-psychological make-up is misunderstood because of worldviews (mis-) representations of reality which the West has a privileged access to. It is not wrong, but it puts the cart before the horse. The problem is that many do not share or live in a common world made by naturalism but constructionalism is more universalizable. The latter's criteria of judging "what is well and badly made" is widespread. In detail, the realities to which humans attend depend on a series of mediations composed of heterogeneous ingredients with histories. The more mediations and ingredients, the more real a fact is. Our realities are open to being interpreted differently. Reality extended in space and time extends its complex life-support system. Realities can fail and thus require careful maintenance and constant repair (p. 459). Facts are artifacts and historical events. Objectivity and certainty in science increase with artificial layering, heterogeneity, multiplicity and complex medias. A new fact's proof is to do with the means and mediation, not fact vs. construction/fabrication. Constructed and real are not



opposing terms. There exists good and bad facts which scientists meet and decide; it is not a scenario of Red Relativists fighting the White Knights of Realism.

Fundamentalism lies at the opposite far end of construction by asserting that unmediated realities (e.g. humans) are unitary, have no history; the less mediation is more real. Realities are not open to interpretation. Universal real nature does not require life support.

The consequences are that: "Anyone who holds that fabricated means untrue and made means fake tends towards fundamentalism." Common experience in science, art, love, and religion should prompt us to say, "the more carefully fabricated, the more real and long lasting" (Latour, 2004, p. 460). For those who judge this as idolatry, worshipping what human hands have made, they forget that fundamentalism was home-made in the West and then globalized. As Peter Sloterdijk remarked: "Westerners loved globalization until the Others could reach us as easily as we could reach them!" We should add here that relativism and post-modern nihilism have been re-deployed as a combative tool against the West, democracy, human rights, and the merits of secular humanism. Western naturalism sees Nature "out there", unconstructed, un-negotiated, but it is "now confronted by people saying the same of the Koran and Sharia" (p. 461). In the clash of fundamentalisms no peace is possible; this is not generated by a modern vs. an ancient/archaic culture/civilization. The enemies of modernization are extreme modernizers using the conceptual tools of Western fundamentalism. Naturalism is a war plan disguised as a peace plan. We need to counter the discrimination against fabrication if we wish to build a common world (p. 461).

For the cosmopolitan Stoics and Buddhists the key question was of attachment and detachment - local or universal. For Latour, the crux is how to differentiate between good and bad attachments. Buddhists and Stoics see "detachment as emancipation" and "attachment as slavery"; to be tied to a (particularistic) identity: to be Egyptian, Greek or Jewish was a stigma. Here we can register the radical event of universal truth telling of St. Paul, as interpreted by Badiou: there is neither Greek nor Jew. For Buddhists, we can add, in order to overcome the violence of identity politics to live as a common humanity belonging to Nature, at peace with animals, all life forms in the cosmos, it might have to be accepted that there are neither gods nor religion - that is, other than those man made.

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# Reviving the Pedagogy of Philosophical Inquiry in Muslim Curriculum for Effective Civilizational Dialogue

Rosnani Hashim, Malaysia

## Introduction

The world today, in particular the world of Muslims, faces many threats, which have been accelerated with the help of information and communication technologies (ICT). The Internet with all the available forums and websites is exposing people to many ideas, and transmitting thoughts, ideologies, beliefs, opinions, values, news and images across civilizations. Globalization and all its effects seem to be another form of colonization. This new form of colonization is even worse for it is ideological and not just physical as it was in the past. Globalization has a lot of implications for world economics and education, especially in the dominance of the English language over indigenous languages in education. We also see increasing demand for international standards and testing, the commodification of knowledge, diversities and pluralism, and cultural imperialism - more specifically, "Americanization". If Aronowitz and Giroux<sup>128</sup> feel compelled to write *Education Under Siege*, we are compelled to write *Muslims Today Under Siege*. Islamophobia post-September 11th and the calamities affecting Muslim countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Iran, as well as those affecting Muslims worldwide, are beyond description. Long before September 11, Huntington hypothesized that the world seems to be converging to a "Clash of Civilizations" - in particular the clash between Islam and Western civilizations.<sup>129</sup> Internally, the crisis of values - family, gender, sexuality, pluralism, democracy, human rights, culture, language and identity - resulting from the accelerated onslaught of great magnitude beginning with displacement due to modernization, are taking centre stage today. The most devastating threats are those that affect the Muslim mind. Today Muslim minds are confronted not only with liberalism, secularism, fundamentalism, positivism and Marxism, but also post-modernism. Islam is not monolithic as obvious as in the ways Muslim women and men dress and live their lives from Morocco to Indonesia. There is a range of interpretations of Islam too - from the liberal, secular to the conservative, traditional. Abou Fadl, in his work *The Great Theft*, argues that the Islam we witness today has been encroached upon by Muslim extremists,<sup>130</sup> while others say that Islam has been stolen from them by moderates.

Muslims today seem unable to coexist with others, although as observed by Amin Maalouf, a Christian Lebanese editor and journalist, they have successfully done so in the past. His perplexity led him to raise this question: "Why has the Christian West, which has a long tradition of intolerance and has always found it difficult to coexist with 'the Other' produced societies that respect freedom of expression, whereas the Muslim world, which has long practiced coexistence, now looks like a stronghold of fanaticism?"<sup>131</sup> Given its practices in history, Muslims' intolerance toward differences of other faiths or beliefs seems to have deviated from the spirit of Islam. But probing deeper would reveal a more complex answer that this increase in intolerance is partly the result of a Muslim identity crisis. Kazmi and Hashim argue that:

"Muslims find themselves today living in a world in which their self-understanding as a Muslim, i.e. their identity, is increasingly out of sync with the rest of world. Hence when Muslims look at the world from the perspective of their self-understanding as Muslims, the world appears fairly incomprehensible and at times threatening and hostile. Finding the world threatening and/or hostile they, like the Muslim women in Europe, retreat to the comfort of just blindly and uncritically following the rules of the game, where the slightest relaxation of the rules is experienced as a threat to identity and hence to Islam.

128 Aronowitz, H., Giroux, S. 1987. *Education Under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal and Radical Debate over Schooling*. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.

129 Huntington, S. P. 1996. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York, Simon and Schuster.

130 El Fadl, K. A. 2005. *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists*. San Francisco, Harper Collins.

131 Maalouf, A. 2000. *On Identity*. London, The Harvill Press, p. 50.

This gives some the moral justification to destroy and kill whoever is perceived as a threat to their identity and to Islam.<sup>132</sup>

How should Muslims meet up with these challenges? How should the education system, curriculum and educators respond to these? Hence, the purpose of this paper is to dissect the problem and to argue for a different pedagogical approach in educating the Muslim youth to overcome this problem. It could be like Freire empowering the peasants and motivating them so that they can determine the direction of their lives rather than being fed with education that is not meaningful to them.<sup>133</sup> It is to inform educators that they should incorporate the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry as the necessary tool to awaken and broaden Muslim minds. More importantly, this is returning to the notion of education taught and demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who presented Islam as a “mercy for all mankind”, liberating men from slavery to men and be concerned with the brotherhood of men, social justice and moral values, as manifestations of their worship of the One God.

## Why Education and the Muslim Epistemology

I would like to focus on formal education as the incubator to germinate new ideas and the bastion for the defense of the faith. Education deals with the youth and change is easier to be adopted by them than by the old folks. Taking on the ideas of Ikhwan al-Safa, “let us not waste our breath with the adults. Let us move on with the youth”, or even al-Ghazali’s “*Ayyuhal Walad* [O my child]” suggest the significance of youthfulness when focusing on whom we want to educate. This discussion will focus on the schools and schooling in the Muslim world, which are moving in a similar direction through different means and at different paces.

Muslim education is centred on the Holy Qur’an and the Tradition (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These are the two fountain heads of knowledge. Being a religious scripture, the Qur’an contained the Shari’ah, that is the path to being a Muslim. It contains the principles or laws to live by, the moral and ethics in many aspects of life from birth to death such as in social and business relations, in marriage, in punishment and education; and the religious fundamentals related to articles of belief and faith. However, the Qur’an itself leads Muslims to reflect upon the world they live in, so that it becomes another fountain head of knowledge for the Muslim. But the Qur’an does not stop there – it talks about the physical universe, human nature (psychological make up) and also human history – not in the chronological sense but in the moral sense of good versus evil and right versus wrong and the importance of truth and reality. Sarton understood this so well in his study of Muslim science and its scholars that he exclaims: “How could we reach a correct understanding of Muslim science if we did not fully grasp its gravitation around the Qur’an.”<sup>134</sup> Thus from the Qur’an and their own problems, the Muslims had developed the *aqliyyah*, or intellectual, sciences, especially those for serving faith and mankind such as algebra and medicine.

## The Muslim Curriculum

It is quite obvious from the above that the Muslim curriculum must have the Qur’an, the Prophet’s Tradition, faith, law and *akhlak* as the core of its curriculum. In fact during the Medieval period the curriculum comprised: Arabic language, grammar, rhetoric, literature, Qur’anic exegesis, Qur’anic reading, Tradition, law and theology.<sup>135</sup> It is obviously not true to suggest that Islam rejects the intellectual sciences. On the contrary, the historical evidence suggests that the Holy Qur’an was the major reason for Muslims’ advancements in the acquired or intellectual (*aqliyyah*) sciences too. Its negligence was due to many external factors – the most important of which is the establishment of the public madrasah (college) system in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century which concentrated only on the Shari’ah sciences and ignored

132 Kazmi, Y. R., Hashim. 2010. Is Being Muslim a Fact or a Challenge? A Perspective on Muslim Identity, Citizenship and Islamic Education in M. S. Merry and J. A. Milligan (eds.) *Attachments and Obligations: Theoretical Essays on Islamic Citizenship, Identity and Education*. Amsterdam, Palgrave Macmillan, in press.

133 Freire, P. 1988. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York, Continuum.

134 Sarton, G. 1927. *Introduction to the History of Science - Vol I*. Baltimore, MD, Carnegie Institution of Washington, p. 5.

135 Dodge, B. 1962. *Muslim Education in Medieval Times*. Washington DC, The Middle East Institute.

the intellectual sciences – leaving it to private individuals and institutions such as the hospital, the library and the observatory. Secondly, the intellectual and ideological conflicts afflicting the *ummah* especially after the Battle of Siffin between Ali and Muawiyah had divided Muslims into several schools such as the Khawarijs, Murji'ah, Jabbariyah, and Qadariyyah who began to apply rationalism to interpret Qur'anic verses in order to justify and defend their positions. The rise of scholastic theology gave the Muslims a strong reason for studying Greek philosophy. But the excesses of rationalism under the Mu'tazilah produced an overreaction from the Traditionalists, to the extent that the 'alien' sciences were shunned from then on.

Hence, since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the public madrasah has taught only one form of sciences - the religious sciences - which led to the negligence of the other "foreign" sciences. However, despite this, the madrasah taught *fiqh* (jurisprudence) in a very rigorous manner. They had a dynamic pedagogy. It was not sheer memorization but the practice of intellectual discourse held in *halaqah* (study circle) or the courts of the Caliph or Sultan, that kept the *ulama* (scholars) or *fuqaha* (jurists) on their toes. Their intellectualism began to be dulled only when the practice of *sharah* (commentary) to explain and elaborate previous works preoccupied their curriculum. Suddenly, the traditional sciences were reduced to memorization of commentaries (*sharah*) instead of fresh ideas through *ijtihad*.

This was the form of education the contemporary Muslims have inherited down to the period of modern science and industry of Western civilization in the eighteenth century. However, as its tradition of having education in the mosque-colleges, in many Muslim countries most of the education took place as religious classes in the mosque, where the imam or other religious teachers taught regularly. In the context of Malaysia, traditional education also took place formally in the *pondok*. In most cases, the methods were traditional – reading, memorization, dictation, commentary, writing and more importantly, debates. The curriculum was devoted singly to the traditional sciences but some arithmetics (*fara'id*), logic, astronomy (*falak*) and Arabic language were also included, with the last preoccupying a big percentage of the time spent. *Tasawwuf* (purification of the self) was also taught in the curriculum. Students were assessed in terms of their mastery of the subject matter. With the exception of producing competent religious scholars, judges, teachers and enlightened masses, education was rarely associated with vocationalism. In fact, al-Ghazali himself was concerned over this imbalance and lamented over the lack of Muslims specializing in medicine or mathematics while many were rushing to major in the Shari'ah or traditional sciences for the richness and fame these brought them.<sup>136</sup>

## The Present Curriculum and Teaching Methods

In many Muslim countries today, there is a public school system run by the government which in most cases has been inherited from the colonial government and offers the secular curriculum. On the other hand there also exists the private religious schools as a legacy of the Muslim past, which focus on the traditional sciences. In many countries, efforts have been made to ensure that a minimum of traditional Islamic sciences are taught to the students in the public school system. Similarly, some intellectual sciences are also taught in the religious school curriculum to prepare its graduates for further studies or meet the vocational requirement. In some countries a greater effort has been taken to obtain a holistic and integrated curriculum of traditional, religious and liberal, secular sciences and philosophies.

Over time due to the emphasis of public examinations in schooling, the methods and goals of teaching Islamic traditional sciences in schools have also changed from its concern with character and spiritual development to cognitive development and vocationalism, as measured by the results of public examination. The outcome of such a system is that students could graduate without the ability to make sense and meaning of what they have acquired. They have information and knowledge but not necessarily wisdom. Thus, even the soul of Islamic traditional education has been abandoned.<sup>137</sup>

Consequently, due to its misplaced aims and to its ineffective teaching or pedagogical methods, Muslim students have found learning the religious sciences (*fard 'ayn*) as dull, a chore and unpleasant. It seems

136 Al-Ghazali, 1987. *Kitab al-'Ilm tran*, N. A. Faris, Lahore, Sh Ashraf Pub.

137 Hashim, R. 2005. Rethinking Islamic Education in Facing the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century. *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 133-147.

that they have been programmed like a computer to store huge chunk of information but which provide no meaning to themselves. Probably, this is what is meant by inert knowledge by the philosopher Alfred Whitehead.<sup>138</sup> This is worsened by the same methods employed in the other so-called intellectual subjects itself and sometimes, even for the teaching of the natural sciences. As a result, these youth are not critical, creative or wise in making judgments. They are not able to interpret the Islamic principles within their own simple contexts. On the one hand, the system has indirectly taught them to be passive listeners, able to memorize the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions but without knowing its rightful application especially in living in a pluralistic world, which is what the world is evolving into. Students do not have enough room to discuss important matters regarding moral or social issues because of the preoccupation with finishing the syllabus. With this method of education which does not equip the youth with adequate tools to face and deal with contemporary challenges, it is therefore not surprising that they found themselves entangled into a lot of social and cultural problems, and more crisis in their values such as free intermingling of people of opposite sex, gender equality in every sense even to the extent of women imam, and human rights to its absolute such as legalizing gays. This group is able to obtain more arguments from their feminist counterparts in the West. On the other hand, the conservative extremists would not open their mind to deliberating on new interpretation of the laws with changing circumstances, i.e., *ijtihad* in the present context such as the roles of men and women in a family where both have their own careers, easy access to polygamy in the context of today and the possibility of women to lead organizations or nations.

Some begin to question and reject their own values – regarding them as conservative, restrictive and limiting. Hedonism, materialism and secularism creep in, and they begin to observe a life of fun and merriment. What they look highly on are material things – thus giving more respect and status to one who owns a lot of material goods in contrast to a poor person who might have so few material possessions even though he possess a noble character. We have taught them to forget about the essence of human dignity, that every person is equal in the sight of God except for the most pious among us. Smoking and possibly drugs confer one with a certain status. Hedonism that knows no limit has led to free sex, premarital sex or adultery which are prohibited in the Islamic *shari'ah*.

These problems arose, aside from other social factors, because of the poor teaching methods, in particular, the failure to equip the youth with good reasoning abilities and also the ability to make wise judgment. They could have been given all the information about the do's and don'ts and they might have mastered this if the examination scores are any indicators, yet they did not act appropriately. This makes possible, the inconsistency between knowledge *'ilm* and action *'amal*, because the education system is oriented towards examinations. To make it worse, the school performance and the teachers' performance are all judged from the percentage of excellent grades and passes which perpetuates the "diploma disease".

Many reform efforts have been taken to raise up wise, intelligent, critical and creative youth especially by shifting from subject-centred or teacher-centred curriculum and teaching methods to child-centred or learner-centred curriculum. More efforts have been taken to train teachers in methods of critical and creative thinking. Small group works, students' presentation using ICT, project-based learning and multimedia instruction have also been garnered to innovate instruction. However, these methods are superficial – just on the surface. Sometimes, just to fill in the class time. Yet many teachers – out of good heart - tend to fall back on the note taking method especially when they have to deal with a classroom of low-achieving students.

Actually today teachers hardly spend time on meaningful learning. Yet, in the Islamic Tradition, knowledge is defined as the "arrival in the soul of the meaning of a thing or an object of knowledge" or the "soul's arrival of the meaning of a thing or an object of knowledge."<sup>139</sup> Even Western scholars such as Bruner<sup>140</sup> assert that learning is making sense or understanding the world and themselves (seeing the whole picture) which encompasses various cognitive perspectives. Another, Sternberg has asserted that we have focused too much on intelligence but not on wisdom. Wisdom is distinctly different from

138 Whitehead, A. 1929. *The Aims of Education and Other Essay*. New York, Free Press.

139 Naquib al-Attas, S. M. 1991. *The Concept of Education in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur, ISTAC, 17.

140 Bruner, J. 1990. *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

intelligence.<sup>141</sup> T.S. Eliot asked as we progressed deeper in ICT today: “Where is the wisdom we have lost to knowledge, where is the knowledge we have lost to information?”

There is no more time to deliberate over rich concepts and philosophical questions that give meaning to the lives of these youth in the classrooms. There is not much philosophical discussion. No time for students’ questions or the thirst for knowledge and in most cases the thirst for knowledge had already been killed. When there is no discussion, airing of views and deliberation, how can there be reasoning aloud, reflection, evaluation of ideas, opening up of minds. Even moral education, civics education and Islamic traditional sciences fell victim to this mode of assessment. When students are not taught to believe in their ideas, to express them and defend them if they can, and likewise to evaluate the ideas of others and correct theirs if the other’s is more reasonable and worthy, how can they develop thinking skills and judgment, self-confidence, good communication skills and most important conflict resolution skills? Even language classes do not afford the time to talk! So how can we expect students to exchange ideas and understand the mind of pupils of other races or cultures? This is an opportunity missed in Malaysia, a multiracial and multi-faith country.

Because of these problems and challenges, then the pedagogy and the methods of evaluation and assessment that teachers employ in educating these youth and children in schools needs reexamination. here is a need to bring back a pedagogy that was much alive in early Islam but has been almost abandoned today. We need to bring back the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry.

## Philosophy, Philosophical Inquiry and the Islamic Worldview

Why philosophy and philosophical inquiry? Philosophy is the discipline that deals with the realm of existence and meaning that are dealt with in religion too. It deals with metaphysics – the meaning of existence, nature of man, cosmology, the truth and reality and God. It deals with epistemology – sources of knowledge, possibility of knowledge, types of knowledge, methodology of acquiring knowledge; with ethics and morality – what is good or bad, right or wrong; aesthetics – the good, the beautiful and the ugly; and finally, logic – the art of logical reasoning and fallacy. Logic is the tool to enhance thinking. Even al-Ghazali admitted of its usefulness and argues that the Qur’an asks a lot of logical question.<sup>142</sup> In fact, the philosophical tools were first employed by the Mu’tazilah to defend Islam against the Christians’ attack on the Muslim creeds. The importance of philosophy for the defense of the faith is further asserted by the eminent, contemporary Muslim scholar, S. H. Nasr: “The teaching of Islamic philosophy is urgent because it is the means of protecting the truth (*al-Haq*) and providing ways for repelling the attacks which are made against it from all sides.” He even considered teaching Islamic philosophy a religious duty.<sup>143</sup> Thus the substance of philosophy is as much the concern of Muslims especially in regards to the Islamic worldview which pays particular attention to the nature of existence, man, universe, Prophethood, and God; and also greatly on ethics, morality and spirituality.

Leaman argues: “It would be a mistake to regard philosophy in Islam as starting with the translation of Greek texts.”<sup>144</sup> He asserts that even before the introduction of Greek logic, Muslims were involved in philosophical arguments in the fields of jurisprudence, the nature of law, analogy, and meaning. It would not be surprising if they even welcomed the contribution of Aristotelian logic for conceptual clarification in these areas. For instance, although al-Ghazali never regarded himself as a philosopher, he thought that it was important to master philosophy before criticizing it. He was able to present his arguments brilliantly in his work *Tahafut al-falasifa* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers). Although he opposed Greek philosophy and its development in Islam, he advocated fervently the study and use of logic. He claimed that Aristotelian syllogisms were already used and recommended in the Qur’an. He

141 Sternberg, R. 2001. Why Schools Should Teach for Wisdom: The Balance Theory of Wisdom in Educational Settings, *Educational Psychologist*, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 227-245.

142 Al-Ghazali, A. Hamid, 1978. *Al-Qistas al-Mustaqim: The Just Balance*. Trans. by D. P. Brewster. Lahore, Sh Muhammad Ashraf.

143 Nasr, S. H. 1987. *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*. New York, Kegan Paul International.

144 Leaman, O. 1962. *An Introduction to Medieval Islamic Philosophy*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 6.

even illustrated Aristotelian logic with examples from Islamic law.<sup>145</sup>

Philosophical inquiry is a form of investigation on these ideas and concept to derive a greater understanding and meaning. Questioning and discussion are built in the nature of philosophical inquiry. This method has also be documented as part of the Muslim tradition of scholarship. Critical examination of traditions or customs for its worth, is also inherent in Islam. In fact, the Qur'an argues that Allah has endowed us with the physical senses to be used for empirical observations and exploration. The use of our senses, that is our sight, hearing and heart, will be taken to task in the Hereafter. The Qur'an thus, denounces blind following. For example, the Qur'an gives account of those people who rejected the call to Allah because they could not abandon the practices of their forefathers although these were in error. The Qur'an urges them to use their mind to think:

"Just in the same way, whenever We sent a warner before thee to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: 'We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their footsteps.' He said: "What! Even if I brought you better guidance than that which ye found your fathers following?" (Al-Zukhruf 43: 22-24).

Philosophy is important in the Islamic world view. It provides the intellectual basis for its beliefs. There are many verses in the Qur'an that ask readers to think, to reflect, to examine. In fact the philosophical mind the Qur'an develops begged the reader to look within himself, all the creation of God and also to the scripture. The first verse revealed to the Prophet for Muslims was the instruction to read and the use of the pen which is not to be taken literally as reading a book but to be interpreted for research in the Holy Book and also for the Created worlds. Writing would mean penning one's creative or analytical thought or presenting one's research finding. The verse 95:1-5 reads as follows:

*"Proclaim (or Read)! In the name of your Lord and Cherisher, who created;*

- *Created man our of a (mere) clog of congealed blood;*
- *Read! And your Lord is Most Boutiful;*
- *He who taught (the use of) the Pen;*
- *Taught man that which he knew not."*

There are also many verses that challenge people's mind to think, such as verse 88:17-20:

- *"Do they not look at the camels, how they are made?*
- *And at the sky, how it is raised high?*
- *And at the mountains, how they are fixed firm?*
- *And at the earth, how it is spread out?"*

It is these kinds of questions that made Muslims who pondered over the Qur'an to look out into nature and themselves and not only to be preoccupied with one passive definition of faith. They were prone to become philosophical and scientific as illustrated by another verse (3:190-1): Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah standing, sitting and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You!"

People are again challenged philosophically and scientifically in verses such as 2:164:

"Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which God sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth: [here] indeed are signs for a people that are wise."

145 Al-Ghazali, A. Hamid, 1978. *op. cit.*

Although the Qur'an has prescriptions for the pillars of faith such as beliefs in God, angels, Prophet, Day of Judgment, Holy Scriptures and predestination, it also emphasized the use of the mind, that is to be philosophical and scientific. Men are supposed to see the Signs of God in reflection over His creations and also in reflection over His Words in the Holy Scriptures, and these two Books would ask its readers to go back and forth between Holy Words and His Creations.

It is due to this impetus from the Qur'an, that the Muslims were the originators of the scientific method, and not Roger Bacon. The inductive method in Bacon's *Novum Organum* "had been expounded by the Qur'an and by Muslim scientists and philosophers many centuries before him". According to Briffault, "neither Roger Bacon nor his later namesake has any claim to be credited with having introduced the experimental method. The experimental method of Arabs was by Bacon's time widespread and eagerly cultivated throughout Europe." And thus we can understand why Sartre asks how can we understand Muslim science if we do not understand its gravitation about the Qur'an.

This emphasis on thinking and reflection that employs the mind to reason and inquire is the significant reason for the existence of freedom of inquiry or *ijtihad* (same root for the word *jihad* which means "to exert oneself to the utmost") in the early Islamic history. If today one is familiar with the existence of four schools of thoughts (*mazahib*), in early Islamic history, there existed more than three hundred schools of thought which illustrates the spirit of Islam with regards to inquiry. This attitude to use reason is also well illustrated in the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad in which during one occasion he advised a few people of Madinah to stop grafting of the date palms in order to increase its yield. He was later on informed that the yield had dwindled, whereupon he said: "If there is any use of it, then they should do it, for it was just a personal opinion of mine, and do not go after my personal opinion."<sup>146</sup>

This means that Muslim sought to conduct their worldly affairs using their minds and ought to know on what matters they could depend on the Prophet's guidance. On another occasion when he appointed Muadh ibn Jabal as the governor of Yemen, he quizzed him as to what he would do when he faced a problem. Muadh replied that he would refer to the Qur'an. But what if it was not in the Qur'an? Muadh replied that he would refer to the Prophet's Traditions. Still if he could not find it there, what would he do, the Prophet then asked him, to which he replied that he would use his reason. The Prophet was happy upon hearing this. The point here is that in Islam, philosophy is compatible with it. Not only that but it is necessary in understanding the Qur'an. According to Hamka, religion is not philosophy! But by philosophizing, one can increase his faith in religion.<sup>147</sup>

Philosophical inquiry has been a widespread method of the Muslim curriculum as attested by Maqdisi: "At the turn of the 4th-5th centuries (10th-11th centuries A.D.) disputation, or *munazara*, had already become a highly developed field of legal studies pursued by the student-juriconsult. To become an accomplished master-juriconsult one had to become proficient in disputation."<sup>148</sup> He asserts that the teaching method was so pervasive that not only was it introduced in grammar and *kalam*, an Islamic speculative theology, but also in medicine.<sup>149</sup> He is supported by al-Jawzi who said:

"It is incumbent [upon the student] in the quest for knowledge that he meditate at all times on the more subtle matters [or, the fine points] of knowledge and that he accustom himself thereto; for only by reflection can subtle problems be solved. For this reason it is said: Reflect and you will reach a solution. And it is essential to reflect before speaking in order to speak correctly [or, the truth]. For verily, a speech is like an arrow, [so that] it is necessary to 'aim' by means of reflection before speaking so that one gets directly to the point."<sup>150</sup>

146 Sahih Muslim, Book 29. No 5830, narrated by Talhah bin Ubaydillah, pp. 8-10. Available at [http://tahadu.org/Tahadu-CD2/Hadith/Saheh\\_Muslim/eSahih\\_Muslim/029\\_SMT.PDF](http://tahadu.org/Tahadu-CD2/Hadith/Saheh_Muslim/eSahih_Muslim/029_SMT.PDF)

147 Hamka. 1995. *Falsafah Hidup*. Singapura, Pustaka Nasional.

148 Makdisi, G.1981. *The Rise of Colleges*. Edinburgh, UK, Edinburgh University Press, p. 111.

149 *Ibid.*, p. 126.

150 *Ibid.*, p. 49.



## The Pedagogy of Philosophical Inquiry

Philosophical discussion is different from other types of discussion: there is a sense of the value of impartiality, the need to think problems through rather than just superficial opinions. It is cumulative - that is, it grows and participants may discover new horizons. In a philosophical inquiry, the amount of information or knowledge children acquire is less essential than the development of their intellectual judgment. A philosophical inquiry explores its own assumptions, strengthens understanding of issues or finds more sufficient reasons for believing the things they do. Philosophical discussion deals with philosophical questions. What is a philosophical question? Philosophical questions are essentially contentious. They don't call for the correct answer. They demand further investigation and admit to different answers that may have one merit or another. They point to problems that cannot be solved by calculation, or by consulting a book, or by remembering what the teacher has said. They require students to think for themselves. It requires complex thinking and greater time to do them justice. For example, what are human rights, children rights? What is good? Philosophical questions are about ideas or concepts. What does it mean to be free? They explore links between concepts. In fact philosophical questions are perfect tools for exploring across the curriculum and for integrating and making sense of all disciplines. A good philosophical discussion is considered to have taken place when the net result or outcome indicates progress as contrasted with the initial conditions, progress in understanding, arriving at a consensus, or in formulating the problem and a sense that something has been accomplished; a group product has been achieved.<sup>151</sup>

A philosophical inquiry enables our youth to find meaningfulness through helping them discover alternatives, consistency, impartiality, comprehensiveness, relations, the feasibility of giving reasons for beliefs, reasons for being able to give reasons and the part-whole relationship. The importance of the part-whole relationship can be drawn from situations such as being a part of a play, a member of the soccer team, or a member of the school band. While the part one plays is minor, if you don't play your role well, then the whole team will fail. The confusion children or our youth feel about personal identity, life career, peer relationships, apathy towards education, etc., could be avoided if they are encouraged to reflect and analyze the direction of their own life. This involves dialogue and exposure to alternatives. Similarly, if logic and reasoning are taught without its application in the child's life, then they will not see the whole and its importance.

## The Community of Inquiry (CI)

For a philosophical inquiry to occur there must be a dialogue between at least two persons - an interplay of questions and answers between them. In the Islamic context, the Prophet himself used this method more commonly than other methods in educating the companions: for instance, his question to Mu'adh regarding how he would rule as the new governor of Yemen. In the context of ancient Greece, we have Socrates playing the role of a gadfly annoying others with his philosophical questions - and thus the birth of the Socratic method. Socrates has a group of people, both young and adult, sitting in a semi-circle in front of him with whom he dialogued. In a sense the *halaqah* (semi-circle) of great Muslim scholars of the past bear an exact resemblance to Socrates' semi-circle. What we have is thus a community of learners or inquirers trying to understand some ideas more meaningfully.

Thus in the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry, we have a community of learners that questions each other on definitions, reasons with their beliefs or assertions, build upon one another's ideas, deliberate over the matter or issue, think of counterexamples to someone's thesis, use criteria in making judgment and cooperate in solving the problem at hand as rationally as they can. A long term outcome of the behaviours students display through their involvement in the community of inquiry - the deliberative skills, the cooperative skills, the reasoning skills - is the internalization of these behaviours within themselves. Consequently, our youth will become more critical, creative and ethical thinkers, will possess self-confidence in their own belief and knowledge and will be able to articulate their views and communicate effectively (See Table 6).<sup>152</sup>

151 Lipman, M., Sharp, A. M., Oscanyan, F. S. 1980. *Philosophy in the Classroom* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press.

152 Lipman, M. 2003. *Thinking in Education*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.

Where are the teachers in this pedagogy? What is their role? The teacher is a thinking coach and a philosophical guide.<sup>153</sup> They choose the stimulus material to lead the philosophical discussion, facilitate and encourage questions to keep the discussion focused, growing and developing in an attempt to reach the truth, a consensus or difference in views, while respecting the others for the principles underlying their beliefs. They will teach them the etiquettes of differences of views (*adab al-ikhtilaf*) and also the necessity of respect and listening to others before disagreeing, the value of mutual consultation. In a sense, they are also preparing the youth for active engagement in a democratic and civil society.

**Table 6: Behaviours of the Community of Inquiry and its Individual Internalization**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviours of CI</li> <li>• Members question one another</li> <li>• Request each other reasons for beliefs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internalized individual behaviours Individuals question themselves</li> <li>• Individuals reflect on their reasons for thinking as they do</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on one another's ideas</li> <li>• Deliberate among themselves</li> <li>• Offer counterexamples to others' hypothesis</li> <li>• Point out consequences of one another's ideas</li> <li>• Utilize criteria when making judgments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals build on their own ideas</li> <li>• Individuals deliberate in their own thinking</li> <li>• Individuals give counter-examples to their hypotheses</li> <li>• Individuals anticipate possible consequences of their own ideas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate in the development of rational problem solving techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals use specific criteria when making judgment</li> <li>• Individuals follow rational procedures in dealing with their own problems</li> </ul>

## Personal Studies in the Pedagogy of Philosophical Inquiry

I have conducted several studies applying this pedagogy through the community of inquiry with students from various levels ranging from the primary to tertiary, and in two languages – Malay and English.<sup>154</sup> In almost all cases the feedback I received from both students and some parents is positive. They gained in language, critical and creative thinking skill, and grew more open-minded, more self-confident and we are able to communicate their ideas better. In fact, I have trained moral education and the civics and citizenship education student teachers to apply this method. My qualitative observations show students' enjoyment of the method. In fact my student teachers reported that their students have begun to love Moral Education and find it more interesting in comparison to their previous classes which employed typically direct teaching, note-taking and discussion or small group works where they sometimes make group presentation without much discussion. Students become more proficient in language communication using this pedagogy as well and thus, it is very useful for language development too. Definitely, it is relevant and interesting for history teachers too. But more importantly, it is a great pedagogy for Islamic religious classes, the target of our pedagogical change.

153 Golding, C. 2006. The "Philosophy" in Philosophy in Schools in Ho Wah Kam (ed.) In *Philosophy in schools: Developing a Community of Inquiry*. Singapore, Singapore Teachers' Union, pp. 66-84.

154 Othman, M., Hashim, R. 2005. Critical Thinking and Reading Skills: A comparative study of the Reader Response and the Philosophy for Children Approaches. *Thinking: the Journal of Philosophy for Children*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 26-34, December 2006; Rosnani Hashim. *Philosophy for Children: Its Effects on the Reading and Reasoning Skills of Average and High Achievers in a Malaysian Primary School*. Paper presented in the 12th Learning Conference at the Universidad de Granada, Spain, July 10-13, 2005.

## Students' and Teachers' Views of the Pedagogy and Programme

How students view the pedagogy of community of inquiry are illustrated by comments:

*"It gives me more new ideas and this class is very interesting. We can also change our own ideas with our friends. Besides that, it makes me think more and improve my English. Another thing I like this class is because sometimes we will also have argument with some questions." (Year 6 student 1, School A)*

*"I like this class because it is interesting, enjoyable and we can get closer between friends and teacher. It improves my English. It makes me think in a creative and innovative way. By following this class. I became an open minded person." (Year 6 student 2, School A)*

*"By doing this programme, I overcome my fears in asking questions in public and also gives me the confidence in reading aloud. I also get to enhance my vocabulary power and improve my English gradually." (Year 6 student 1, School B)*

*"I have become open-minded, acquired communication skill, Argumentation, and overcome the feeling of shy". (1st year KIRKHS- Qur'an and Sunnah)*

*"Programme has increased my confidence, communication skills, creative, participate in the discussion, argumentative and motivation". (Master student, AIKOL)*

*"I feel confidence. The more I speak the more I feel confident. There is an improvement". (Master student, KIRKHS)*

But it is more interesting how the teachers who applied it in the classroom feel. A Form 3 teacher using PI in her English class has this to report (15 March 2009): "As for your information, today I've got a very good respond from one of the parents. She told me that her son is always looking forward for the class as it is different from what he's been studying English before this and it has also broaden his mind. So, I did explain to her about the program."

Another teacher (15 January 2010) who teaches Form 4 and 5 students moral education using the method of Philosophical Inquiry found that they did not take it easily initially: "I am using the method to teach moral for Form 4 and 5 students, at first they don't want to respond. Later they try to ask question and answer their friends' questions. I am so happy because the worst students in the class also try to talk and give their point of views although it is right or wrong. I learn more from their views, either their thinking styles or update my thinking styles."

She felt that this approach is more meaningful: "Last time when I used the normal method and give example questions to train them to get 'A' on Moral. They only memorize and didn't realize it. They are as robots apply the moral value only on question paper; even they don't know how to communicate or the right way to talk to teacher although they are smart students."

She personally believes that the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry approach is very suited to Moral Education especially among the students in the upper forms:

"Actually the subject of morals is very interesting to do inquiry, especially upper forms. They realize, to learn try to practice the value in their life. The important thing is we have to give them chance and freedom to talk and encourage them to respond; at the same time class control also is important. We have to know where to stop and how to bring them to achieve our lesson outcomes and objectives."

Let me quote the experience of my student who applies the pedagogy in teaching Secondary 4 history:

"I use a lot of stimulus material from the newspaper. One of the issues that I discussed is the historical fact that the Chinese came to this country as immigrants in the 18 and 19th<sup>th</sup> centuries. M. Fuh, the school authority, called me. The Chinese students sent a letter to the principal saying that they were not satisfied and claimed that I was racist. The principal did not understand this methodology and said I was wrong. He forbid me from using this approach because he said it will bring problem to him. I think all this while the method of teaching history did not produce any effect although it is a core subject but when I use Philosophical Inquiry, students become more sensitive to the subject of history. I strongly agree that PI should be used as a base to teach history."

## Conclusion

This paper is an attempt to show the importance of reviving the pedagogy of philosophical inquiry in the curriculum, in particular, the Muslim curriculum. The agents for the revival of this pedagogy are teachers and educationalists. The pedagogy is not new as I had discussed earlier. What is needed is not so much the content of Western philosophy, because the Islamic tradition had a rather well-developed theory of metaphysics and ethics, but rather philosophy as a tool for doing thinking, for clear argument, for clarifying conceptual muddles, for reasoning analogically, for recognizing ambiguities and tautologies, for examining assumptions, and discovering fallacies in thinking and argument. Coupled with the community of inquiry, this pedagogy is very useful in dialogue and resolving conflict. It is very important now to help the youth to make proper decisions about living in this world that today is more plural in all respects— in thoughts, cultures, ethics, and beliefs.<sup>155</sup> Teachers too need to be critical and creative thinkers, and have good moral and ethical principles. If we apply this pedagogy, we will awaken and open up many minds to be thoughtful, ethical and wiser, and will also have given them a tool to resolve the conflicts and opportunities in their lifetime.

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155 Hashim, R. 2009. Philosophy in the Islamic Tradition: Implications for the Philosophy for Children (P4C) Program. In E. Marsal, Dobashi & B. Weber (eds.). *Children Philosophize Worldwide: Theoretical and Practical Concepts*. New York, Peter-Lang: Hodos Edition.

# Peace Education for Common Future: Indonesian Experience

*Habib Chirzin, Indonesia*

## Peace Education and Integrity: New Agenda and Challenge

In the age of a globalized human community and shrinking world, interregional dialogue is no longer just a commendable endeavor, but has become a historical necessity. Dialogue is not mere communication of words, but a new way of understanding, thinking and reflecting on the philosophy of others and their values. The academies have to move further from intercultural tolerance to understanding, acceptance, respect and celebration and deeper philosophical reflection. Developing a new initiative and agenda for cooperation in the ethical and philosophical studies are essential in our age of history.

Interregional and intercultural dialogue will call for some basic parameters, ethics and common standards to be achieved. There is a need for a global ethic that transcends and governs intercultural relationships, dialogue and action. In the same time we should also promote a human rights standards and mechanism for a common standard of achievement in peace, justice and integrity in the more globalized world. Human rights are conducive to peace, and there is no peace without human rights protection and promotion. Human rights are an indispensable condition for peace, which means that the separate value of peace can not be attained without securing the basic value of human rights. There is a right to peace, which means that this right is already included in the catalogue of human rights or that it must be immediately included in it. This is important in the national, regional and international protection mechanism as well as in the standards of interfaith dialogue, communication and action. This right to peace was solemnly proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in the *Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace* on 12 November 1984:

*“The General Assembly, Recognizing that the maintenance of a peaceful life for peoples is the sacred duty of each State, 1. Solemnly proclaims that the people of our planet have a sacred right to peace; 2. Solemnly declares that the preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State.”*

According to Article 55 of the UN Charter: “Universal respect for, and the observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms” is instrumental in “the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations’.

In its Preamble, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights lists, in the first place and before reasons related to justice, dignity and worth of the human being, the conviction of the General Assembly that ‘recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.’ Similar wording appears in the identical first paragraphs of the Preamble of the two International Covenants on Human Rights.

The General Conference of UNESCO has been very fond of language indicating that “peace cannot consist solely in the absence of armed conflict but implies principally a process,” of progress, justice and mutual respect among the peoples. A peace founded on injustice and violation of human rights cannot last and leads inevitably to violence.

Intercultural dialogue should be a platform which enables the community to find ways to work together for the good of the respective religions and their communities, even for the nations, for humanity, and the universe as a whole. The way we conduct and develop the dialogue should stimulate a sense of mutual concern and a spirit of togetherness, a sensitiveness to the need of fellow human being and all creatures (*rahmatan lil ‘alamien*).

The basic principles of international humanitarian law are formulated in various international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Civil and Political Rights Covenant, which bind all signatory (member) states.

We should be aware of the various documents within which international humanitarian law is enshrined, particularly in countries where laws are not adequate to guarantee the rights and security of its citizens. The following is a list of some of those laws that may be applicable in the protection and promotion of the rights to peace:

- a. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- b. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- c. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination.
- d. The Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- e. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.
- f. Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or One's Convictions.
- g. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
- h. Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- i. The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

## Strengthening Peace Education in the Globalized World

To each age of history, humankind and academic communities have to give answers to life's mysteries and challenges; yet they can never consider their answer as absolute and final. They must go beyond the boundary of their possibilities. This is their openness to the future, which characterizes their innermost existence on the threshold between vanishing today and the newly appearing future. Human beings are creatures of hope, peace and justice. Therefore we have to develop more deep, more sincere intercultural dialogue and action for human fulfillment, peace, justice and integrity (*Mukhlishina lahuddin, hunafaa*).

According to Betty Reardon (1988), peace education expert from the Teachers College, Columbia University, peace education is "the attempt to promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and patterns of thought that have created it." The transformational imperative must be at the centre, both in knowledge and values.

In the daily practical life, peace education seeks to draw out from people their own best conduct to live more peacefully with others. This implies working from within, starting the transformation of society beginning with each individual of community members.

To build on the philosophy and the processes of nonviolence is to help us understand the roles that conflict and violence have played in our own lives, seeking ways to transform them. Peace educators point out both the value of and the risk of conflict and social transformation.

Concerning the role of young people in peace education, Elise Boulding (1988), a founder of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), said: "There are certain characteristics that optimize young people growing up to be peacemakers - those who will seek to shape their societies toward peace." These include: genetics, cognitive maturational processes, modeling and reinforcement, knowledge stock, cultural values and beliefs, family influence, peers, the media, community inputs. Models are the key. The important function of education cannot be underestimated.

Young people of different faiths, cultures and traditions involved in NGOs and PVOs in different parts of the world have been able to accomplish an enormous amount of good work because of the advantages they bring to conflict situations in promoting peace culture and development. PSAP (the Center for Religion and Civilization Studies) of Muhammadiyah has initiated a promising program of Peace

Generation and has launched a Manual Book with 12 Learning Books on Peace Education for the young generation. This Peace Generation and other NGOs have been actively involved in peace and conflict resolution training as well as social action.

Through humanitarian assistance in food, health and shelter, countless lives have been saved by these kinds of activities. Human rights advocacy has prevented repression, torture, detentions and deaths in many countries by the committed youth groups. Communities in post-conflict situations have been assisted towards rehabilitation and economic viability through reconstruction programs. Community development and reconstruction have become a new name for Peace.

In achieving the sustainability of a peaceful world, the dialogue among civilizations is being undertaken by the United Nations and related activities among religious and civil societies. Since the United Nations declared 2001 as the “Year of Dialogue among Civilizations” there has been growing acknowledgement of such noble endeavors. The IYF2008 (International Youth Forum 2008) was held in Bandung, Indonesia, from 23-30 June 2008, co-organized by PSAP and IofC (Initiative of Change). It was also a great forum for promotion of the Culture of Peace and also Dialogue among Civilizations, especially among the young generations for their common future.

In Indonesia and other Asian countries, many local NGOs and PVOs work with internally displaced people (IDPs) during a conflict. Most of the work done at this stage focuses on various aspects of humanitarian assistance and normally includes the provision of shelter (camps), food, medicine, clothing, water and sanitation. Psychosocial response services may be needed as well as the development of coping mechanisms for war-affected people.

In many cases, conflicts are not static and can change in nature very quickly; so the NGOs activities need to be flexible enough to adapt to these changes. Relief work must continue and some pre-emptive reconciliation work can be done in refugee/IDP camps which have a reasonably stable population. Peace Generation together with the different stakeholders and its networks have been initiating some peace education and development activities. This work include preparation for peace, conflict prevention and sustainable development such as:

1. Peace education for the youth and women groups.
2. The formation of peace groups in the local community.
3. Working with local and traditional leaders (*ulama* and *Pesantrens*).
4. Building an indigenous capacity for coping with conflict prevention.
5. Strengthening local institutions for conflict resolution and prevention.
6. Exploring traditional and culturally appropriate reconciliation mechanisms.
7. Collaboration in peace and development program of other NGOs and PVOs.
8. Developing an effective network of interfaith action for peace and development.

## **Nurturing Culture of Peace through Music and Traditional Festivals**

Recently the Indonesian peace-makers, including the Peace Generation and Center for Peace and Human Security Studies of Hamka University, Jakarta, were involved in the “Songs of Peace and Reconciliation” Consultation, jointly organized by the Brehm Center, Fuller Graduate Schools; The Henry Luce Foundation and ICRS (Inter Cultural and Religious Studies) Graduate School, Universitas Gajah Mada, Yogyakarta, from 31 March to 3 April 2010.

Music brings together essential components of life, i.e. religion, people and culture, linking them in historical, present and new constructs. When peoples of different nations, ethnic groups and cultures are in conflict, profound religious disagreement and misunderstanding arise. However the area of music seems to be neutral ground, ground which people can come together despite their differences. In particular, studies in music-in-culture and world religions provide entry points for accessing deeply embedded beliefs and assumptions. The goal of consultation was to explore the role that music and song play in fostering peace and reconciliation.

My personal experience on peace, religion and music, was in January 2005, when I was co-hosting the visit of brother Yusuf Islam (formerly, Cat Stevens) after the Tsunami disaster in Aceh. After the visit with brother Emha Ainun Najib we conducted a "Concert on Aceh Healing", a collaboration between Kyai Kanjeng, led by Cak Nun (Emha Ainan Najib), with Yusuf Islam, Ahmad Dhani, etc., on 28 January 2005. I also made a recitation of al-Quran and the translation by Mohammed Khan, a film maker from Santa Monica, California.

My involvement with peace, music and healing was enriched by the experience to be invited to participate in the "Quest for Global Healing" held in Ubud, Bali, May, 2006, where different music and cultural performances were shared. The Peace Noble laureate Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu, as a guest of honor, also sang a song and danced together with other participants. It was a wonderful experience in the peace and healing through art and culture.

One of the most interesting cultural phenomenon of nurturing peace culture in the traditional Javanese-Islamic festival is the Sekaten Festival, held annually in different parts of Java, like Yogyakarta and Cirebon. The Sekaten Festival is a week-long cultural festival held in the Palace ground yard of Alun-alun, Yogyakarta to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. In Yogyakarta, Sekaten Festival has become an open public sphere and cultural festival to celebrate social and cultural diversity. During the Sekaten Festival, the different people from the different parts of Java and some foreign visitors gather at the Alun-alun (Palace ground yard) to participate in the festival. Sekaten has become a festival celebrating the diverse beliefs, ethnicities and cultures of the people of Yogyakarta and Java, since the 16th century.

The festival, a *gamelan*, a set of traditional Javanese musical instruments named by Kyai Sekati, played in the special place in the Kraton Grand Mosque (*Masjid Gede*). The *gamelan* ensemble of Kyai Sekati is reported to have been created by Sunan Kalijaga, one of the *Wali Sanga* (the Nine saints) of Java in 15<sup>th</sup> and 16th centuries.

The Arabic term for "music", *musiqa*, does not apply to *all* types of artistic vocal and instrumental arrangements of sounds or tones and rhythms; rather, the Muslims term this general case "*handasah al sawt*," or "the art of sound." *Musiqa*, or "music," applies rather "only to particular genres of sound art, and for the most part it has been designated for only those that have a "somewhat questionable or even disreputable status in Islamic culture" (al-Faruqi, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*, 1986).

In the Indonesian Muslim community, Qur'anic chant (Tilawah/ Qira'ah al Qur'an), for example, can be seen as the prototype of all Islamic music and the most pervasive genre of Islamic sound art. The point of much music in the Islamic world is, therefore, to express the most important concept of the Qur'an: *tawhid*, or "unity with God."

There are various devices that Muslims use to express *tawhid*, but in sum these characteristics can all be described as forms of abstraction: "Since *tawhid* teaches that God cannot be identified with any object or being from nature, He cannot be musically associated with sounds that arouse psychological or kinesthetic correspondences to beings, events, objects, or ideas within nature" (al-Faruqi, 1986).

Over the last 20 years, *Sama'* music and dance was introduced to the Indonesian community. The Sufi order of the Whirling Dervishes was founded in the 13th century by the world-renowned Islamic scholar, philosopher and mystical poet Jalal-al-Din Rumi, popularly known as "Rumi". The popular appeal of Rumi and his poetry expressing his philosophy of love of all creation, tolerance, and peace through love and worship of God has not diminished over the centuries. *Sama'* of the Whirling Dervishes features the revolving dance of the dervishes cloaked in long white robes accompanied by spiritual Sufi music performed live on traditional instruments dating back to the time of Rumi. In Indonesia, the *Sama'* music and dance is being popularized by a group of Sufi tradition.

The Peace Generation and other peace-maker groups have been creatively developing music for peace and reconciliation. The key is creativity and a deep understanding of people's culture of peace.



## Strengthening the Peace Initiatives of World Peace Communities

In conjunction with UN Millennium Summit, on 28-31 August 2000, two thousand of the world's prominent religious and spiritual leaders representing many faith traditions, gathered at the United Nations for a Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders. The summit then established the World Council of Religious Leaders (WCRL) as an independent body, which works to bring religious resources to support the work of the United Nations in our common quest for peace. WCRL is not an official part of the United Nations, nor does it have any status with the United Nations.

The establishment of the World Council of Religious Leaders was one of the stated goals of the Millennium World Peace Summit. The objective of this Council is to serve as a resource to the United Nations and its agencies around the world, nation states and other international organizations, offering the collective wisdom and resources of the faith traditions toward the resolution of critical global problems. Two years later, the launching of the World Council took place in Bangkok on 12-14 June 2002, at Buddhamonthon and at UNESCAP. Participants adopted a Charter that outlines key areas in which religious leaders can play an active role in reducing conflict and addressing the critical needs of humankind.

Since then the World Council of Religious Leaders undertake initiatives that will assist the United Nations and its agencies by providing the spiritual resources of the world's religious traditions in the prevention, resolution and healing of conflicts, and in addressing global social and environmental problems. By promoting the universal human values shared by all religious traditions and by uniting the human community for the creation of a more peaceful, just and sustainable world society (World Council of Religious Leaders, 2008).

The Center for Civilizational Dialogue of the University of Malaya and other studies centers of the intercultural community for peace should develop a creative and new vision of collaboration to nurture the culture of peace and integrity from the philosophical perspective.

## Some Proposed Future Agenda for Cooperation in the Philosophy of Peace and Integrity

The academic, interregional and intercultural community now needs more than ever a Global Forum on Philosophy for Peace. We need a forum which can nurture continuing discussion of ideas, beliefs, and visions of the future. An effort must be made to combine studies with discussion, and we have also to consider joint projects and studies. Some proposed future agenda for cooperation to be considered by the Interregional Conference Dialogue:

1. Interregional and intercultural dialogue in the globalized world community should be issue oriented.
2. The Philosophy Community should seek major involvement of women and young people in this dialogue for life and humanity.
3. The Interregional and Intercultural dialogue should strengthen the Peace Generation and other peace-makers.
4. The Interregional and Intercultural dialogue and Center for Civilization Dialogue should plan a viable four-year program. The organizations co-sponsoring this conference dialogue might plan and oversee a four-year program of interregional and intercultural dialogue and study; and meet biannually with a focus on specific issues and area of concerns.



## Commentary

### *Azizan Baharuddin, Malaysia*

The paper is an important encapsulation of the overall framework of peace education in Indonesia, especially from the perspective of the Center for Peace and Human Security Studies, Hamka University, of which Prof. Habib is the Director. Hamka, by the way, is one the most important philosophers in our region. Hamka is significant because he was successful at developing a corpus of knowledge that harmonized indigenous philosophy with “modern” scientific ideas/developments. I hope in the future he can give in more details in terms of the curricula and programmes in Indonesia.

Prof. Habib also elaborates meanings of “dialogue”, which needs articulating and developing as a discipline in itself. He says: “Dialogue is the new ethics of living together in a plural world, an inevitable fact of life; dialogue is the way of understanding and reflecting on the philosophy of others and their values; dialogue is a way of inculcating a sense of natural concern of spirit of togetherness as well as sensitivity to the need of other human beings and creatures; dialogue requires rational, emotional and spiritual intelligence and capacities.”

Prof. Habib talks about something new in the idea that we need a global ethics that could/would govern or guide or be the basis of intercultural relationships, dialogue and action. I would like him to elaborate on the ideas of global ethics. Prof. Habib also lists out principles of international humanitarian law as formulated in various international laws and conventions. I would like to know which of the laws are actually in place in Indonesian conventions which are ratified by Indonesia currently? Also, can he tell us to what extent indigenous principles and values can add to or complement these laws and conventions? For example, there is a Quranic teaching about the equality of people based on the ideas that all men are the sons of Adam. I think this highlights the importance of a reinvigoration of indigenous value systems to the extent that this is possible.

By indigenous value systems, we also take on board, all elements of hybridity that have taken place in the context of our region - the Malay-Muslims’ values plus the other value-systems to be found in the plural society of the region, i.e. Indian, Chinese and Western outlooks.

In the form of affirmative action, youth involvement is a critical practical aspect of peace education. This real life involvement is the creation of peace. One form of activity or programme in this regard that Prof. Habib has highlighted is community development and reconstruction. Here I think lies an important space where students at the university, for example, can interact with and enrich their education and development through direct contact with NGOs and the community at large. This contact can, I think create a life-long impact. I would link this to Elise Boulding who is a futurist engaged in persuading youth to participate in their thinking of their future.

I also like the forum of dialogue of life that takes place through the celebration of the arts. The example he gave is the music festival that was held that brought together people of different ethnicities and religions. I must say we have not consciously done this, and it is certainly something, which we will try to emulate. We need to consolidate efforts in the region.

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## Mundialization of Home: Enabling a Consciousness of Multi-Identity

*In-Suk Cha, Republic of Korea*

In this age of globalization, the easy movement of capital, goods, technology and workforce across national borders is accompanied by an ever-widening dissemination of diverse ideas, beliefs, values and customs among various peoples. This cultural diffusion is accelerating at an unprecedented pace due to the rampant innovative uses of telecommunication. Cultures, which had always been defined by their individual uniqueness, one from another, now appear to blur into one another. How deep and comprehensive is this appearance of merging cultures? Is it only an appearance or are cultures losing their distinctiveness and human beings losing all individuality? Surely it is worth examining.

All human beings are born into a particular community, inheriting a language, a culture, and certain ways of interacting with other members of their immediate community. In that community, they connect to each other as fellow beings and develop their individuality through the various modes of coexistence. Though categorization of these modes varies to some degree, they are remarkably recognizable no matter which scholar addresses them. I like to use the categorizations of my mentor, Eugen Fink, namely because, over the years, I have found that other categorizations complement his, but never challenge them. His categories for the modes of co-existence are love and hatred, domination and subjection, work and play, and death. By virtue of the meanings formed through these modes of coexistence, every individual develops the capacity to form, and reform understandings of self, society and nature (*Grundphaenomene des menschlichen Daseins*).

These modes of coexistence are not models or blueprints as to how human beings might develop in an ideal way. They are broad categories of the emotions and fields of operation with which and in which human beings interact and develop as individuals and groups. These categories are not blueprints for how human beings should live; they simply are the modes by which human beings develop rationally. The modes are intertwined and bound together in all cultures and the lives of all of us are also bound in them in most intricately experiential and complex ways.

No matter which of myriad ways these modes of coexistence are manifest, they are intrinsically the same in every society. A child first learns love in the bosom of the family, as love unites mother and child. Hatred might, perhaps, first come in the form of sibling rivalries, or perhaps in the form of quarrels with neighbors, and these often lead to loss of lives, to death, which is ever present in a thousand other ways as well. To avoid this heart-aching calamity, from the earliest time, some humans learnt to seek ways to find peaceful coexistence among themselves.

The family unit works together but their subsistence mainly depends upon community and the unit works with its neighbours as well. We know that the earliest families hunted and gathered together and some, indeed most of the early groups, discovered agriculture and decided to form farming communities. From the various social structures built around these communities, came the building of dams, temples, towns, cities, and states and lastly civilizations of complexity and magnitude.

We can imagine, even in the earliest of communities that after a long day's hard work, family and neighbours come together to share food and drink at the evening table. There they soothed the pains of the body, thus lifting the spirit. Drinking prompted them to sing and dance life's burdens into oblivion. In every culture the idea of play is a universal conception. In play, make-believe can be experienced as a reality. The capacity to imagine and to create alternative realities is uniquely human. Through play we experientially learn the meaning of freedom of self-expression.

Our awareness of our own mortality comes by way of our awareness of the death of the other. Our understanding of death is social. Death-awareness in fact defines what it is to be human. The inevitability of death holds us captive in thought and imagination. Death illuminates the disparity between transience and eternity. The loss of a beloved can reveal to us the futility of realizing eternal life on earth and inspire us to live in peace with others while still of this earth.

Human interactions within the modes construct humanity. For example, love discloses to humans the meaning of unity and peace, whereas hatred opens out toward violence and destruction. Work certainly reveals the magnitude of our potentialities and the relevance of cooperation for the survival of humanity. These meanings, formed through various modes of human coexistence, constitute the basic structure of intersubjective understanding among individuals and groups. As individual subjective meanings are formed through intersubjective communication and interaction, those meanings exist in the community domain and are thus shared and understood by others in the community. Humans then use these meanings to communicate, argue, agree, give reasons and make definitions, and as they do this, the meanings expand and change.

Biologically and genetically, each of us is unique, so different from one another that even an infant is predisposed to show preferences and to have certain propensities, talents and dislikes. One might say we are arranged so as to play different tunes. We are always aware that we are different from one another even when we note and compare our similarities. Thus, when a human being engages in self-reflection, she or he may be solitary, but the act of self-reflection can only take place because the human ontological essence is social. That is to say, we exist because we coexist. We think because we coexist and our thinking takes place within the parameters of our sociality. The notion of collective and individual belong on the same coin. It is said that to be human is to be rational and rationality derives from societal interaction. Only in association with others does one's individuality come into being. Dewey phrased this notion aptly when he stressed that "Selfhood is not something that exists apart from association and intercourse" (*The Theory of Moral Life*). It is only in community that individual human beings progress in intellectual capacity, in observation, imagination, judgment, and invention (*Democracy and Education*).

When we find ourselves in different cultures and societies, we recognize the modes of coexistence, love and hatred, domination and subjection, and work and play, and death, functioning there in daily life. Because this is so, adapting to strange situations is possible. Normally, we begin our life in the family and start out from our homes to the neighborhood. Perchance, we venture even further to new surroundings, and then, home again. Sometimes, of course, we embark on journeys to entirely unknown and strange worlds. It is through repetitions of leaving home and returning again that the different worlds we visit become ever more familiar, ever more like home.

When we find ourselves in a strange environment, we at once see what is different from our homeworld. But we also see what is similar and as we come to negotiate with what is similar, we also come to accommodate what is strange by virtue of how it fits in with what we recognize as similar. The similar is easily taken into our existing schemata of orientation, which itself widens with the acceptance. In that widening, we are able to reckon with the strange and accommodate it into our schemata as well. This process is generally called cultural assimilation. Its end result is that we finally are able to think and act in the manner of the other, interacting with the reality of the other's environment as if it were our own. What was once strange and unfamiliar is transformed into something comfortable and familiar. Through this assimilation, the boundaries of our individual homeworlds become constantly widened as the strange world we encounter become absorbed and transformed into our own homeworlds. This phenomenon I call "the mundialization of home". What effects the mundialization of home is the mediation of common elements found in both the schemata of orientation of the homeworld and that of the strange world.

The links between the homeworld and the alien are the modes of human coexistence. The world at large which includes the homeworld and the strange world of the other is social and cultural, a place wherein human beings interact in thought, feelings and actions in intertwining modes of coexistence. All communicative acts, in family, school, office, business, factory, arts and politics are interacted, enacted and transacted via the modes of coexistence. And within this experiential structure, humans traverse a multitude of different worlds. We are world-experiencing, world-constructing and reconstructing beings. Today, in this age of globalization, as never before in the history of human kind, we have most truly arrived at the mundialization of the homeworld.

A new lifestyle brought about by the global economy and rapid progress of telecommunication is emerging across the globe. It recognizes no cultural boundaries for we see it and hear of it in New York, London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow. The list goes on. It is, to be sure, a cosmopolitan list, and while

rural segments of the world do not share this new lifestyle, those segments often feel the effects, sometimes disastrously. But in the glittering cosmopolitan sector, young white-collar workers in Beijing and Bahrain, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul and Auckland cruise around cyberspace all day long. At noon, they take a quick bite at fast food counters, and in the evening they watch videos or listen to CDs. They don't have to be Englishmen or Russians to understand Shakespeare and Dostoevsky. They comprehend mental anguish and moral dilemmas of both Hamlet, the Danish prince who plans to kill to avenge his father's murder, and Raskolnikov, the fallen-out Russian student who kills a much hated, parasitic pawnbroker. Educational and technological advancements worldwide have created lifestyles, which make connecting to the ethos of other times, places and minds possible for young people because they share their own common ethos with contemporaries in different lands and cultures. In what might be called the globalization lifestyle that they share, they tend to think alike, feel alike and behave alike in many pervading areas of life. Their preferences in cuisine, music and entertainment seem to be almost homogeneous. Never again can anyone quote Kipling's "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet" as if it were a truism. The flow of exchanges between and among East, West, North, and South is so constant that meeting on common ground takes place in numerous contexts.

In truth, no culture of any folk or nation has ever been indigenous. Every culture is made up of other cultures for cultures are always binding together, forming unique unions. That is to say that any culture is a complex of many other cultures and always in a state of assimilating other cultures. Moreover, the fluidity of this process contributes both to the uniqueness of a given culture and to its commonality with other cultures. Culture is nearly always in the state of instability because it is always transcending its boundaries and confines. With the accelerating globalization this flexible nature of culture could eventually lead to a more global consciousness of the multi-identities of all individuals and groups inhabiting the regions of the planet. This global consciousness, in turn, could be called upon to counter intolerance of differences, mutual suspicions, and animosities, which fester among peoples of all localities and regions of the globe.

A cultural common ground for mutual understanding is certainly a necessary condition for founding a world in which we can live together in peace and harmony. It is an essential prerequisite. However, it also is clear that common ground can be swiftly trodden upon by particular interests within national boundaries. For, as we see workers, capital and technology striding with ease over national borders, we also see that most of the populations of the countries in which such exchanges take place, carry on with their lives as if newcomers had not arrived. Their pursuits and needs remain intact and conflicts arise in terms of the newcomers and their priorities. Indeed, to many, it seems a situation in which the differences of the Other have invaded their homeworld. This sort of problem is but one of many posed by the current economic globalization. Rational thinking is necessary for their solution. Fear, suspicion, violence, and scape-goating are among the factors to be addressed and abated through the power of reasoning together. In the case of host communities and the newly arrived workers, whether they are to be transient or permanent members of the community, all parties should be involved in rational thinking and planning, raising awareness, deliberately enlarging the parameters of community through cultural sharing and collaborating on projects of vital interest to community life. After all, today's global projects are not the result of invasions; governments have approved them. Surely, it is not too late to remedy the lack of preparing on a broader, social level now and to use the many ways societies have at hand to build communities capable of assimilating and of tolerating differences. That is the vision, which drives our current global projects, after all.

Realizing that vision requires consciousness of the goal and of the dangers that beset us in our efforts to achieve it. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre reminds us of the power of the Other to nullify my self's very existence if I accept the objectification of the Other's gaze. Each self seeks to maintain or recover its being through objectifying the other. Here may arise the following kinds of thought. Am I to resign myself to this fateful end of my being, especially to an enemy? Or should I raise arms against the threat of my adversary and assert my own being? Or should this fear for my own demise motivate me to reflect upon the necessity of my living together with the enemy in peace? The last question should lead us to Kant's rational, survival alternatives to the devastating mechanisms of our human propensity to "unsocial sociability".

Today, the truth of the matter is just as it was in Kant's time: the very survival of humankind depends on cooperation of all nations and states. The economic crisis which the world is currently experiencing manifestly demonstrates that all peoples on the globe are so inextricably interrelated and so deeply interdependent on one another that peaceful resolution of conflicts of interests is required for the survival of all humanity. We must see to it that our rationality is purpose-oriented and instrumental to the continuing survival of humankind.

The notions of human dignity and human rights have become today part of the internationally standardized democratic ideas that have come to represent the interconnectivity of global survival: to wit, no human being has the right to exercise their rights at the expense of another's. Of course, this idea of human rights is by no means universally accepted in the strict sense of the word. Nonetheless, over centuries of mundialization processes, it now encompasses every corner of the earth. Transforming globalized ideas into our own schemata and making them our own is accomplished through transculturation, which is mediated through the elements in our culture's conceptual schemata that are compatible with elements in the conceptual schemata of another culture.

In fact, the mundialization process takes place by virtue of transculturation through the medium of which such ideas such as freedom, equality, social justice and human rights positioned now as the real essentials of democracy worldwide. All nations and peoples of East and West need to recognize, accept and act upon these ideas as constitutive of our interpretative schemata for understanding political and social reality. These saving seeds of our humanity have already been sown in the global garden, they need cultivating now if humanity is to survive.<sup>156</sup>



## Commentary

### *Napat Chaipraditkul, Thailand*

Albert Einstein said: "A human being is a part of a whole, called by us the 'universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest... a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."<sup>157</sup>

What made us who we are now is our identity. Every particular person has their own identities and each one of these identities determines their consciousness, preference and prejudice. Many people have more than one identity. Identity<sup>158</sup> is simply the concept of their self-being and how they see themselves. When people are born they are prone to simply accept the culture and religious belief in which they were immersed. Intrinsically this is considered to be a part of particular gender, social class, financial status, and cultural orientation, national and regional identity.

Creation of self-identity is legally bounded following the birth of every human being by their biological parents. Later on their social roles are given. On the other hand, when a child has grown into a person, experience will have taught things which should make us increasingly more aware of the complexity of our own personal identity and mindset. Nonetheless, with globalization transcending cultures and the perspective of people throughout the globe, multiple identities can be expected by people regardless of their former experiences, self-existence, and familiar homelands. The identity of each person is different, the same as there are cultural differences.

156 This is an enlarged version of a paper presented at Rhodes Forum (Dialogue of Civilizations). October 8-12, 2009 at Rhodes, Greece.

157 Harris, K. 1995. *Collected Quotes from Einstein*. Available at <http://rescomp.stanford.edu/~cheshire/EinsteinQuotes.html>

158 Macer, D. R. J. (ed.) 2005. *UNESCO/IUBS/EUBIOS Bioethics Dictionary*. Available at <http://eubios.info/biodict.htm>

Conflict is very likely to occur if we focus on the differences. We can say that humanity has experienced harmony and love, as well as conflict, and rivalry or even hatred. The avoidance of these feelings is simply impossible. Some people see conflict as the development of something and some view conflict as a way to greater sorrow. Most human beings learn to coexist and balance between what is more important to them and what is not. In all cultures people may judge on many things, but they should continue to be tolerant with them due to social interactions and their interest. Harmonious coexistence among people is possible when people see some benefit for themselves.

Conflicts also happen between people with identical hopes and goals as well, due to the sense of competition among people to reach the same goal. Conflict also inflicts envy and a sense of superiority. Ethnocentrism is considered to be a major part of the multi-identity acknowledgement problems, such as gender, racial, and financial discrimination. For example, in Thailand, some Thai people see people from European countries, (defined as those of Caucasian descent), to be financially stable and rich. They try to financially exploit them because they are Caucasian tourists. This financial abuse of tourists, consequently, creates a series of unwelcome situations. We all have multi-identities, and we should not stereotype people.

Apart from racial and financial discrimination, another issue that gets in the way of mutual consciousness is gender discrimination. Mao Zedong said: "Women hold up half the sky",<sup>150</sup> therefore implying that men are holding up the other half of the sky. However we can see abuses today in many countries in Asia, such as female feticide and the abuse and neglect of girls. Equality among humanity should be the first thing to be considered.

Gandhi fought for equality all his life. He also had a sense of humour when he said: "I believe in equality for everyone, except reporters and photographers."<sup>151</sup> One problem that we, as human beings, are facing today is segregation of races and beliefs. Despite our differences we have to seek commonalities between people and their culture, whether they are from the West or East, and not simply empower separation and ignorance. I agree with the essence of what Professor Cha<sup>152</sup> has said. Adapting to coexist with the environment around you by repetition is daily common sense of people in most cultures and traveling to the unfamiliar world. Globalization has shifted our globe into another level where people are acknowledging the cultural diversities from the unfamiliar world and keep learning for more mutual understanding.

We need to join together for cooperation despite the biological and cultural differences. We cannot simply deny who we are. The consensus of cooperation must reach the majority of people at international and national level regardless of the prejudice of a particular identity. We are humans who are worthy of living and all deserve rights the same as everyone else. Therefore, creating awareness of multiple identities into the minds of people all around the world will lessen biased perspectives and encourage harmonious intercultural communication and universal understanding.

In conclusion, multiple identities of people vary depending on their personal and regional background. We should have an appreciation of other human beings who deserve the same rights and equality no matter what country they are living in. I believe people altogether can live together in peace in our coming future only if we lessen our greed and encourage empathy, awareness and mutual understanding. This is essential for our generation and future generations, all of humanity. Last but not least, appreciation of other cultures is another way closer to the goal that we are looking forward to see in the near future. I appreciated the wisdom of Professor Cha.



# Human Dignity as a Tool to Improve Transcultural Dialogue: The Example of Bioethics

*Sadek Beloucif, Algeria*

Among the fundamental questions raised by medicine, that have direct philosophical implications, bioethics has yielded key respect for the definition, integrity and autonomy of a person, with the attention for an appropriate consent, free from moral, economic, political, scientific, or social pressures. Among the values that are at the core of bioethics, the concept of dignity, with its tensions between means and ends, is of special interest.

Medicine is too often taken as a technical job. Physicians are used to explaining the medical condition of the patient, but usually the quality of discussion concerning a patient's functional status, values or fears is poor or even non-existent. Such a practice that lacks the core of human interactions could be seen as a breach to the patient's dignity. As patients, we would not like to be treated by such physicians. These issues have gained some attention in the medical field and accordingly, a recent editorial in *Lancet*<sup>159</sup> asked whether caring for patients could be taught. Given the vogue of acronyms in medicine, the acronym CARE was proposed, for Compassion, Attention, Respect, and Empathy. In a similar attention, the *British Medical Journal* also proposed some "A, B, C, and D" of dignity conserving care.<sup>160</sup> Such a humane treatment would consist in taking consideration of relatively simple attentions, such as:

- A for Attitudes (with questions to be asked like: "How would I be feeling in this patient's situation?", "Am I aware how my attitude towards the patient may be affecting them?", "Could my attitude towards the patient be based on something to do with my own experiences, anxieties, or fears?"), and Actions to be taken, such as to "make a conscious effort to make these questions a part of your reflection on the care of each and every patient."
- B for Behaviours, in order to "treat contact with patients as you would any potent and important clinical intervention", simple good manners, such as always asking the patient the permission to perform a physical examination, and some attentions to programs and tools aimed at facilitating communication.
- C for Compassion: "getting in touch with one's own feelings requires the consideration of human life and experience", and the doctor should read stories and novels and observe films and theatre depicting the human condition, and learn the ways of expressing such a compassion.
- D for Dialogue, by acknowledging personhood and knowing the patient.

This respectful and proper way of practicing medicine therefore should not only concentrate on the "How's" of physicians performing their tasks, but also on the "Why's" they are prescribing this treatment to a unique individual.

Dignity is not restricted to the medical field. It encompasses good manners and morals. For a politician, it might mean putting national above personal interests, although it cannot be restricted to a battle between my autonomy and the collective interests of a group. Human dignity is a complex concept that has been proposed to be at the core of ethical concerns in bioethics. It is present in numerous international texts such as the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights (1997), or the European Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, but can be found as early as in the opening of the Preamble of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations ("Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world"), as well as in its first Article ("All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.").

159 *The Lancet*. 25 August 2007. Vol. 370, No. 9588, pp. 629-712.

160 Chochinov, H. 2007. Dignity and the Essence of Medicine: The A, B, C, and D of Dignity Conserving Care. *British Medical Journal*. Vol. 335, pp. 184-187.

Dignity, however, is difficult to clearly define. Like the cardinal principles of bioethics, it is rooted on practical grounds, preventing abuses, but is also aiming for a clear respect for principles and values. Among these, the definition of a person and the respect for dignity may seem “obvious” as their corollary would be to understand tensions between means and ends or to fight against any profanation of a person. Dignity might even be ambiguous, as it can be understood, as a quality (*dignitas*) attached to a rank or an official position (dignitaries), or as a general principle protecting the sovereignty of humans. Dignity here seen as humanity (i.e. what behavior I expect from my fellow humans) would be taken as the concept of equal dignity of all humans. But dignity could also be considered as an individual claim defined by the person itself, that can be used to request new rights, and in this regard we will all have our personal cultural ideas of what dignity is. Special requests of this understanding have, for example, been claimed in the context of euthanasia by persons requesting a right to “die with dignity”, because they would have the impression that their dignity is now lost and that consequently they have the “right” to euthanasia. However, dignity, an intrinsically human characteristic, cannot be suppressed! Even if we consider the horror of Nazi concentration camps, Jews and other deportees, although having been inhumanely treated, did not lose their dignity, as this equivalent of what a human person is simply cannot be suppressed.

One of the difficulties (and beauty) of dignity, is that it possesses a dual acceptance. Taken as a general principle, it infers that it would be a means to be protected against external aggressions, against the excessive “liberty” of others. On the other hand, understood as an individual claim, it is a means to promote my individual conception of liberty. We might then see here an illustration of the social and anthropological problem of the tension between the good of the group versus the good of a single individual. In this respect, if we consider the cardinal bioethical principles (autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice), would dignity lean on (or mainly represent) the autonomy of the individual, or the justice of the group? Is dignity more related to an individual, or to a group value? If we consider justice as an equivalent of dignity (with the goal of first promoting equity and equality of chances, and then fighting against discriminations), we find a harmonious agreement, being valid with the different theories of justice, being procedural (libertarian), utilitarian (“classic” economic reasoning), egalitarian of primary goods (Rawls), egalitarian of “capabilities” (Sen), or elitism of merit (Ferry).

The concept of respect could also be seen as another equivalent of dignity. We are not alone; it is the view of others that makes me human and that gives me dignity. Professor Jasdev Rai, comparing Western and Eastern philosophy in his paper in this volume, said: “The West says, ‘I think, therefore I am,’ while the East says, ‘You are, therefore I am.’”

In some poor neighborhoods of France, this idea of respect is now very popular, and would be falsely considered as a plain simplification of dignity, a sort of light-dignity. To respect a person means to recognize them, and recognize obviously means to know this person. This last term can also be understood on its biblical acceptance of love. Dignity indeed can be seen as a highly pluralist concept.

Such an understanding can be very useful in the light of a trans-cultural approach. Given the individuality and singularity of humans, we are all different, and thus will see all others as different than us. However, obviously, we fail to realize that others will also see us as different than them! To enhance global understanding, we have to discuss and promote the idea, not only of simple plain information and communication, but also of true and mature dialogue. But dialogue is not enough. It is just a means, a tool towards the goal of ensuring relationships and bounds between humans.

Therefore, in this regard, in the quest for universally accepted landmarks and principles, dignity has emerged as a useful tool to promote world dialogue among and between cultures. It helps us understand human identity, with a subtle link between the collective vision of a shared humanity, and the individual claim of my identity. Politically, one might even understand it as a dynamic tool for a relentless fight against injustice and de-humanization.

Dignity is a “human common denominator” for the promotion of peace and harmony. It encompasses the usual means of communication of culture (through art, science, or prayer), but avoids the accusation that could have been made against culture of not furthering integration (“...culture does not unite. It identifies, therefore it divides as much as it assembles. The word is ambiguous,” says Alain Lamassoure, European MP).

In the philosophical understanding of dignity, issues are probably more complex than imagined. We need to promote solidarity and fair reciprocity, and work on the different concepts of Equality vs. Equity, Autonomy vs. Harmony, Moral Fundamentalism vs. Cultural Relativism (that would be the link towards the difference between Universal Ethics vs. Cultural Diversity). In this regard, we have to follow the path towards the concept of a “negotiated pluralism” between and within individuals. Although progress points in the direction of ever increasing control over life, an “authentic” control of self would be to know where to stop, and to think about the boundaries of what can be done. Common behaviours would be deducted, such as the value of non-instrumentalisation of individuals, respect for the integrity of a person, or choosing the lesser evil when objections can be found to all proposed solutions.

The beauty of the concept of dignity is that it unites humans while respecting cultural specificities. It would therefore be a useful tool to improve transcultural dialogue by taking reference in our common humanity.



## Commentary

*Anna Shimpo, Japan*

There are several concepts of dignity in the history of ideas, from both ancient philosophy and different religions. In classic antiquity, dignity was understood as “deserving of honour and esteem according to personal merit, inherited or achieved” (UNESCO, 2008, p. 20). Human abilities of deliberation, self-awareness, and free decision-making were important concepts which human dignity was often associated with by ancient Greek philosophers, particularly Aristotle and the Stoics (UNESCO, 2008). Also, in many world religions, a concept of human dignity is seen together with the image of God.<sup>155</sup> In modern philosophy, understanding of human dignity is often associated with the idea of human rights, such as personal freedom and one’s public worth. “Categorical imperative” a philosophical concept in moral philosophy of Emanuel Kant, has been accepted as the fundamental basis for conceptions of human rights.<sup>161</sup> Recently human dignity is strongly connected to human rights, which we can see through numerous contemporary international laws, domestic constitutions, and other normative documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the European Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine.<sup>162</sup>

Though there is no concrete definition of dignity, which applies to all of us on the earth today, we probably have some common ideas of what could be a notion of dignity. For example, it does not ask you what your gender or ethnicity is, nor does it ask what religion or social status you have. Free choice and self-determination also take important roles in a notion of dignity. In a society or a community, respecting individual members as a person or “moral agent” (UNESCO, 2008, p. 20) should be based on a notion of human dignity. Also, this notion requires that “the interests and welfare of

161 UNESCO in Bioethics Core Curriculum, it says that many world religions predetermine human dignity through the idea of human beings as creatures made in the image of god, such as that “those who are weak in body and soul have dignity equal to those who are robust and sturdy”.

162 In *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals* (originally written in German, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, 1785) Kant mentions that the categorical imperative “[would be that which represented an action as necessary of itself without reference to another end; i.e., as objectively necessary” and it “declares an action to be objectively necessary in itself without reference to any purpose; i.e., without any other end, is valid as an apodeictic (practical) principle]”. Translated into English by Thomas Kingsmill Abbott.

the individual be considered as prior to the sole interest of society, community, or any particular kind of publicly wholesome activity" (UNESCO, 2008, p.20). In this sense, the argument of human dignity is also used to prohibit some sorts of medical experiments on the human body like what has happened during the Second World War, especially under Germany and Japan.<sup>158</sup> Do we need to define the word "dignity"? Although many people try to define the word "dignity", I am not confident that defining the word "dignity" will lead to a certain implication when we discuss equality or freedom.

First of all, we have different languages, which make it difficult to have a universal definition of certain words, especially those, which are involved in topics of sensitivity and morality. We can see this challenge also when we try to transfer the concepts of some words from their original language to our own. This is not just a translation problem, but is because these concepts sometimes are rooted in local cultural contexts and assumption. For example, in Afghanistan, *mualagh* denotes a feeling of floating in sad uncertainty, like a leaf held aloft only by gusts of wind; in Darfur, *mondahesh* means a sense of shocked surprise; and in East Timor, *hanoin barak* denotes a state of thinking too much (People's Health Movement, et al., 2008). Although common scientific factors underlie all societies, the ideas of human rights or dignity are embedded within a tradition or belief system of a culture. We can easily imagine it would be difficult to define a certain word universally if they started to discuss based on these cultural concepts. Moreover, they might not realize these concepts do not exist in other cultures.

Secondly, we could leave it without a concrete definition as a gray zone, which allows different cultures to keep sharing and discussing with each other. Which could lead developing dialogues between multiple cultures for peace and harmony. In my opinion, dignity is a sort of sense we have, like love, kindness or flavour of your favourite food, to which every individual has both common and different ideas and those senses could be changed through new experiences and interactions with others. In terms of interacting with others, I agree with what Sadek mentions that "respect" from others can give dignity to a person. Recognition of others is a fundamental start for dignity and this could apply to a dialogue on human dignity in a multicultural occasion. This would also refer to the idea of identity.

Though it would not be easy to have a universal definition of the word "dignity", we probably would be able to agree that we need a universal protection against abuses of dignity based on some common ideas. When we discuss this universal protection, we should have special focus on most vulnerable people in a society because this approach will result in re-realizing the meaning of human rights again. Those who are in minor circumstances are often neglected in a society on both the domestic and international level. Otherwise, we would never reach the goal to protect against abuses of dignity.

For example, people in prison are one of the most vulnerable groups of people in a society. Little information, however, is available on prison conditions in some countries. This could easily create an environment, which is against a concept of human dignity, and it is already happening in many places around the world. According to the Walmsley, at the end of 2008, over 9.8 million people

163 German Nazi regime had a series of human experiments on large numbers of prisoners without any consent, which often resulted in death or permanent disability. This includes experiments on twins, malaria, tolerance in freezing condition, producing drinking water from sea water, and so on. Also, Unit 731 of the Imperial Japanese Army conducted a biological and chemical warfare research including tests on prisoners with plague, cholera, smallpox, botulism, and other diseases. They also examined the results after dropping or giving poisoned food and clothing to unsuspecting victims and children in China. As an ethical dilemma, Baruch C. Cohen mentions about the use of data from these experiments for scientific researches today. More details are available at <http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/NaziMedEx.html> (Accessed 31 May). In 1964, the Declaration of Helsinki was adopted as a set of ethical principles regarding human experiments in medicine. The statement has been amended six times since, most recently at the General Assembly in October 2008. Available at <http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/index.html> (Accessed on 31).

were being held in penal institutions worldwide.<sup>164</sup> Many prisoners around the world are in unsafe conditions without proper health care facilities. Besides, most people including children suffer from poor physical and mental well-being and from ritual humiliation and sexual abuse by prison guards and other prisoners (People's Health Movement, et al., 2008). It is important not to misunderstand the meaning of "penalty" as an overcrowded room or poor sanitary facilities. A series of abuses and tortures that happened in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba is also an example of violence against human dignity and human rights, even if it was not officially called "torture" but "harsh punishment" (al-Dossari, 2005).

Many issues in bioethics involve moral dilemmas of medicine as well as biotechnology. As an ethical aspect of healthcare, the relation between the health care provider and the patient is one of the main topics to discuss in human dignity. The basic stance here is that this relation is one kind of human relationship, as an alternative to the paternalistic one. That is a one-way action, which was common in early times, with a patient simply following orders of what their doctor said. The professional characters of medicine, the social position of medical doctors, and the social respect to these people have been interacting until today. Special cases where consent is more difficult to obtain would be when patients are children, handicapped, and the elderly. Also, special attention is required in palliative treatment of terminal patients and patients in a vegetative state. The status of embryos and fetuses are also hotly debated in the field.

Also, there are other important bioethical factors in medicine which relate to human rights. We can see these principles in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (UNESCO, 2005): "benefit and harm", "autonomy and individual responsibility", "consent", "persons without the capacity of consent", "respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity", "privacy and confidentiality", "equality, justice and equity", "non-discrimination and non-stigmatization", "respect for cultural diversity and pluralism", "solidarity and cooperation", "social responsibility and health", and "sharing benefits".<sup>165</sup> Those contents cover all respect for patients' dignity and rights, and clarify the specific context of human rights in bioethics.

Having these principles, how can bioethics apply to human dignity in transcultural conditions, and improve transcultural dialogue? The cartoon Sadek showed is a good example because there we can see the different perspectives people have toward one specific event in life or death. Normally, a baby is welcomed not only with joy when they are born in any culture, but there are various reactions towards death, which come from the culture a person is in. Culture does influence a number of single emotions and ways of behaviour of a person.

An additional example could be a treatment of mental illness. In the West, one-on-one counselling with a psychiatrist is a common way of mental health care because of strong self-identity culture. However, this does not apply to some cultures. A concept of the individual can exist together with their relationship with their community in some cultures. Self-identity can be tied to being a mother, daughter, or wife and her work. The same could be seen in men, children, and the elderly. This is very important to realize because then we can easily imagine that a hundred imported psychologists from overseas can do nothing to cure Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after a natural disaster like the Indian Ocean tsunami in Sumatra if they have knowledge and techniques only from Western culture and medicine (People's Health Movement, et al., 2008). A handful of traditional healers from the community could probably contribute more and be appreciated more.

164 Penal institute here refers both prison and jail. Almost half of these are in the United States (2.29m), Russia (0.89m) or China (1.57m sentenced prisoners). More details are available at [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/law/research/icps/downloads/wppl-8th\\_41.pdf](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/law/research/icps/downloads/wppl-8th_41.pdf) (Accessed 1 June 2010).

165 For its principles and details are available at the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=31058andURL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPICandURL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=31058andURL_DO=DO_TOPICandURL_SECTION=201.html) (Accessed 2 June 2010).

Many of us, however, do not have opportunities to know these differences between cultures. Although many people travel and work worldwide, it does not always go into a sense of human dignity enough because many of them do not ask further questions of why or how these differences exist. It tends to believe that these are from a more professional area. Then, why don't those professionals share their experiences? Those who are in medicine, science, religion, art, natural environment and other bioethics-related fields in a multicultural environment should be able to do that. Those experiences are often kept within an individual or shared only by limited people in a field.

Another factor of preventing healthy transcultural dialogue is that people sometimes tend to believe that their own customs come ahead of others even if we realize those differences. We need to overcome this ignorance of other cultures. Moreover, it needs to be realized that this approach is already starting to violate the concept of human dignity because it prioritizes cultures and ignores the importance of pluralism.

Bioethics is a good tool to overcome these primary issues. Bioethics applies to ethical dilemmas, which especially relates to important factors for a concept of human dignity, and those dilemmas exist in many cultures but in different ways. Human dignity is a major concept in bioethics; therefore, bioethics welcomes and needs to have transcultural dialogue. At the same time, transcultural dialogue on human dignity could not be improved without being connected to bioethics.

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# The Moral Status of Human Embryos and Fetuses

*Sawa Kato, Japan*

## Introduction

What do human embryos and fetuses mean for us? This has been a subject of much philosophical debate over the past millennia. As we all know, they will be children in the future when they grow up. Many persons of a wide range of beliefs do not regard human embryos and fetuses as just things. If we think that human embryos and fetuses are beings that should not be treated simply as others desire or please, then it means that we need to behave in a specific way toward them. Then they can be object to our moral consideration.

In other words, if we feel that we should behave to human embryos and fetuses in a specific way, they would have some moral status. Warren wrote that: "If an entity has moral status, then we may not treat it in just any way we please; we are morally obliged to give weight in our deliberations to its needs, interests, or well-being" (Warren, 1997, p. 3).

If they are considered to be of full protectable human status at a certain time, and if the living embryos or fetuses are aborted artificially after the certain threshold, the death of them is unethical. Some still insist on no research or no abortion, while a few who believe they have no rights have no ethical objections to research or abortion. There is an intermediate view that they should be respected, but they are not always so protected.

This paper will overview the treatment of human embryos and fetuses in different ethical theories or doctrines. The purpose of here is, not to judge which position is the best to discuss the ethical problems involving human embryos and fetuses, but through each treatment of their status to consider the implications of human dignity.

## Sanctity of life

Sanctity of life (SOL) expresses the belief that every human life, of any form, is sacred and inviolable and therefore has a special value. It has supported not to kill a human being intentionally as well as not to compare a quality of one's life with that of another. According to this idea, beings who possess a human life are not restricted to existing human adults or small children. That is, because a human life is sacred from the moment of conception even before birth, both human embryos and fetuses have a human life and so deserving protection equally. This belief is especially illustrated by the Roman Catholic view. The official Vatican position is that the fetus has been ensouled at the time of conception (Vatican, 1974).<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, the Roman Catholic Church has criticized not only abortion but also some contraception.

The approach based on SOL leads to the strict control over artificial abortion and human embryo research. This position does not stress the difference in the process of human development. It shows a consistent framework from embryos to human beings after birth to protect human lives and this is familiar to our common belief to some degree. It can provide human embryos and fetuses with the same moral status as human adults. Further, it can say that they are ensured human dignity as far as they are human lives. These may be of strong points if we adopt this standpoint.

At the same time, we can point out some issues, practically and theoretically, to this belief. First, it urges us the strict protection of human lives, however, such a protection is diminishing even in some of Western nations. In Germany, for example, while the Embryo Protection Act restricts the experiments in general that use pre-embryos because the basic idea of it is that human lives maintain human dignity from the moment of conception, the abortion of a more developed fetus is not a criminal act if it is performed

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166 [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/)

within 12th weeks of pregnancy. One of the problems is that the practical range of application of this doctrine seems not to be so clear. Some claim that the idea of SOL is one of old-fashioned maxims and it is unsuitable for contemporary practice (Singer, 1994, pp. 190 ff).

Second, while this is familiar with countries under the Catholic tradition, it is not the universal viewpoint seen in all cultures. Certainly, the similar belief about human lives can be commonly seen in other religions but they are not same. For example, in Buddhism, not only human lives but also other living creatures have the equal value and we, human beings, happen to be born as them among different species. In Islam, the moment of implantation on the uterus wall tends to be regarded as influential, not the moment of conception. There are identified stages in development and the fetus becomes a person when it receives its soul from God at the end of 17 weeks (Macer, 1990, p. 66).

In a related matter, SOL approach in theory gives human lives a higher status than other creatures, because human beings were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). To base moral law only from the fact that the Bible stated something, and to thus make a conclusion that human beings have higher or the highest status, can be criticized as a kind of dogma. Recently, the discrimination based on the difference between species also tends to be criticized as 'speciesism.'

To avoid such speciesism and to establish the special value of human lives, the proponents have to present other reason why just only human life is sacred above all lives, without falling into tautology. If they try to adopt the high level of mental abilities such as the faculty of rationality and self-consciousness (we will consider such a position below), human embryos and fetuses seem to lack them, at least at present, while some higher animals, such as greater apes, seem to possess them more or less.

After all, because SOL builds on its theoretical basis, it is always asked the moral foundation. One attempt of building the moral foundation can be the appeal to the concept of human dignity. In fact, the idea of SOL has a common basis with the concept of human dignity, for human lives are sacred and therefore it can be interpreted that human beings maintain their dignity.

## Kantian deontology and Contract theory

Deontology claimed by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is an ethical theory composed the obligations toward persons. The category of person here means the rational and autonomous beings, and persons can not only think of things rationally but also reflect what to do as their own moral obligation autonomously. Only persons are moral agents, which imply that they respect other persons like oneself and they do not treat other persons as just a means to achieve an end. That is, persons are the objective ends in themselves and keep human dignity. In this way, his view gave the reason for respecting persons philosophically, independently of theological reason like SOL.

The faculty of moral autonomy makes an individual intrinsically worthy and persons have a special moral status. According to Kant, the class of persons is not limited to human beings. In that sense, Kantian deontology does not correspond to a mere speciesism. However, Kant did not give nonhuman animals the status of person, but just a means. Such a means cannot be ends by themselves. In this regard, he did not say that it is always permissible to treat nonhuman animals as a mere thing or object, but he argued that even if humans do not have duties *toward* nonhuman animals, they have duties *about* animals (Kant, 1797, Section 17). He stated that permitting pervasive animal cruelty routinely may cause people to inflict cruelty on human persons; that is, not treating animals badly can be regarded as an indirect duty toward human persons. This line of thinking had been a traditional one in the history of philosophy before the perspectives of animal rights or animal welfare were strongly insisted. In this way, nonhuman animals had not been given the same moral status as human beings, however were protected in the indirect way.

Let us get back to considering the moral status of human embryos and fetuses. Human embryos are also not autonomous and rational and therefore they might not be worthy of the status of moral agents. Do they lack any reason for protection or respect? Should we treat them like animals? If so, then we could say that the existing already beings as persons do not have any duties *toward* them, but duties *about* them. This means that the persons should try not to be cruel to them. Let us think about this point from Kant's deontological argument. He admitted the "offspring" produced by the parents to be a *person*,



“Children, as persons, have by their procreation an original innate (not acquired) right to the care of their parents until they are able to look after themselves, and they have this right directly by law (*lege*), that is without any special act being required to establish this right (Kant, 1797, Section 28.” (Gregor,1996, p. 64)).

It might be regarded that Kant thought and treated an infant as a person. However, infants or even young children are not yet autonomous and rational beings but he called children persons. This means that the term “person” (or “personhood”), he used, is not restricted to the fact of expressing actually the individual ability as a moral agent. In other words, it can mean, not that a being becomes whole as a person only after it became autonomous and rational, but that an infant can be autonomous and rational and therefore it has a common characteristics of humanity.

Here, we may include human embryos and fetuses in the offspring as we include children, even if they have lacked the individual ability. However, at the same time, he described that the maternal infanticide of a child born out of marriage should be originally illegal and punishable by the death, but, after all, he stated that its illegality can be ignored (Kant, 1797 (Gregor, 1996, pp. 108-109)). For, the child was born out of law and any of law cannot remove the disgrace of the mother. If an infant is already a person, then the person should be respected according to his/her dignity no matter what the situation is. Alternatively, if the baby’s status of person is not fully established yet, human embryos and fetuses would be the same. He considered this point as one of open problems.

What we can say, at least, is that if the case of the infant is not clear, the one of the fetus or embryo would be more disputable. Therefore, the point whether human embryos and fetuses maintain human dignity would also be unsolved. Probably, in the time of Kant, human embryos and fetuses were not the main object of moral consideration unlike the attention given to them in the past several decades with developing assisted reproductive technology and changing abortion laws.

More recently, John Rawls tried to present one concept of justice, generalizing the well-known social contract found in Kantian deontology, and argued the principles of justice in which free and reasonable people interested in the improvement of own goods will be accepted in a hypothetical and equal initial state (Rawls, 1971 (Reprinted, 2005, pp. 17 ff.)). He called the state as the “original position” where people are covered by a veil, “veil of ignorance.” It blinds all information about oneself, man or woman, rich or poor, young or old, and so on. Since they start out knowing nothing, it makes the participants fearful and rational. They try to seek the principles of justice, and avoid bringing themselves a disadvantage situation after the veil is removed. Rawls believed that the principles of justice through such a process can be accepted by all member of the society.

Can human embryos and fetuses be included in the original position? Before this issue will be considered, we should note that he regarded discussant in the position as rational beings and did not include nonhuman animals as a member of the original position and that he did not regard their status as the same that of human beings (Rawls, 1971. (Reprinted, 2005, p. 505)). Rawls described two features to be a moral person, that is the participants of meeting at the original position, as the capability for possessing (or at least assumed to process) a conception of their good and the capacity for having (or at least assumed to acquire) a sense of justice. Human embryos and fetuses are not in the position to attend the meeting because they lack both capabilities. Then, some people as their substitute may claim their interests in the original position (Iseda, 2008, p.111). However, such people would notice that they themselves are neither embryos nor fetuses in spite of under the veil of ignorance because they can think at least rationally about the principles. The interests of them may be ignored there.

Rawls believed that human dignity is not the right starting point to discuss the principles of justice (Rawls, 1971. (Reprinted, 2005, p. 586). Rather, he wrote that if the principles develop first, then a clearer idea of human dignity also could come out. We can predict that such an idea would be relevant to the moral persons, but do not know whether it is applicable to human embryos and fetuses.

## Pro-choice arguments

The positions which have appeared in the arguments to support the personal decision of abortion are called “pro-choice,” while the opposite, such as the position supporting SOL, are called “pro-life.” The arguments for abortion based on the liberal feminism approach are often classified into the pro-choice position. The typical discussion is that the individual has a right to control one’s own body and decide what happens to it. Pregnancy is very significant event for women and a pregnant woman has the right to decide whether or not the child will be given birth to, the right of abortion.

In this approach, the right of woman regarding giving birth and raising her child, tends to have priority and as the result, that the right of fetuses are regarded as secondary. For, the status of fetuses are seen as highly dependent on the body of their mother as the proper owner. The fetal claim for nutrition may exist but the mother clearly has significant claims. Only when she allows them to share her body, their rights can become meaningful. If not, the mother’s serious claims can overrule the fetal one.

This approach is likely to lack the moral reflection that women are only the proper owner of their bodies and fetuses are not. In the event of pregnancy, women can experience the sense as different ones and same one. Then both are not completely separate from each other. In this case, it is difficult to agree completely with woman rights without asking that what kind of being human embryos and fetuses are.

We will next see the philosophical arguments which intend to show that the fetus is not the holder of any rights. Michael Tooley (1971) and Mary Ann Warren (1973) used the term *person* in connection to the right to live which is different from Kantian theory. Tooley, first of all, defined the concept of person as a holder of the right to live, he then argued the further implications from the definition. The outline of his argument is as follows. Generally speaking, someone claims a right to something to desire. In the case that someone claims one’s own right to life, he has to be able to desire to continue living. To be so, he must understand himself as the continuous entity through time, that is, he has to maintain self-consciousness. Fetuses and even newborns have not yet possessed such a persistent consciousness. As the result, Tooley admitted that abortion and infanticide are permissible morally because they do not have the serious right to live.

Warren tried to identify the evaluative traits as being person with the full moral rights. The traits are consciousness (especially the capacity to feel pain), reasoning ability, self-motivated activity, the capacity to communicate, and the presence of self-concepts or self-awareness (Warren, 1973. (Reprinted, 1992, p. 206)). She believed that they were not necessary conditions for beings to be considered a person and all of them were not needed. However, because a fetus does satisfy any of them, she concluded that it is not a person with the full moral rights and therefore that abortion is permissible. She claimed the moral acceptance of the infanticide when a newborn has a severe defect (See Postscript added in 1982).

Their ways of justifying the act of abortion and infanticide made a major impact and provided the new basis to argue these problems. Their frameworks of arguments are based on a kind of the dualism between persons and non-persons. If we accept this dualism, then we would also need to consider the other two problems. The first one is that, when the dualism tries to make a clear distinction between persons and non-persons by emphasizing persons’ high level abilities such as self- consciousness, it leads to a model with a boundary area. The area includes not only fetuses and infants, but also human embryos and the brain-dead, the patient in a vegetative state, and persons with severe mental disorders because they all may lack some abilities. At the same time, some higher animals may be included the area of persons. Should the animals confer the higher status?

Second, if we take up only the differences between persons like the holders of serious rights and embryos and fetuses, human embryos and fetuses may appear as though they are far away from persons. However, human embryos and fetuses are in the continuous development and they can become a person. In that sense, human embryos and fetuses are the potentiality for person. The dualism between persons and non-persons fails to take up the potentiality. How the potential for person should be considered?

The person theory may claim that persons maintain their dignity based on some abilities. The aspect of dualism would not admit that human embryos and fetuses possess own dignity. However, the range of human dignity can include the potential persons, even if they lack some abilities now. As we seen

above, the Embryo Protection Act in Germany does interpret the idea of human dignity from such a viewpoint. The restricted dualism has a possibility that interprets it in narrow way and loses its possible meanings.

## Virtue theory

According to Rosalind Hursthouse (1991), the virtue theory does not aim to provide the objective moral rules or principles to solve ethical problems systematically. Rather it is useful when people think about what to do in facing a particular ethical problem. This ethical theory regards that "An action is right if it is what a virtuous agent would do in the circumstances" (Hursthouse, 1991, p. 225).

Hursthouse picked up the problem of abortion and approached it from the virtue theory. According to her, to consider this problem under the right to abortion is not adequate (Hursthouse, 1991, pp. 234-5). For, the individual can exercise one's right virtuously, and vice versa. Instead, what is important is that, if a woman has the right to abortion, how she exercises it. Whether her choice of abortion is right or not morally depends on what characteristics she expresses in the situation where she makes the decision. For example, the attitude that a woman in the later month of pregnancy decides to abort her fetus to go traveling is described as selfish. In contrast, when a woman is in poor health and makes a decision with great care, her selection of abortion would not be evaluated as such (Hursthouse, 1991, p.239).

The approach based on the virtue theory emphasizes what to do for a particular embryo or fetus in a particular case, through the consideration of being a good mother, the value of having family, or the perfection one's whole life. In this way, the virtue theory does not clarify whether the actions of abortion in general are right or wrong.

Further, Hursthouse put little emphasis also on the approach based on the fetal moral status (Hursthouse, 1991, pp.235-6). For such an approach is rooted in the intention to solve the problem of abortion under some general rule, and as a result she believes, almost all of philosophical writings on abortion fails to treat abortion as a unique moral problem. After all, she concluded that the status of the fetus is simply not relevant to the rightness or wrongness of the act of abortion.

In this way, virtue theory tries to consider the problem of abortion without referring to fetal status. This is in part because the concept of virtue derives from the particular individuals' role in the community, for example, as a good father, politician, or citizen. Furthermore, along with changes in the community, then the list of virtues also changes (MacIntyre, 1981. (3rd, 2007, p.182)). It may be difficult to regard human embryos and fetuses as the entity which can play some particular role positively, and the moral status of them is not the main problem in the theory.

Certainly, the theory can give us a certain guidance, especially about what we should not do for fetuses or embryos; for example, not to decide without great care and not to treat them cruelly or selfishly. However, even among the proponents of this theory, it is difficult to lead to agree which cases of abortion are acceptable. The criterion of judgment is that "act as if a virtuous person does." Some proponents can make a judgment based on the traditional custom to be a good mother and others can support the liberal way that women live own life. If the proponents try to avoid this kind of disagreement, it would be compelled to seek some objective criteria of judgment.

Human dignity is objective or universal idea or principle because it can mean that someone, as far as he/she has human nature, maintains own dignity, even if he/she lacks some abilities or sometimes does not act virtuously.

## Utilitarianism

While virtue theory focuses on the agents' attitude or characteristics before an action, utilitarianism values focus on the consequences and results of an action. Utilitarianism is classified into consequentialism, and the ethical theory aiming at maximizing happiness or utility of all beings affected. Such beings are not restricted to only human beings. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), who is seen as one of the utilitarian

founders, described the fundamental purpose as “the greatest happiness or greatest felicity principle” and wrote that we should pay attention to animals based on whether animals can suffer, not on ability to reason or talk (Bentham, 1789). He suggested that not only human pleasure and pain but also animals’ should be included in happiness calculus.

What is happiness to utilitarians? There are some different criteria of happiness. One of them is of increasing pleasure and decreasing pain as Bentham claimed. According to this criterion, human embryos do not yet feel pleasure or pain now because they lack the necessary brain and nerve structure. Using embryos for research itself is morally neutral. When the use increases of total happiness, it is considered ethical. On the other hand, human fetuses with the brain structure, who have developed in some degree, can be seen to experience pleasure or pain. Therefore, this type of utilitarianism cannot ignore the fetal pleasure or pain when it exists. It can claim that killing a sentient fetus is morally wrong because it brings about the increase of pain, or that, as a result of happiness calculus, even if people are going to kill him, then they have to consider his pain and remove it as possible as (For example, See Singer (1993), pp.164 ff.).

However, whether the comparison among different pleasure or pain and the calculation of the total amount of happiness are really possible, has been questioned repeatedly. For example, it is difficult to compare intellectual pleasure of writing a thesis with the physical or psychological pleasure of playing tennis, since both are different qualitatively. Therefore, the other criterion of happiness, satisfaction of preference, has been suggested to deal with such a difficulty. This position thinks the satisfaction of preference to be important, which means to realize one choice which someone prefers to the other. Preferring A to B in fact reflects the actual choice through the comparison of both options. In the previous example, someone who is writing a thesis preferred it, not playing tennis.

Preference utilitarianism based on this criterion regards the satisfaction of preference as good and the frustration as bad. Whose preference should be considered? Human infants appear to possess some preferences, although they may be only very preliminary appearances of actual moral preferences. Perhaps some fetuses may have actual preferences regarding some choices, but maybe they do not have morally significant preferences yet. It may be more difficult to declare human embryos to be the holders of preferences. However, embryos and fetuses will have them sooner or later in actuality. Since the *satisfaction* of preference is valued for this position, some of utilitarians focus on such a future satisfaction of preference rather than on the fact whether or not it exists now. When it can be foreseen that a human embryo or a fetus develop and have a various preference in the future, preference utilitarianism would express basic support for the protection of them. For example, R. M. Hare (1975) believed that the potentiality for the grown person gives human embryos and fetuses the only and significant reason why they should be protected.

In the utilitarian theory, how to interpret pleasure or preference would affect the moral status of human embryos and fetuses. What we should emphasize is that utilitarianism seems to judge the status based on their property unlike Kantian theory or virtue theory. Utilitarianism may avoid the arguments based on the concept of human dignity because of its ambiguous meaning. One aspects of human dignity is that human beings are not comparable. Utilitarianism can justify killing embryos and fetuses through the happiness calculus and furthermore suggest replacing an existing fetus with a severe defect with a possible future child (Hare, 1993, pp. 187 f). Some opponents of utilitarianism may criticize such a replacement or comparative traits based on the concept of human dignity.

## Conclusion

We have seen how to treat the moral status of human embryos and fetuses in several ethical approaches which are found across the world. Each of them seems to have particular problems. It may express that we are only beginning to acknowledge and comprehend human embryos and fetuses philosophically while scientific knowledge of them has developed and some laws and guidelines to treat them have also made.

We have interpreted the range of the concept of human dignity in each position. Considering it not only from the viewpoint of full persons but also from the viewpoint of human embryos and fetuses can be helpful and can expand and deepen our understanding of the concept of human dignity. This topic would be important to explore in specifically Asian and Arab traditions, as we consider how to include embryos as persons or not.

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# UN Metanarratives and Contemporary Incredulity

*Phinith Chantalangsy, Lao PDR*

If I may say so, in a provocative manner, the United Nations (UN) is a talkative organization. It is an institution that produces discourses, declarations, statements, speeches, etc. that are meant to be heard by every man and woman, since they have an international dimension. When does the UN generate such speech productions? It does so in times of tragic events or of joyful celebrations, in times of re-foundation of norms and ideals or of rejections of misconceptions, in times of praise for good actions or of sanctions against crimes. In a word, the UN produces utterances when confronted with “events”.

For the purpose of this paper, let us call these verbal products “narratives”, both in the basic sense of a formal construction that says something about an event, and in the etymological sense of the Latin verb *narrare* which means “to make acquainted with,” from *gnarus* “knowing,” from the Proto-Indo-European suffixed zero-grade *\*ne-ro-*, from base *\*gno-* “to know”.<sup>167</sup> A narrative therefore tells something on the basis of given knowledge. The UN narratives have produced in turn numerous concepts, among which some relate to UNESCO’s areas of action in particular and are under our scrutiny: “Culture of Peace”, “Human Dignity”, “Dialogue among Civilizations”, “Intercultural Dialogues”, “Respect of Cultural Diversity”, or the more recent concept of “Rapprochement of Cultures”.

Faced with these concepts included in narratives that inspire respect or veneration because they are sealed by prestigious international organizations, how do we, as people, react today? The contemporary questioning on the role and place of the UN and of its specialized agencies in the unfolding of world history seems to have been wandering around two questions that can be bluntly formulated as following: What project and vision does the UN propose? Do we today believe in this proposal? Several signs tend to suggest that the answers to these questions are negative, or worse, the answers can somehow be summed up by an indifferent and irritated “So what?” Of course, it is difficult to find tangible, official and clearly expressed proof of this general sentiment, because we are not talking about the behaviours of the states or governments – who have proved many times that they can, or even intend to decide and act without seriously taking into account UN narratives – but we are trying to intuitively seize peoples’ feeling.

From this first intuition, the next question is therefore: Why do people today fail to believe in UN narratives? The related question is the following: Is this situation desperate for our world? This paper attempts to give some answers to these questions by enquiring upon the cognitive status of the UN narratives that relate more particularly to UNESCO’s areas of interest. It is useless to remind us of the fact that the UN system was founded on the belief that humankind can live peacefully only when its fundamental rights and dignity are respected. This idea is explicitly formulated in the very second paragraph of the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations: “We the people of the United Nations determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, [...] have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims”.<sup>168</sup> In other words, the essential conditions of possibility of this universal institution are faith – a conviction that goes beyond the provable knowledge – and a sense of community embodied by the pronoun “We the people”. In the post-Second World War context, both faith and sense of community are highly needed for the re-foundation of a new era.

Here starts a narrative in the very basic sense of the word: a story is being told about a subject, convinced of some truth, and thereon doing some action. This story-telling aspect of the UN narrative is even clearer in the Constitution of UNESCO: “The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed; that ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war; for these reasons, the

167 Online Etymology Dictionary, “narration”. (n.d.). Retrieved 20 March, 2010, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/narration>

168 United Nations, Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice, 1985, Preamble, § 2. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/preamble.shtml>

States Parties to this Constitution, [...] are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives".<sup>169</sup> The narrative is indeed refined here with metaphors, a historic background, and even a prospective vision by means of the comparatives "a truer and more perfect knowledge".

In a sense, these two texts depict a global vision, which can be identified as a "metanarrative" defined as a theory that tries to give a totalizing, comprehensive account of various historical events, experiences, and social and cultural phenomena based upon the appeal to universal truth or universal values.<sup>170</sup> These texts have raised massive enthusiasm and hopes and continue today to inform actions and ideals on the international scene, because they embody what the so-called postmodern philosophers such as Jean-François Lyotard would call the "Narrative of Freedom".<sup>171</sup> However, the reason for the high credibility manifested towards the UN metanarratives seems to be more of a historical nature than a logical one: they are venerated because they were the very matrix of a new form of inter-state relationship, that of a peaceful multilateralism that was born out of the scourge of the war. To some extent, this intuition can be supported by the fact that some recent UN narratives that are very much inspired by and based on the values and faith of the previous two texts do not seem to attract much attention and enthusiasm. The example of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace,<sup>172</sup> and more recently that of the declaration of 2010 as the "International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures"<sup>173</sup> are good testimonies of the rather blurred reception of UN narratives by the people. Of course the UN system does celebrate these initiatives through various activities, but the real question is to what extent do men and women across the world understand the meaning and implications of such narratives. What is a Culture of Peace? What is Rapprochement of Cultures? The UN proposes lists of fundamental values and principles that underlie and explain those concepts, but rarely are there any substantial and conceptual arguments explaining the spirit of these initiatives. It is as if lists should be self-explanatory.

From these general observations, some reasons and hypotheses can be put forward with a view to understanding the current incredulity of the general public with regard to UN recent narratives. These reasons are factual, philosophical and epistemological.

The factual reason is the simplest one: every one of us, as an individual rational mind can legitimately wonder what use there is to repeat the same declarations and statements while the reality is otherwise. Such skepticism is not mere nihilism claimed by vulgar and ignorant minds, but it is based on a blatant fact: those who proclaim the universality and immutability of principles conducive to peace and freedom on the one hand are the ones killing, torturing, thieving and wiping out "evils" in endless wars against others. In this context, what sense is to be given to the Culture of Peace, for instance? This bitter feeling may be one of the most worrying and devastating enemies of modern democracies, knowingly the distrust of the people vis-à-vis their own governments, leading to a form of political disengagement. This problem is also often called the "crisis of institutions".

In terms of pragmatics, what is called into question here is the status of the recitation of the same metanarratives time and again, while their effectiveness seems to be very low, or even inexistent. It is as if human institutions are so alienated that they dwell on the same stories whatever the contexts may be. This produces a situation of embarrassing incoherence. In fact, this type of discourse, constantly repeated as a ritual, can be identified with the mythical discourse that does not need any external legitimization

169 UNESCO, Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Preamble. [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=15244andURL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPICandURL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244andURL_DO=DO_TOPICandURL_SECTION=201.html)

170 New World Encyclopedia, "Metanarrative". Retrieved 20 March, 2010, from: <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Metanarrative>

171 Jean-F. Lyotard, 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, Manchester, Manchester University Press, p. 32.

172 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, General Assembly of the United Nations, A/RES/53/243, 13 September 1999. [http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/kits/uk\\_res\\_243.pdf](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/kits/uk_res_243.pdf)

173 *Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace*. General Assembly of the United Nations, A/RES/62/90, 17 December 2007. [http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/dialogue/pdf/UN\\_GA\\_RES\\_A\\_62\\_90.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/dialogue/pdf/UN_GA_RES_A_62_90.pdf)

to be accepted as true and useful by its community. This auto-referential discourse is typical of what Claude Lévi-Strauss calls the “savage mind”<sup>174</sup> which does not require the same criteria of validation of discourse and knowledge as scientific thought (verifiable proof, stable protocol of experimentation, peer review, etc.). The mythical discourse is therefore inherently eternal in the sense that the knowledge it conveys does not need to be constantly verified against facts to be true: by the mere fact of being recited, mythical discourse has the power of renewing the foundations of the society.<sup>175</sup>

The problem, however, of the UN metanarratives’ kind of “eternal return” is that they do not meet with a traditional community that would share the ideals in a movement of mystical adhesion, as it is the case for mythical discourses. In other words, for there to be adhesion, faith and trust in a metanarrative, the latter needs its senders and its addressees to be equally competent to transmit and to receive it, i.e. the senders must have the credibility owed to their singular capacity and the addressees must believe that the narrative has a performative power. In our modern society, this specific type of pragmatics does not exist: we all have a natural tendency to ask for proofs, justifications and verifications before we lend our credit to a particular narrative. UN metanarratives, precisely, fail this test on the ground of facts, and thereon it unfolds as a ritual recitation without followers.

This leads us to the philosophical reason that can potentially explain our incapacity to believe and to support UN metanarratives. This reason is twofold. First, like all metanarratives, the UN metanarrative faces the problem of the claim of universality. For obvious logical reason, trying to apply universal norms and laws is much more difficult than applying local laws in clearly circumscribed perimeters. Here again, we are confronted to the question of community: for a truth or a value to be unanimously recognized and for a law to be generally respected, these elements must meet with a community that shares the same references in the domain in question. The problem becomes even more complex when a metanarrative aims to justify a virtuous interaction between communities, cultures or civilizations, and is perceived by peoples as assuming that differences can be subsumed into an identity. This kind of misunderstanding is due to a lack of rigour in the definition of the terms used, but it is also due to a paradoxical assumption that human groups are entities *per se* that would need to be “rapproched”. In other words, the intent to create mediation and to install a dialogue that would be founded on universal values, requires the isolation of particular groups and the assumption that they differ in values and cultural habitus, thus needing mediation. One of the most significant examples of the difficulty to achieve this dialectic between the universal and the particular is the recently formed “High Level Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures”, as UNESCO’s response to the International Year of Rapprochement of Cultures. In February 2010, the Panel had its first meeting: each one of the panelists has been selected to represent the different cultures that are to be “rapproched”, whereas the meeting was intended to address the themes “The power of cultural diversity and dialogue” and “Building peace – the place of shared values in the era of globalization”. In fact, since each individual was legitimated to sit on the panel on the very basis of their specific cultural and religious identity,<sup>176</sup> there automatically was an implicit expectation that each one would intervene from their specific standpoint. Therefore, the debate ended up being a collection of multiple singularities. This example shows that while metanarratives risk being vague and purely theoretical discourses solely based on particularities often do not bring anything constructive. And very often the attempts to explain the universal is pervaded by such an oscillation between incredible metanarrative and insignificant discourses.

Most often, in front of such a logical dilemma, out of fear of relativism that it literally views as evil, the institutions in charge of defending the universal tend to barricade themselves behind metanarratives, assuming that the latter causes less damage. In fact, it is not certain at all that losing credibility by avoiding tackling the real would cause less damage than lending attention to particular contexts. Aristotle uses a bright metaphor to illustrate this difficulty. He explained that a person who attempts to make every decision by appealing to some antecedent general principle, kept firm and inflexible for the

174 Lévi-Strauss, C. 1962. *La Pensée Sauvage*. English translation by John Weightman & Doreen Weightman. 1966. *The Savage Mind*, Chicago, IL, University of Chicago.

175 Eliade, M. 1949. *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour: Archétypes et répétitions*. Paris, Gallimard. English translation by Willard R. Trask. 1954. *The Myth of the Eternal Return*. New York, Pantheon Books.

176 UNESCO. *Composition of the High Level Panel on Peace and Dialogue Among Cultures*. Available at <http://www.unesco.org/en/rapprochement-of-cultures/high-panel-on-peace/composition-of-the-high-panel/>



situation, is like an architect who tries to use a straight ruler on the intricate curves of a fluted column. Instead, the good architect will measure with a flexible strip of metal that "bends round to fit the shape of the stone and is not fixed".<sup>177</sup> This metaphor indicates that the solution in such a situation would not consist in abandoning measurement and getting submerged by singularities, but it would consist in finding the flexible ruler that will enable real communication. In a word, in the domain of intercultural dialogues, it is the right methodology of a veritable dialogue that still needs to be found.

The second philosophical reason relates to competition between the scientific cultures as it has developed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the humanist consonance of UN metanarratives in general, with the victory of the former over the latter. If we consider the type of utterance produced by each of the parties at stake, it is easy to understand the type of contentious point between them. According to Jean-François Lyotard, "the scientific knowledge requires that one language game, denotation, be retained and all others excluded. A statement's true value is the criterion determining its acceptability."<sup>178</sup> Denotative speech is therefore the one that states facts, which are supported by verifiable proofs. On the other hand, one can say that UN metanarratives constitute the "narrative form [which], unlike the developed forms of discourse of knowledge, lends itself to a great variety of language games".<sup>179</sup> The main alternative language games to the denotative speech are the normative and the prescriptive utterances: the former establishes (universal) laws and rules; the latter recommends behaviours in conformity with the norms. The concept of "language games" can be understood as the set of rules that detail the mode of acquisition of the knowledge conveyed by a specific utterance and define its use.<sup>180</sup> Now the problem comes from the fact that neither the knowledge contained in the normative nor the one contained in the prescriptive utterance can be submitted to scientific verification (as it is the case for denotative utterance): by definition, norms and related recommendations cannot scientifically be proven. The recommendations can still be based on experiences, but the norms are inspired by principles and ideals that are legitimated by a metanarrative (the one of human fundamental freedom and dignity).

Some examples can be taken from UNESCO's Constitution and the UN Charter. To some extent, in the utterance "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed", the first part can be identified as a denotative utterance, because the knowledge it conveys has been somehow proved true by experience. The two World Wars were not genetically programmed in human genes, they were engendered by human misunderstanding and ignorance. The second part is prescriptive: UNESCO recommends building peace by informing the human intellect. This prescription, because it proceeds from a denotative knowledge, is thereby legitimated, as expressed in the famous sentence from the UN Charter: "We the people of the United Nations determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, is normative because human rights, dignity and equality are nowhere demonstrable: they are principles and ideals."

However, things are far less clear in the statement that declares the International Year of Rapprochement of Cultures. The General Assembly decides to declare 2010 the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures: it is performative since it officially institutes something, yet with regard to the part Rapprochement of Cultures, we do not know if it is denotative (if so, what does each of the concepts, and then the complex, refer to?), normative (if so, what is the theoretical assumption?) or prescriptive (if so, how can this be done?), etc.

The problem of incredulity towards the UN metanarrative is due precisely to this confusion of language games. And contemporary minds, deeming that denotative utterances have better performance, have the feeling that the UN metanarrative is a confusing blend of different natures of discourses. "To speak is to fight, in the sense of playing, and speech acts fall within the domain of a general agonistics,"<sup>181</sup>

177 Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book VI, 1137 b.

178 Lyotard, J. F. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

179 *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

180 For more thorough definition of the concept of "language games", see Ludwig Wittgenstein. 1953/2001. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, p. 7.

181 Lyotard, J. F. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

warns Jean-François Lyotard. Agonistics refers to the art of athletic combat in Ancient Greece, and extends to all activities associated with aggressive encounters between members of the same species. This is particularly true in societies, which the author calls “postmodern”, defined as “incredibility toward metanarratives”.<sup>182</sup> While in the modern era, knowledge is acceptable on the condition that it is legitimated by scientific demonstration conducted with a rigorous protocol, in postmodern societies; the criterion of knowledge legitimation is “no longer truth, but performativity – that is, the best possible input/output equation”.<sup>183</sup> In this context of competition and fights between language games, it can easily be grasped that the UN metanarrative, while it could have tried to strive closer to the truth-criterion, will have many difficulties to meet the performativity-criterion.

The reason for this is that the UN metanarrative abides by a law which is just at the opposite of above-mentioned agonistics: as a philosopher once noticed, just like the Pope would aspire to martyr, the UN system would aspire to irenism.<sup>184</sup> Irenism comes from Greek *Eirèné* (“peace; it refers to the firm belief that differences, however huge they may be, can be subsumed into unity by peaceful means. This metaphor used by Jérôme Bindé reveals an ambiguity: while one may think that irenism is a noble ideal that deserves respect, its positive dimension is however clearly questioned when it is compared to the aspiration to martyr. According to the Christian conception, indeed, being a martyr means obtaining heavenly glory in compensation of one’s being a victim of passive (ill-treatment because of one’s religion) or active (struggle to defend one’s religion) sufferings on Earth. In both cases, an aspirant martyr: 1) knows that his/her actions will fail (indispensable condition for being martyr), but will be highly compensated after death because of their unconditional truth; 2) does not consider oneself as being a veritably member of mankind living on Earth (because one’s sufferings are due to others’ misunderstanding and ignorance, and these sufferings alone worth the heavenly compensations that have much more value than the mundane condition). Following this martyr model on the one hand, and having to confront on the other hand the agonistic domain of speech because it is by nature talkative, the UN system seems to have no recourse: on the one hand its metanarratives fail to meet peoples’ faith because of the latter’s postmodern incredulity; on the other hand its irenic aspiration virtuously justifies it neglecting the search for the ordinary people’s understanding.

Today, because of historical or factual and philosophical development that human societies have undergone, the UN metanarratives tend to retract themselves indeed in a form of purism. This may partly explain why the UN system seems to continuously utter the same metanarratives apparently without reform: the tendency to think of itself as a martyr of irenism may have rendered it indifferent to the lack of understanding of the peoples. The non-reform in the way the UN system addresses itself to the world leads us to the last reason that may explain the general incredulity with regard to it: the epistemological reason.

With regard to UNESCO and to the UN system in general, the French expression “*langue de bois*”, meaning waffle, or useless wordy discourse, has been often used by many persons who directly or indirectly happen to deal with these institutions. This French expression conveys an interesting image: a “wooden tongue” is one that fails to adapt itself to situations, its inflexibility and non-adaptation would be of natural necessity. In fact, this type of discourse is blamed on the basis of performativity: what is said is of little use because it keeps conveying the same idea and grand words, whatever the context is. This point about pragmatics has been addressed earlier in this paper. Let us now take a step further. More fundamentally, “*langue de bois*” not only fails to adapt itself to new and different situations; it also fails to give nuances to the concepts it conveys. As Aristotle would say, a straight ruler fails to seize and explore the real shape of things; it fails to capture the concealed and the veiled cavities; it tends to picture the most even and regular dimensions out of the things and the concepts it examines. The UN metanarratives precisely often neglect the nuances. In other words, this attitude often tends to put forward massive positivity without taking time to create the necessary perspective for this positivity to be critically understood. This is not only about defining concepts, it is also and more importantly a matter of challenging them by means of questionings and historical and sociological perspectives.

182 *Op. cit.*, Introduction, p. xxiv.

183 *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

184 Bindé, J. Philosophie et droits humains. In *Philosophie et droits humains*. Proceedings of the First World Philosophy Day at UNESCO 2002, UNESCO, 2004, p. 5. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001375/137534fo.pdf> (French only).

If a metaphor was needed, we can compare UN metanarratives and speeches to two-dimensional geometric figures: what is offered to the view of the public is the even surface of the figure, laid down on a two-dimensional plane. Such a figure is literally and fully visible to everyone, and contesting it is neither justified nor even possible. One of the very meaningful symptoms of this two-dimensional discourse is the listing as a mode of the definition of a concept.

Let us take the definition of Culture of Peace in a UNESCO document. This concept is defined as follows: *“A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on: (a) Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation; (b) Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law; (c) Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms; (d) Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts; (e) Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations; (f) Respect for and promotion of the right to development; (g) Respect for and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men; (h) Respect for and promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information; (i) Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace.”*<sup>185</sup>

This list, which can be taken as a paradigm for most of the lists formulated by the UN in general and UNESCO in particular, has three characteristics. Firstly, like every list, this one formally limits a concept to an arbitrary number of elements. Secondly, a list is characterized by the absence or the weakness of the logical links between its components. The above-mentioned list shows how, instead of being clarified and sharpened, the meaning of the concept to be defined is dissolved into a confusing inflation of words. Because the logical links between the different elements are not clear, one cannot have a coherent general picture of the definition. Consequently, once at the bottom of the list, one has already forgotten the different elements listed on the top. Thirdly, and this characteristic is particular to the lists related to UN metanarratives, this list contains all the positive concepts historically defended by the UN. The general impression generated by this list is therefore that of a massive positivity in which no singular element can be significantly detached as a specific key idea of the concept defined.

The real and worrisome problem, however, is not that people do not understand such a concept and its intent; it is rather that these very people and the sender of the message have the impression that nothing new is being proposed, and that what is just happening is that the UN metanarrative is being once more reiterated. The above-mentioned definitional list can very easily be taken as a standard list that could also have applied to the other UN concepts, such as *“International Cooperation”*, *“Intellectual and Moral Solidarity”*, *“Human Security”*, *“Dialogue among Civilizations”*, etc. (especially the point (a) of the list is in fact a list within a list, containing all UNESCO key concepts). Paradoxically, this type of narrative is exposed to the risk of engendering relativism, which would merge from the undifferentiated positivity.

What reform is thus needed? This is a huge question that obviously needs complex and in-depth reflections in the long run. But from the epistemological point of view at least, an immediate effort can be made. Metaphorically, that would consist in systematically inserting every narrative and concepts in a three-dimensional plane. The surface of concepts and narratives would have to be contrasted against its own *“body”* put in perspective. Emphasis must be laid on the fact that three-dimensional geometric figures are essentially composed of their surface and their body: one would not be intelligible independently of the other. Likewise, concepts that the UN system would put forward should relate the concept itself and its critics or perspective in an essential relationship. This is the only way the UN metanarratives can significantly confront both singularities and nuances (in the plane of perspective), and unity and universality (in the concept itself). A parallel can be drawn with the vision Jean-François Lyotard gave with regard to postmodern science: *“Post-modern science – by concerning itself with such things as undecidables, the limits of precise control, conflicts characterized by incomplete information, fracta, catastrophes, and pragmatic paradoxes – is theorizing its own evolution as discontinuous, catastrophic, non-rectifiable, and paradoxical...It is producing not the known but the unknown.”*<sup>186</sup>

185 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. *Ibid.*, art. 1.

186 Lyotard, J. F. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

The trap posed by a relativism born out of an undifferentiated positivity can be avoided if efforts are made to instill more rigour in the epistemology that is used in building narratives. One should lend more attention and interest in the “fracta”, the “limits of precise control”; in a word one should seriously examine what poses a problem, instead of immediately formulating solutions. The general atmosphere of incredulity toward metanarratives does not require that we abandon our work: it shows the existence of a high awareness that there is an unknown that we must strive to critically circumscribe together in order to clarify it.

An example of narratives that concern themselves with the “fracta” and depict the perspective of the concept in question can be found within UNESCO itself, at the very origin of the Culture of Peace concept. It can be found in what is known as the Seville Statement on Violence (1986).<sup>187</sup> It is indeed partly from this Statement by eminent scholars that UNESCO advanced the “Culture of Peace” concept, notably through its Culture of Peace Programme. What is interesting and significant is that this Statement aims to “challenge a number of alleged biological findings that have been used [...] to justify violence and war”.<sup>188</sup> The Statement then unfolds under the form of five propositions all starting with “It is scientifically incorrect to say that...” denying that warfare is inherent to human nature, and justifying such a statement with scientific explanations and perspectives.

This text clearly states its rules, defines its concepts, provides historical perspective, explains what is at stake, and acknowledges its limitations: “We state our position in the form of five propositions. We are aware that there are many other issues about violence and war that could be fruitfully addressed from the standpoint of our disciplines, but we restrict ourselves here to what we consider a most important first step.”<sup>189</sup> These are simple, but essential, epistemological steps that the UN system and UNESCO can systematically apply to avoid a martyr attitude.



## Commentary

*Rainier Ibana, Philippines*

Chanthalangsy’s critique of United Nations metanarratives is a plea for greater inclusiveness and openness to areas of human concerns that are yet to be explored by the current discourses of the UN. The limitations of UN discourses, however, are a function of the limitations of words and arguments since we can only speak of one syllable at a time before we can even come to terms in solving the dynamic problems of our time. Yes, the UN is a talkative organization. But it is better to use words than swords, arguments rather than armaments, in addressing the world’s problems.

The limitation, perhaps, of the UN is the state-centered representative structure of its organization which has marginalized the local and grassroots-level organizations that are most affected by global and national catastrophes. The UN can therefore do better by expanding the scope of its constituency by creating organizational mechanisms that will include those who have been screened out by the national elites who usually comprise the representatives sent to the UN by nation-states.

187 Seville Statement on Violence, 16 May 1986, in Follow-up to the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men: Yamoussoukro Declaration; Seville Statement on Violence, 15 September 1989, UNESCO, 25 C/20, Paris. Annex II. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000839/083903eo.pdf>

188 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. *Ibid.*, art. 1.

189 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. *Ibid.*, art. 3.

The epistemological paradox of the post-modernist penchant for asking for the unknown is, of course, well known to philosophers since the time of Greek antiquity when Socrates asked in Plato's dialogue, the *Meno*, about not knowing what to look for, if in the first place one is trying to search for that which one does not know (*Meno* 80E). The Platonic answer, as we all know, is through the process of recollection: to remember that or those that we have forgotten.

In our contemporary world of marginalization and exclusion, those who have been forgotten are precisely those who are not able to participate in the discourses of the UN, those who lie in the abyss of the digital divide, those who could not even read or write, much less hear about the UN or UNESCO. They are the ones who must be included in the unfinished list of definitions that aim to include those who will be most affected. The call for universality, since the time of the great Immanuel Kant, is not a matter of counting everyone in, or trying to follow the majority since the majority, could very well be wrong. The norm of universality is hinged on the second formulation of the moral imperative: to treat human beings not as means, but as ends in themselves. To this end, the list of UN imperatives aims to arrive in an asymptotic manner and will therefore never be finished for no one can ever claim to say the last word on matters that pertain to the infinite grandeur of the human condition....

# Meditation for Peace and Happiness in this Globalized World

*Chutatip Umavijani, Thailand*

What do we want from life? If peace and happiness are the answer, what is peaceful existence and real happiness? How can we attain these qualities of life? Can we survive in this capitalistic world and are we able to attain true happiness as well? In this case we try to understand human's place in nature, with the sense of altruistic love and compassion through meditation. How can meditation help people to have altruistic love and compassion? There are many studies indicating the sense of happiness and good health that can be achieved through mindful meditation.

Richard Layard's *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science* (2007) showed his thorough studies about happiness in different areas such as economics and psychological research. It is interesting to see that the work of Layard and Greg Easterbrook's *Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse* (2006) came to the same conclusion. Both Layard and Easterbrook agree that happiness does not depend on income or material gains.<sup>190</sup> They made several investigations in many countries about the rate of income. The results from the research show that even though the rate of income went up the rate of happiness stayed the same. Material gain is not the only answer for happiness. Aristotle's first sentence in the *Nicomachean Ethics* stated that the aim of our action is happiness. The developments since the Industrial Revolution and the Scientific Revolution to the Age of Technology-Electronics enable us to enjoy an easy, luxurious life, believing that this kind of life will bring us happiness. But on the contrary, it turns out that we became more miserable and distressed since these times. The suicide rates have been increased greatly, especially in the upper-class or among successful businessmen. In the beginning of 2009, we heard about the American and German businessmen who committed suicide due to the global economics crisis, starting with the downfall of the American economy. There are also a large number of Japanese men committing suicide every year. But we seldom see homeless people committing suicide. These evidences showed that material gains are not the only answer for happiness. At the same time, there is much evidence to show that those who live with a sufficient style of life or moderate way of living in any part of the world never commit suicide. How can we live a sufficient way of life?

In a capitalist society, humans are victims of propaganda by all kinds of media. These propagandas lead to greediness and emptiness from within. There are several thinkers who brought Buddhism into practice. They are able to find peaceful paths and set up examples for happiness in this contemporary world.

Richard Layard, who studied happiness thoroughly, finally concluded: "Happiness comes from without and from within. The inner life and the inner being determine how we react to life and what we give to it."<sup>191</sup> Examples of happiness from within have been practiced by two great Buddhist minds at the present time, such as Venerable Matthieu Ricard and Venerable Ajahn Brahmavamso, or Ajahn Brahm for short. It is interesting that both of them were scientists before they were ordained in Buddhism. Venerable Ricard was a doctor of molecular biology, and worked with Nobel Prize-winning French biologist Francois Jacob and Jacques Monod at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. In the early part of his career, he surprised his family and friends by becoming a Tibetan Buddhist-monk and studied under Tibetan spiritual masters in India.

Ajahn Brahm, on the other hand, studied Theoretical Physics at Cambridge University and after completing his degree and teaching for a year, traveled to Thailand to become a monk. He studied under Pra Achan Chah in a forest monastery for nine years.

Venerable Ricard gave very clear pictures upon life's fulfillment or way to happiness. He asked: "What do we want from life?", "What are the moments of a genuine sense of fulfillment?", "Is it when you get more money, or the times when you spend with friends, family or nature?" He said we have to begin thinking

190 R. Layard. 2006. *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science*. London, UK, Penguin Book, p. 30

191 *Ibid.*, p. 184

about what matters most in our life. He suggested that we must have moments of silence to see what comes to the surface. Try to quiet our mind. Try to look inside. To be able to differentiate between genuine fulfillment and what is not. Authentic happiness for him is not an endless succession of pleasure. But it is the genuine constructive state of more compassion, more inner peace, inner freedom and inner strength that give way to happiness. We can also notice the kinds of mental states that will destroy our happiness, such as jealousy, anger, or obsession. It is our responsibilities to cultivate the constructive ideas and get rid of the destructive ones. It is an optimal way of being that really gives one resources to deal with ups and downs in life. He also suggested that meditation is the way to become a better human being, to be able to function better in society and then able to serve others and practice altruistic love. Happiness can be achieved with and through the happiness of others. Selfish happiness does not exist. It is only self-destructive, making yourself and others miserable.<sup>192</sup> Venerable Ricard also said: "Altruism is the key. Compassion and altruistic love are the most constructive emotions of mental states."<sup>193</sup> This is what makes us do work in favor of others. It is attuned with reality, which is inter-dependence. It is important for us to work together for the good of the family, the people, the nation and the whole, and most of all one's own good." He concluded: "...first begin with yourself by being sensible, wise, strong, altruistic, and then slowly others will also change. Their anger, somehow loses its intensity. ...In any situation, it is important that we cultivate love in our mind. It is our mind that generates the optimal quality of being, that is genuine happiness."<sup>194</sup>

Ajahn Brahm also wrote about happiness, that there are three types of happiness, such as sensual excitement, personal achievement, and happiness from letting go. These types of happiness are different in their nature. First, the happiness generated by sensual excitement is hot and stimulating but also agitating and tiring. Second, the happiness caused by personal achievement is warm and fulfilling but also fades away soon, leaving a vacant hole. But the happiness born of letting go is cool and long-lasting. It is associated with the sense of real freedom.<sup>195</sup>

Now we can find ways to have real freedom and be able to maintain the long lasting happiness that both Ajahn Brahm and Venerable Ricard mentioned. Both stressed that happiness comes from the inner self, so we must learn how to let things go in order to have long-lasting happiness. What is the method of letting things go? It seems easy to say rather than practice. To be able to reach this state of mind, it is important for one to understand the reality of ourselves and nature around us. How can we understand human nature from within? And how would this understanding be related to happiness? Socrates emphasized self-knowledge or "Know thyself". The Buddha taught knowledge of the self and reality including ways and methods to attain it. Why is attaining self-knowledge important to humans? Socrates once said: "One who has no self-knowledge can never be satisfied with oneself". The following explanations of the great minds can help us to understand humans and enable us to be satisfied from within and then, we are able to use technology for the best of humanity. Without this kind of knowledge we are blind. We will want more and more with no limit. And finally we are able to understand and have the sense of altruistic love and compassion from the knowledge of our nature and reality. We can also discover peace and true happiness, if we practice meditation as part of our everyday life.

We can liberate our mind from within by learning to be at the present moment. Venerable Ricard mentions that we need to know how to liberate our mind - that is to stop the mind from leaving any traces of emotion which only leads to confusion - which will give rise to a chain reaction, for example a thought of dislike will bring hatred expressed in the form of words or deeds.<sup>196</sup> So it is necessary for one to be aware of the present moment, to be free of any discursive thoughts. The more one practices the more one will be able to stay longer in a state of awareness. When the discursive thoughts calm down, the mind is clearer and able to discover the true nature of things. Just like the reflection of water in a pond, without any disturbing wave, it can reflect clearly.

192 We can see many examples in the world now, that self-love or selfishness will only bring miserableness to others, not only themselves, such as Madoff case who cheated and was sentenced to jail for 150 years.

193 Sukrung, K. & Un-Anongrak, Y. 30 December 2008. Bangkok Post.

194 *Ibid.*, ending.

195 Ajahn Brahm. 2006. *Happiness Through Meditation*. Boston, Wisdom Publication, p. 134.

196 Revel, J. F. & Ricard, M. 1999. *The Monk and the Philosopher*. New York, Schocken Books, p. 84.

Venerable Ricard gave a very interesting thought of how to eliminate negative thinking and how to be able to have only positive thinking. When one finds a thought full of hatred or anger, the more one investigates it, the more one discovers the emptiness of thoughts. He also gave the following direction of how to empty your thoughts in the following:

*"You let the emotion appear in the field of your consciousness and then you fix it with your inner perception, alternating analytic investigation with sheer contemplation. At first, that feeling dominates and obsesses you. It returns constantly. But you continue to examine it carefully. Where does it get its apparent strength from? It doesn't have any intrinsic capacity to harm, like some living creature of flesh and blood. Where was it before it arose? When it appears in your mind, does it have any characteristics – a location, a shape, a color? When it leaves the field of your consciousness, does it go anywhere? The more you investigate it, the more that powerful seeming thought escapes you; it is impossible to catch it or point it out. You reach a state of 'not found', in which you stay for a few moment of contemplation. This is what's technically called 'recognizing the emptiness of thoughts.' It is the state of inner simplicity, of clear mindfulness and awareness, stripped bare of any concepts."<sup>197</sup>*

If we are able to understand or be aware of our mind, we have strengthened our mind, we are courageous, understanding and patient. These qualities give way to the sense of altruistic love as one can eliminate negative thoughts towards others. Therefore it is important to distinguish between negative emotions, like desire, hatred, and pride, which only bring us to a self-centered outlook. It is the positive thoughts such as altruistic love, compassion, and faith that are able to free us from negative self-centered being. Positive emotions reinforce the mind to be more stable and courageous. In order to be able to have the sense of compassion towards others, Ajahn Brahm also stresses what we can achieve through loving kindness toward our breath and good will toward meditation.<sup>198</sup>

What is meditation? How important is meditation and what can it do to people? It is important to have one's mind fixed at one point and to stay in the present moment at all times. Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw stresses for beginners who practice mindful-meditation (*Vipassana*) to start from observing the rising and falling of the abdomen. After one sits, then one put one's mind at the abdomen, noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. Any thoughts that may occur must also be noted. The meditator should take note or recognize desires of any kind as they arise, but continue to keep still.<sup>199</sup>

How can one train oneself to be able to fix one's mind at one point and not to scatter our thoughts or not to concern ourselves with other people or things? Ajahn Brahm stressed the importance of present awareness in a very practical way. It is his genius to be able to bring ideas that are difficult in Buddhism into action. He wrote the following: "When I teach meditation, I like to begin at the simple stage of giving up the baggage of past and future. You may think that this is an easy thing to do, but it is not. Abandoning the past means not thinking about your work, your family, your commitments, your responsibilities, your good or bad times in childhood, and so on. You do not think about where you live, where you were born, who your parents were, or what your upbringing was like. All of that history you renounce...everyone becomes equal, just a meditator."<sup>200</sup>

With his background as a biologist, Ajahn Brahm explains an interesting metaphor that the mind is like a padded cell. When any experience, perception, or thought hits the wall of this cell, it does not bounce back. It just sinks into the padding and stops. The past does not echo in our consciousness. He says if you let go of the past, you will be free in the present moment.<sup>201</sup> One should let go of the past and the future, and only stay in the present. Eckhart Tolle told a story about the Zen master Hakuin who would say: "Is that so?" Even when he was accused by the people in the village of making a girl pregnant, and when the truth came out, the villagers apologized to him he also said: "Is that so?"<sup>202</sup> Tolle

197 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

198 Ajahn Brahmavamso. 2006. *Happiness Through Meditation*. Boston, Wisdom Publications, p. 37.

199 Sayadaw, Venerable Mahasi. 1966. *The Great Discourse on Not Self*, (Anattalakkhana Sutta). Bangkok, Buddhadhamma Foundation, p.15.

200 Ajahn Brahmavamso. 2006. *op. cit.*, p. 7.

201 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

202 Tolle, E. 2006. *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*. New York, Namaste Publishing, p. 200.



made very interesting remarks about the present, in the following: "The most important, the primordial relationship in your life is your relationship with the now. The present moment is inseparable from life, so you are really deciding what kind of a relationship you want to have with life. Once you have decided you want the present moment to be your friend, it is up to you to make the first move: Become friendly toward it...Life becomes friendly toward you, people become helpful, circumstances cooperative. One decision changes your entire reality. But that one decision you have to make again and again and again-until it becomes natural to live in such a way."<sup>203</sup> Tolle gave explanations about how to be able to bring present moment into practice in our everyday life, here and now. If one is able to practice or be with the present at all times, then there is no sense of remorse, loss or any emotion from thinking of the past or future. One only experiences peace from within. One is fully alive when one stays in the present.<sup>204</sup>

How then we can achieve altruistic love and compassion through meditation? The highest aim of mindful-meditation in Buddhism is to realize the three characteristics of reality in nature (impermanence or *annica*, suffering or *dukkha*, and no-self or *anatta*). Mindful meditation is the path to enlightenment. Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw wrote: "The meditator who takes note of every act of seeing, hearing, touching and knowing as it arises perceives only phenomena rapidly arising and vanishing. He knows therefore, things as they truly are - all transient. With this knowledge of impermanence comes the realization that there is nothing delightful and pleasant in the present mind and body; future state of mind and body, having the same nature of impermanence, will also be undelightful and unpleasant. He therefore develops distaste for all mentality and corporeality, and he wants to be free from them.... Therefore the Blessed One taught that the insight which sees only dissatisfaction and repugnance is the true path to *Nibbana* (Enlightenment)."<sup>205</sup>

Through the realization of the impermanence of all things, including ourselves (even though we have not reached enlightenment yet), we gain sympathy for everything around us. This sympathy gives way to altruistic love for all. When one understands the changeable nature of all things that all is in the process of changing, it also tells us that sadness, and sufferings are part of our life. The second characteristic of reality is suffering or *dukkha*. What is *dukkha* or suffering? Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw expressed the following: "The reason it is *dukkha*...is that it is ever arising and perishing, and so it is fearsome. People imagine things to be good, because they appear to be enduring and stable. When they realize that things do not endure even for a second and are constantly dissolving, they can no longer see any goodness in them."<sup>206</sup> Therefore we cannot cling to things or those around us as they are subject to change and suffering in some ways. This gives us the sense of compassion to all as we are under the same condition. We are able to sympathize with the rest of humanity, and peace and happiness can be attained within and without. As Ajahn Brahm said: "If you follow the path of meditation, finally your inner happiness rises like a tide that never ebbs. Mindfulness becomes energized as you struggle less with your inner world. Insights appear in abundance like luscious fruits on a heavily laden tree, too many to pluck and eat all at once. You realize so clearly that the path to peace is this letting go that you learned in meditation. Or you can call it the path of unconditional loving-kindness. Such *metta* (loving-kindness) softens your judgments of yourself and others. Judging and measuring fade away like the phantoms they always were. In the final disappearance of all measuring, words are stolen away, for language is nothing more than the measuring scale of life. As peace reaches its apex, as happiness crystallizes into a radiant gem at the summit, when measuring finally implodes-the mind disappears as well."<sup>207</sup>

David Hume, one of the British Empiricists, had also discussed the concept of no-self. Hume said there is no self-identity. The moment we think of ourselves, there are succession of emotions, thoughts, ideas that come after one another. Then there is no such thing as a self-identity. But Hume reached this point by using his own reasoning and his analysis of the association of ideas. Werner Heisenberg, on the other hand, is a physicist who discovered the changeability of all things through his experiments in the laboratory. He found out that we cannot pin down the position and velocity of the particles at the

203 *Ibid.*, p. 201.

204 Tolle, E. 2003. *Stillness Speaks*. Novato, CA, New World Library.

205 Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw. 1996. *The Great Discourse on Not Self* (Anattalakkhana Sutta), Buddhadhamma Foundation, p.160.

206 *Ibid.*, p. 99.

207 Ajahn Brahm. 2006. *Happiness Through Meditation*. Wisdom Publication, p. 272.

same time, as the object is always in the process of change. Both Hume and Heisenberg discovered the truth through scientific methods, but in mindful meditation the truth is revealed through realization from within. There are also other benefits one can gain through meditation. Venerable Ricard said that scientific study shows that the brain changes in people who practice short- and long-term meditations. Through meditation one can reduce stress, anxiety, blood pressure and also depression, and at the same time the immune system and production of antibodies increases in efficiency.<sup>208</sup> There is evidence in many temples in Thailand that those who get sick from any kind of disease can be cured of the sickness when they meditate. Right now many hospitals and retreat places bring in the meditation method to cure their patients.

Through this mindful-meditation and to be able to be in the present moment at all times, one is able to realize the true nature of things. These processes enable humans to exist with the sense of compassion and altruistic love. Realizing that we are all under ever changing conditions in life and all have to go through suffering, then we are able to give sympathy to all and bring a better society by genuine concern for the well being of the whole. By understanding these facts we can decide within ourselves how to face difficult questions in present day misery. We hope that this kind of knowledge can help us to answer questions about peace, violence, greediness, anger and finally how to face death. Learning how to face death enable us to live more with dignity.

Not only are meditation and attitude towards life important, but also chanting. Chanting in all religions is part of sacred ritual, interwoven with human culture. Vibration from chanting can potentially heal. Sound vibrations affect humans on physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels. Practicing meditation as mentioned before, and chanting, can also create peace and happiness. For example, Paritta Pali and Protective Suttas, which was gathered by Venerable U. Silananda, the disciple of well-known Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw of Myanmar, gave great protection to those who chant. There are great merits from chanting *Paritta*, as *Paritta* means "protection" and brings many good results. If one chants through understanding the roots of each chant well, one is able to connect to the chanting more deeply.

If we live this life by understanding reality, we are able to go beyond any negative feeling towards life. In this case no matter what happens, we welcome it with bravery, as we understand the true characteristics of life and nature mentioned above. We will have a different attitude towards life. Attitude is the most important element for us to face any problem. Hope, courage and strength come through knowledge. Buddhism in practice should enable people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be able to face great difficulties, such as the economic crisis, global warming, and political turmoil, etc. One is able to see things as they are by knowing what is real behind appearances. One can attain self-sufficiency, know one's limit, be able to fulfill oneself from within, and be able to give more compassion to others. Then the problem about distribution of goods and land, the oldest problem in the history of humankind, and the roots of most political problems around the world, can easily be solved. People then can think for others and the unfortunate ones more instead of thinking for themselves, family and their connections. Changes for the good of the whole can take place. When we can manage greediness, anger, jealousy from within, we are able to attain a sense of altruism and bring peace and happiness to others and ourselves.

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208 Sukrung, K., Un-anongrak, Y. Interview Venerable Ricard Revel, Outlook, Bangkok Post, 30 December 2008.



## Commentary

*Issa Abyad, Jordan*

I have enjoyed reading your paper. I have learned new things and I do fully agree with its contents. It seems cultures have many things in common; the issues of inner peace and happiness are two of them. In our culture we have many proverbs that teach us that peace and happiness come within us. The first proverb that comes to my mind is: "Contentment is a long lasting treasure." What our wise grandfathers meant by this is very simple. A person should be content with what he/she has and should never look at what the others have with an envious eye. By doing so every person will find happiness and peace within themselves. The second proverb which is in line with the issues you have covered is: "When capable, forgive." This means that you should forgive those who have insulted you, or have done something bad to you, even if you are in a position to return the insult or the harm they have caused you. By doing so you feel happy and peaceful with yourself.

So what Chutatip has mentioned in the paper, and the two proverbs I have mentioned, can be achieved by the power of the mind. It seems many people have forgotten that the mind is a very powerful tool. And, if used properly, it will give each of us the inner peace and happiness we all desire. Not many people can do meditation, but surely they can achieve contentment and be able to forgive if they put their mind into these two simple concepts.

I do wish people would reach the conclusion that happiness is not a materialistic thing. It is "a state of mind" which gives each one of us inner peace and happiness. I am very proud to say that when I was 25 years old I had Lymphoma. And I believe I survived this difficult situation because I was not scared, I was not moaning, "Why me?" Because my state of mind was calm, because the doctor who did the operation was good in his job, and because of chemotherapy, my illness became part of my past.

# Climate Change, Culture, Peace and Human Dignity

*Johan Hattingh, South Africa*

## Introduction

In this paper I would like to focus on the manner in which the characteristics of climate change and the internal logic of “discounting the future”, a standard decision-making tool about the future value of present investments, can lead us into a culture of hypocrisy in which we deny our war on ecosystems and our war on future generations, and by this compromise not only the dignity of future generations and the victims of climate change, but also our own ethical values and integrity.

## Points of Departure

My first point of departure is the scientific view<sup>209</sup> that climate change is a reality, that it is to a very large extent human made, and that we can mitigate some of it, but not all. Part of this picture is that we are currently experiencing 0.7 degrees Celsius of average surface warming of the earth over and above the average temperature of 1750, which is usually taken as the advent of the industrial age in the West. Besides that, we are currently already committed to another 0.6 degrees Celsius of warming because of past emissions. Even if we stopped all greenhouse gas emissions today, this warming will still take place over the next 50 to 100 years and we will not be able to do anything about it.

I therefore argue from the position that the destabilization of the climate system is already with us in the form of extreme weather events that range from prolonged droughts, to unexpected floods and storms, including hurricanes and typhoons. As warming continues, these effects will intensify, and if nothing is effectively done about climate change in the very near future to curb warming at a level of below 2 degrees Celsius, we will be faced with severe destabilization of the climate system that can be catastrophic for all life on earth. There are many, however, who maintain that a 1.5 degrees Celsius warming over the levels of 1750 is the limit that the earth can take.

Scientific uncertainty is another point of departure – where uncertainty is not about the causes of climate change, or about the general nature of its effects (that include extreme weather events), but uncertainty about the location and the magnitude of these effects. This is because climate is fundamentally a complex system that is characterized by unknown or unpredictable positive feedback loops. The thresholds and tipping points within the climate system, as well as the system changes that can take place at these tipping points, are in fact fundamentally unpredictable: they cannot be addressed and overcome by merely filling out certain gaps in information about the climate system, or by adjustments in the theoretical models used to portray climate change.

My third point of departure lies in the observation that the mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change are equally important, even if we live in a factual reality where mitigation gets more attention than adaptation. In this regard, my argument is that while it is extremely important to set targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions<sup>210</sup> and to promote renewable energies to switch to a low-carbon economy, it is equally important to implement measures to adapt to the unavoidable effects of climate change that we will not be able to escape, even with targets of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius above the 1750 levels. In the context of adaptation, different challenges need to be met, for instance identifying who the most vulnerable to climate change would be, what their particular needs would be to adapt to climate change – including the knowledge needs to do so – and to effectively

209 This scientific view is summarized in the various assessment reports of the IPCC – The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

210 The IPCC in its Fourth Assessment Report (2007) for example, sets a target of not more than 2 degrees Celsius in warming above the levels of 1750; a target of a reduction of 50% in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; and a target of not more than 450 parts per million of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

address these needs. Similarly, in the context of adaptation, part of the challenge is to build the capacity to adapt in those populations that are affected, as well as to learn from others that may have been exposed to some of these adaptation challenges in the past.

For my fourth point of departure, I would like to start from the observation that climate change is not only a scientific or a technical issue that can be solved by more science or more technology.<sup>211</sup> For that matter, climate change is not even only a political issue that can be settled in processes of international negotiations. My contention is that climate change is fundamentally a social and human challenge – it challenges our cultures and way of life, it challenges our identities (i.e. who we are), it challenges our ethical values and integrity (i.e. how honest we are with ourselves), and it challenges our dignity as human beings.

## Characteristics of Climate Change

Following the provocative thesis of Stephen Gardiner (2006) that the characteristics of climate change plunges us into a perfect moral storm, I would like to briefly note the following characteristics of climate change.

### The Dispersion of Causes and Effects

In this regard, the facts are well known. Climate change is caused by human-induced global warming, and the latter is caused by the emission of greenhouse gasses, of which CO<sub>2</sub> is an important component. Methane and ordinary water vapour are other important greenhouse gasses. However, the most important point in this regard, is that while it is possible to pinpoint where these greenhouse gasses are emitted, it is not possible to identify or predict where their effects will be felt, at what time, and what their magnitude will be. The fact is that greenhouse gas emissions become part of the atmosphere, so that the effects of climate change are dispersed over the whole of the globe.

A number of very important ethical issues follow from this – that I only would like to mention here and not fully discuss.<sup>212</sup> The first issue is that those most likely to be affected by climate change are at the same time those least responsible for it, and those least capable of doing anything about it. A second issue is that those most capable of doing something about the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change are apparently the least motivated to do. As such, this situation conjures up a plethora of distributive and compensatory justice issues, as well as a wide range of procedural fairness issues. Without going into the merits of the arguments for or against, climate change apparently confronts us with the issues of an unfair burden of negatives, burdens and costs that are borne by some and not by all, and that something needs to be urgently done to correct this situation. At the same time, the issues of procedural fairness confronts us with the question who is really calling the shots in climate change decision-making? Do we see in the international climate change negotiations merely a repetition of current power divides currently characterizing the world order, or do we see real efforts to overcome those divides?

### The Fragmentation of Agency

As Gardiner (2004 and 2006) sees it, under a spatial perspective climate change is caused by a vast number of individuals and institutions that are not unified by a comprehensive structure of agency. Under a temporal perspective, he argues, temporally fragmented agents cannot actually become unified – which is starkly emphasized by those generations that actually do not live in overlapping times.

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211 See COMEST. 2010. *The Ethical Dimensions of Global Climate Change*.

212 For some discussion of these issues, see Gardiner, 2004. *The White Paper on the Ethical Dimensions of Climate Change*, Rock Ethics Institute, undated; as well as COMEST. 2010. *The Ethical Dimensions of Global Climate Change*.

As Gardiner sees it, the serious ethical problem that follows from this, is that present generations typically act in self-interest, leaving future generations worse off. As such, he argues that this inter-generational problem is exacerbated by a number of factors, the most important of which is the multiplier effect. By this he means that the problems created by greenhouse gasses do not increase in a linear fashion as time goes by; rather, they increase in an exponential manner. Formulated differently: by not doing anything about the mitigation of climate change now, we are not merely adding a few problems to those that the next generation will inherit; we rather multiply the number of problems that we convey to them.

## Institutional Inadequacy

An effective response to climate change today would require not only global regulation of greenhouse gas emissions (to start with), but also a reliable enforcement mechanism. The current international system, however, as underlined by the failure of COP 15 in Copenhagen in December 2009, makes this difficult, if not impossible. This factual state of affairs, however, does not take away from the requirement that we need an international system of global governance to effectively respond to the current and possible future challenges of climate change, and that we need to replicate this type of system on a regional and national basis to promote cooperation and coordination between the multiplicity of sectors and institutions that will have to work together in a joint effort to effectively face the challenges of climate change.

## Theoretical Inadequacy

Having considered the most important characteristics of climate change, it is also important to note some of the inadequacies in our theoretical capacity to effectively respond to climate change. In this regard, my contention is that our thinking about climate change is, to a large extent, informed by assumptions that make it very difficult, if not impossible, to effectively respond to climate change. One of these assumptions is that the state is the proper agent that can respond adequately to the challenges of climate change. To formulate it more accurately: we seem to assume that states can be persuaded to act rationally in the interests of the common good – while we actually see from observations in more and more areas, besides that of decision-making around climate change (for example in the handling of the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009) that we are mistaken in this regard.

We also assume that rational analysis can help us to comprehend the challenges of climate change and get us out of our quandaries. However, apparently rational tools for decision-making like game theory and economic calculus also leaves us in the lurch when it comes to climate change. Game theory, for instance, seems only to help us describe strategies of decision-making with regards to climate change that leads us to the positions of the prisoner's dilemma or the tragedy of the commons, without helping us beyond these positions. While the trouble with economic calculus seems to be clearly illustrated by the decision-making tool of discounting.

In short, discounting can be described as a decision-making tool designed to help us calculate the present value of future costs. It could typically be used to answer a simple question such as the following: What would be the cost today of a future cost of \$100 in 2100?<sup>213</sup> The answers to this question would vary, depending on the discount rate. With a discount rate of 8%, a cost of \$100 in 2100 would be a cost of 1 cent today. With a discount rate of 5%, the cost today would be \$1.00, while at a discount rate of 2% the cost today would be \$17.00. On the basis of these figures then, it would be possible to maintain that the present value of future costs decays exponentially over time at a constant rate – where that rate is represented by the discount rate.

This becomes clearer if we consider the formula used in discounting. Consider the task to find the present value (PV) of \$100.00 that will have to be paid in five year's time. The equivalent task is to find out what amount of money today will grow to \$100.00 in five year's time when subjected to a constant

213 See COMEST, 2010.

investment rate. Assuming a 12% per year discount rate ( $r$ ), it follows that:<sup>214</sup>  $PV = \$100 / (1 + 0.12)^5 = \$56.74$ .

Concretely put, discounting can mean different things in financial or social decision-making contexts. In the financial context, discounting entails deferment of payment of a debt to a future date at a fee. As deferment is extended, the fee accumulates exponentially over time, based on a fixed percentage. Debt of \$1.00 today at a fixed interest rate of 8% therefore becomes a debt of \$100 in the year 2100.

In the context of social decision-making, discounting entails the comparison of the value of present well-being with future well-being. A high social discount rate (3% or more is considered high) implies a high estimate of present well-being, while the value of future well-being decays exponentially as time goes by.<sup>215</sup> This implies that present funding for future social benefits are less likely the higher the social discount rate is, the longer the time is for the benefits to realize, and the bigger the risks or uncertainties are to future society.

As such, discounting has a number of far reaching social and ethical implications.<sup>216</sup> In summary, it can be stated that high discount rates bias us towards indifference about future costs. The costs we shift to future generations for whatever project can thus be ignored in present-day decision-making. For example: at a discount rate of 6% the costs of decommissioning a nuclear power plant after 40 years of use would be regarded as negligible in terms of present values. This kind of calculation, of course, presupposes that GDP (gross domestic product) will keep on growing, and that the capacity of future generations to cope with the costs we generate now, will also grow. The converse of the implication spelled out above, is that it would be a waste of resources (i.e. irrational) to invest now in projects to gain benefits in the distant future, or if there are real risks that can be foreseen that may prevent these benefits from realizing.

So, what are we actually doing when we make use of the decision-making tool of discounting? One way to put it is to state that we actually hide the true costs of our choices behind a conveniently chosen discount rate: we underestimate or refuse to acknowledge the future costs of our present choices. In another formulation we can say that we defer payment of our debts/costs as far as possible into the future, while perhaps also undermining, if not destroying, the capacity of future generations to pay that debt. In a third formulation we could state that we express our unwillingness to invest now in projects that may yield social benefits at some time in the distant future. In yet a fourth formulation, we could say that we discount the value of the interests and the lives of future generations, elevating our interests and the value of our lives to the highest level possible.

This clearly stands in stark contrast to what is actually required to effectively address the challenges of climate change. We, in fact are still in a position to be able to afford the presents costs of mitigation to keep global warming under 2 degrees Celsius above the 1750 levels,<sup>217</sup> and perhaps even the higher costs of keeping warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius – but we are not in a position to afford the costs of what will happen if warming goes above 2 degrees Celsius in the future. Conventional approaches to discounting, however, as indicated above, effectively keep us from doing something about climate change, keeping us inactive as it were, keeping us in a mode of business as usual. The point I try to make in this paper, however, is that the longer we continue with business as usual, the longer we postpone action on climate change, the more difficult it will become to respond to it, and the more that response will cost us. The point is, as it has been indicated above, that if left unmitigated, greenhouse gas emissions will increase exponentially, and with that not only the challenges of climate change, but also the costs of addressing them.

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214 See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discounting>

215 If equal moral weight is given to all generations, the social discount rate should be 0%.

216 See COMEST, 2010.

217 According to the 700 page Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (2006), we will need only 1% of global GDP to prevent future generations from suffering from unaffordable damages due to climate change. This could be achieved by environmental taxes, and in practical terms calls for a global sacrifice of consuming 1% less per annum. According to William Nordhaus (2007) this is too much to ask for. In an interview in 2008, Stern acknowledged that climate change is happening faster than he initially calculated, and that the costs to address climate change would rather approximate 2% of global GDP. See Jowitz, Wintour, 2008.

## A Culture of Hypocrisy?

So, where does the above leave us? With Gardiner (2006), I think we can say that we conveniently create, through so-called rational decision-making procedures, an opportunity for this generation to continue with exploitative behaviour that will harm future generations, without having to acknowledge that this is what we are doing. We create the impression of being concerned about selfish behaviour, while taking advantage of our present situation, without the unpleasantness of acknowledging it to ourselves.

In short, this approach to discounting, read together with the characteristics of climate change that were discussed above, enables us to construct obstacles to our ability to make the hard choices necessary to address climate change. They help us to shy away from the difficult ethical choices we have to make; they help us to avoid taking effective action. It places us, as Gardiner argues, in the position of a perfect moral storm – where distraction, complacency, unreasonable doubt, selective attention, delusion, pandering, avoiding to face and discuss the very real issues related to climate change are at the order of the day, obscuring the fact that we in fact are at war with the ecosystems that sustain us, and with the future generations that may follow us.

## But Is There a Way Out?

On the other hand, though, if we are able to ask radical questions about the theoretical frameworks from which we approach rational decision-making about climate change, and if we are able to ask serious questions about the philosophical and ethical implications of framing the characteristics and challenges of climate change in a certain manner, then we certainly are in a position also to overcome the culture of hypocrisy that we have described above.

Then we also are in a position to state, and to start debating the very real issues that we will have to address if we want to effectively overcome the challenges of climate change. Some of these questions include the following:<sup>218</sup>

Who should take what action? Should industrial countries clean up the mess of climate change because of past emissions? Should industrial countries pay compensation for damages to lesser developed countries because industrial countries have overused a common resource, thus denying other countries the opportunity to use their “shares” in that commons?

How should we allocate the costs and benefits of greenhouse gas emissions and abatement?

Can industrial countries be excused from responsibility because they were ignorant of the impacts at the time when they started emitting greenhouse gasses?

Is there an obligation on rich nations to assist poorer nations to mitigate and adapt to climate change – because of their previous causal role?

Should we not just forget about past emissions and only focus on future emissions?

Should we opt for equal per capita entitlements? (Setting a ceiling?)

Should we go for a right to subsistence emissions? (A guaranteed minimum?)

Should we give priority in mitigation and adaptation to the least well-off and the most vulnerable nations, or groups within nations?

Should we equalize marginal costs – divide burdens to tackle climate change according to the ability to pay for it?

Can we continue to use scientific uncertainty as an excuse not to take action?

Can we continue to use cost to national economies as an excuse not to take action?

Can we continue to use the lack of new generation technologies as an excuse not to take action?

Do nation states have an independent responsibility to act, regardless of what other nations do?

Which principles of procedural justice should be followed to assure fair representation in climate change decision- and policy-making?

218 See COMEST, 2010.



## Closing Statement

My contention is that as long as we do not seriously and honestly address the very real issues listed in the section above, we not only compromise the dignity of future generations, but also the dignity of those most vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change and changing ecosystems. Then we also compromise our own dignity. Formulated differently: as long as we do not seriously and honestly address the very real issues listed in the section above, we will not be able to make peace with future generations, ecosystems, nature, others living now, and ourselves.

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# Sustainable Development in the Spiritual Context as a Denominator for an Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogue

Azizan Baharuddin, Malaysia

## Why Religion/Spirituality?

The importance of the spiritual or religious component in Sustainable Development (SD) discourse is due to its link to ethics and values. However in the current secular discourse/language, religious and moral values cannot be made public as they are perceived to belong to the individual's private life and because today's liberal idealism is said to treat citizens as being amoral.<sup>219</sup> Garray, a systemologist from the Universidad de Andes, Ecuador, observes that the current Western/secular culture generally sees the world and human beings as being groundless. This view places people and objects as mere things-in-themselves, i.e. without any hidden side or meaning to them. All things are also contextless, groundless, and it is the same with humans. Although it does not mean that people cannot have moral or religious values, the latter is not part of our natural constitution or essence. They are not essential to our being. As such people can change them whenever they like, and it is this freedom that they want to protect through the institutions that are seen to be capable of protecting that freedom.<sup>220</sup>

Nevertheless according to the neo-liberal view in modern societies rational justification must be given to human action. Because the moral language is fragmented, the rational drive cannot be properly fulfilled. Premises for action are often noted on moral grounds, but when these lack a moral framework, settlement regarding the issue being debated, such as what constitutes social justice cannot be reached.

The chaos and tension that has arisen because of this massive lack of certainty and absence of framework for action is also emphasized by Vaclav Havel (freedom fighter, writer and first President of the Czech Republic) when he said: "I am persuaded that [the present global crisis] is directly related to the spiritual condition of modern civilization. This condition is characterized by loss: the loss of metaphysical certainties, of an experience of the transcendental, of any super-personal moral authority, and of any kind of higher horizon. It is strange but ultimately quite logical: as soon as man began considering himself the measure of everything, the world began to lose its human dimension and man began to lose control of it."<sup>221</sup>

Spirituality/religious values are also critical in the discourse of SD because today no one can deny the marked decline in human values in the way humans conduct their lives. This decline is accompanied by the rise in materialism, philosophical incoherence and the pursuit of happiness under assumptions that are false (as we have seen above). The situation resulted in spiritual nihilism where people sacrifice authentic human's purpose for pleasure.<sup>222</sup>

The lack of love and spirituality in globalised economics or the economics of globalization is also a major stumbling block for SD. A desire to look at and ask deeper, more fundamental or bigger questions about life, its meaning and its purpose have to be awakened in people, says theologian Kamrad Mafid. Religion/faith/theology is significant today because globalization needs conscience, morality and ethics.<sup>223</sup> In the context of economics, religion can contribute to restoring the balance between the material and spiritual elements – paving the way to a peaceful, just and sustainable society.

219 Lopez, H. G. 2001. Dialogue Among Civilisations: What For? *International Journal On World Peace*. Vol. 18, No. 1, p. 15-33.

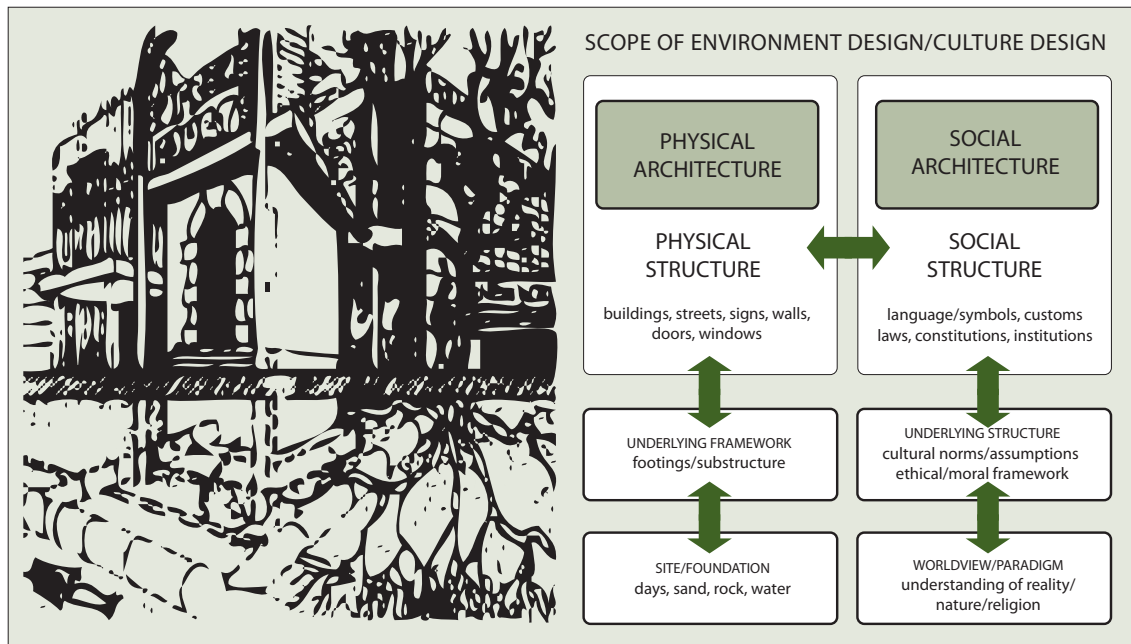
220 *Ibid.*

221 Vaclav Havel. Available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaclav\\_Havel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaclav_Havel)

222 *Ibid.*

223 Mofid, K. 2003. Global Capitalism in Crisis, Theology and Economics Working Together. *Interreligious Insight Journal*. Vol. 1, No. 3., p. 16.

Figure 4: Diagram Illustrating the Social and Physical Domains of Human Civilization



Adapted from: Richard A. Slaughter. 1996. *Futures Concepts and Powerful Ideas*, Futures Study Centre, Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia.

Mostly looking at non-Western societies (Asian and Arab societies for example), commenting on the place of spirituality in development, Pierre Beemans (Vice President of the International Development Research Centre, Canada) saw that conventional Western discourses on development for decades, or up to the 1990s, have ignored or dismissed the cultural, moral and spiritual dimension of human well-being, seeing the latter as being too subjective to be made a practical consideration, or simply irrelevant.<sup>224</sup> He says that although assumptions and values may not be expressed in “rational paradigm”/quantitative terms, they nevertheless exist in culture, ritual and religion. Such ontological needs/priorities include such elements as: love of others, one’s commitment and responsibility to family, clan, and community, self-worth, one’s sense of dignity, honour, and respect for a sense of the sacred and the transcendental, life and death.

All these are interlinked in “cosmological visions” or worldviews which essentially are given by religion and spirituality that provide people with points of departure for making “the great human choices” that really determine and sustain development (SD): choices between transforming nature versus inhabiting it, between being present-oriented versus future-oriented, innovative versus passive, right versus wrong, or good versus evil. Principles or frameworks that provide answers to these questions can be considered as “basic human needs” every bit as much as food, shelter, access to health and education, and honest, just governance.<sup>225</sup>

## Meaning of Religion and Spirituality

Spirituality is at the basis of religion. It addresses the issue of humans’ link to, and partaking in our divine dimension. “Spirit” is also referred to as the soul, which is also the encapsulation of humans’ inner psycho-spiritual and emotional nature. Religion is “relegare” (Latin) – the state of being bounded to something. In the case of religion, to a set of beliefs grounded in a Being of Supremities i.e. described by the 99 names of God in Islam, for example. Religion provides a cosmology, a code of ethics and norms of conduct, meaning and purpose to life. Religious teachings are provided by scripture or figures of

224 Beemans, P. 1995. In W. F. Ryan. *Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening A Dialogue*. Ottawa, ON, IDRC, pp. 5-9.

225 *Ibid.*

authority. Although scriptures or revelations are regarded as eternal, in their shades, depth and scope of meaning, clarity can increase with references to increases in man's knowledge. In fact one of the demands of the times (and today SD is one such demand of our times) is that scripture is read with the increasing knowledge of the study of nature or ecology.

S. Naquib Al-Attas explained for example that in the religious tradition humans have both body and soul as a physical and spiritual being. "God taught him knowledge of things, their attributes, the relations and the distinctions that exist between them, so as to clarify their natures, purposes, and uses. The seat of knowledge he believes is the heart (*qalb*) a spiritual substance, his soul (*nafs*), spirit (*ruh*) and intellect (*aqil*).<sup>226</sup>

## Human-Centered Versus Life-Centered Universe

SD is a response to the environmental crisis, which in neutral secular language is due to the overstepping of the earth's carrying capacities (issues pertaining to pollution, environmental degradation, pressure on the life support system of water, air and land, etc.). As we know, degradation of the environment means decrease or destruction of resources or "natural capital" which is the purview of the economic system. Much debate has arisen regarding the pros and cons of what is described by some quarters as rampant capitalism, for example.

So it would seem that economy or *oikos nomos* (Greek words meaning management of home) should be preceded by ecology *oikos logos* (knowledge of home). But is knowledge of the limits and mechanisms and processes embedded in the environment sufficient to ensure *taubah* (literally meaning "turning of the heart"), a change in human attitudes and actions towards nature, towards economic and social justice? No, because there are elements in the human make-up that can result in irrationality (as far as the environment is concerned, behavior such as overconsumption, greed, worsening/increasing gap between rich and poor, exploitations and all manner of mismanagement, abuses of power - in short social upheavals like wars and refugees being poignant reminders).

Therefore experts and laypersons have come to the conclusion that a new paradigm or worldview is needed. G. Tyler, Jr., for example, describes this change as the need to shift from the human-centered to the life-centered worldview.<sup>227</sup> If we examine the above closely, we can see that the life-centered principles are in line with the religious ethos (of much of the Asia-Arab Communities) vis-à-vis the environment (see the next section for examples). Therefore, even if one is dealing with a totally materialistic, non-religious perspective, it can be argued that the religious inputs for sustainable development are not baseless or without support. In the table below, we can see principles of the human-centered worldview as well as the life-centered worldview.<sup>228</sup>

226 Naquib Al-Attas, M. 1990. *The Nature of Man and the Psychology of the Human Soul*. Kuala Lumpur, ISTAC, p. 2.

227 Tyler, G. Jr. 1994. *Living in the Environment* (8th ed) International Thompson Publishing. Belmont, California, p. 18.

228 *Ibid*.

Human-Centered	Life-Centered
Humans are the planet's most important species, and are apart from and in charge of the rest of nature.	Nature actually exists for all of Earth's species, not just for humans who are neither apart from nor in charge of the rest of nature. Man needs the Earth, but the Earth does not need man. The Earth does not belong to man but he belongs to the Earth.
There will always be an unlimited supply of resources and we can gain access to them through science and technology.	Earth's resources are limited, they should not be wasted, and man should use them sustainably for himself and all species.
All forms of economic growth are good, more economic growth is better, and the potential for economic growth is unlimited.	Forms of economic growth can be beneficial or harmful. We should design economic and political systems that encourage Earth-sustaining growth and discourage or prohibit Earth-degrading growth.
A healthy economy will result in a healthy environment.	Only a healthy environment can provide a healthy economy. Our survival, life quality, and economies are totally dependent on the rest of nature (Earth capital).
Man's sustainability will depend on his success in understanding, controlling and managing the planet for his benefit.	Our sustainability as a species depends on our learning to cooperate with one another and with the rest of nature instead of trying to dominate and manage Earth (and humans) for our own use. Because nature is so incredibly complex, and always changing, we will never have enough information and comprehensive to truly understand and manage the planet and life, by ourselves.

The life-centered worldview (LCWV) is needed as the metaphysical or religious premise for SD and sustainable living in the future.<sup>229</sup> The LCWV is also in line with environmental ethics, a field of study that has developed in recent decades, and one that the Asian-Arab Philosophies can be rich resources for. Some principles of environmental ethics as laid out by Tyler include the following:<sup>230</sup>

## On Ecosystems

We should try to understand and cooperate with the rest of nature rather than try to dominate and conquer it. Earth does not belong to us; we belong to the Earth.

We should work with the rest of nature to sustain ecological integrity, biodiversity, and adaptability of Earth's life support systems for us and for other species. This requires controlling population and resource use, living off of solar energy and renewable Earth income, not depleting or degrading Earth capital, and rehabilitating or restoring ecosystems we have damaged.

When we alter nature to meet our needs or wants, we should choose the method that does the least possible harm to us and other living things.

Before altering nature, we should carry out an Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA) and a Grandchild Impact Analysis (GIA) to help us decide whether to intervene and to discover how to inflict the minimum short- and long-term harm.

229 Macer, D. R. J. 1998. *Bioethics is Love of Life: An Alternative Textbook*. Christchurch, Eubios Ethics Institute.

230 *Ibid.*

## Culture and Species

Every species has a right to live, or at least to struggle to live, simply because it exists. We have the right to defend ourselves against individuals of species that do us harm and to use individuals of species to meet our vital needs, but we should strive not to cause the premature extinction of any wild species. The best way to protect species and individuals of species is to protect the ecosystems in which they live. No human culture should become extinct because of our actions. Culture diversity is just as vital as biodiversity.

## Responsibility of the Individual

We should not inflict unnecessary suffering or pain on any animal we raise or hunt for food or use for scientific or other purposes. We should leave wild things in the wild unless their survival depends on human protection. All people should be held responsible for their own pollution and environmental degradation. We should leave the Earth in better shape than we found it by considering the impacts of our actions on the next seven generations (an ethical principle of some native American cultures).

We should strive to live more lightly on the Earth, not because of guilt or fear, but because of a desire to make the world a better place. No one can do everything but we can do better at working with the Earth. We should get to know, care about, and defend a piece of the Earth.

If we look at some of the writings of theologians who are informed by the knowledge of ecology and science behind the environmental crisis, these scholars are articulating (via specific concepts, principles and edicts, or *fatwa*) how religion does possess a body of knowledge as well as guidelines, that can put a great emphasis on religion as a way of life to promote sustainable behavior at the individual, communal, professional, institutional, political and economic level/sphere. In what follows, examples will be given from several faith traditions.

## How Religion Can Contribute to Sustainable Development

### Buddhism

Even though Buddhism is fundamentally concerned with transcending the duality of the world it does offer values that can operate in an ethics towards the environment. For example, the Buddhist has compassion for all beings; life is one and is indivisible. Breaking the harmony of life will lead one to suffer oneself; hurting others will destroy one's own development. Humans are rooted in nature and Buddhism teaches that in giving to others one is blessed and generosity strengthens the bonds of the community. Exploitation of others is unacceptable.<sup>231</sup>

The Buddha's teachings strongly emphasize justice and equality. The ruler's role is not to aggrandize himself or to exploit the people (or those of other nations) but to prevent crime and provide for the needs of all. A ruler should be a good example: "...a king is seen to have responsibility to maintain, through his actions and influence, the moral fabric of society and nature."<sup>232</sup>

### Taoism

Humans are not the measure of all things. Charity is the universal love of all creatures/creation. Taoists practice an "ecocentric impartiality" through which the Taoist identifies with and respects all beings as being equally and intrinsically valuable. Taoism teaches peace whilst opposing oppression and domination. Through involvement and not withdrawal from life, a person's nature is fulfilled and not annihilated. Not all new technologies are seen as beneficial; therefore technological innovations that degrade and dominate humanity and nature are not approved of.<sup>233</sup>

231 Marshall, P. 1992. *Nature's Web: An Exploration of Ecological Thinking*. London, Simon and Schuster, pp. 50-53.

232 *Ibid.*

233 *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

## Hinduism

Hinduism is also known as *Sanatan Dharma*, which means “the eternal essence of life”. Devotees believe that it is the essence that unites all beings such as humans, plants, animals and all creatures with God. In Hinduism, no matter how believable an explanation science can provide us for the workings of nature it will always be incomplete because it cannot explain the reason and purpose behind these workings. Science can tell us how but not why.<sup>234</sup>

We will not know how to live in the world properly when we do not understand the divine purposes behind it. Science has brought many benefits in the forms of medicines and numerous comfort of life in the past 300 years through it being able to manipulate nature. However, it is also undeniable that science has also led to many dangers. As such if humankind does not understand/have knowledge of what the world is, what is the purpose of our existence in relation to that world and how or to what ends we should use it, then such harm can potentially result from the powers that science gives.

## Christianity

Christians view nature as an expression of God’s joy and love. For Christianity, the idea of the divine origins of the world is a central theme. The Bible views nature as a creation and a gift to humans from God, although it always does belong to God only.<sup>235</sup> “Do not cut down trees even to prevent ambush or to build siege engines; do not foul waters or burn crops even to cause an enemy’s submission” (Scriptural passage Deuteronomy 20:19-20).

The Talmud warns that wasting indicates a loss of self-control and leads to idol worship.

Then God said: “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So, God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female. God blessed them and said to them ‘Be fruitful and increase in numbers; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of air and over every tiny creature that moves on the ground’<sup>236</sup> (Genesis 1:26-28).

Gottlieb interprets the above passage as follows: “The ‘earth’ symbolically stands for unruly human ‘desires’ and the command to rule the earthly creatures means moral development should be pursued. Contemporary Christian theologians are agreed that though man is unique in the gift of reason bestowed upon him by God, that gift is marked more by responsibility and not abusable privileges.”<sup>237</sup> These theologians explain how the Bible sets out general principles that teach respect and value of the earth/environment such as: “There must be regard for other creatures; the weekly Sabbath, sabbatical (once in 7 years) and jubilee (once in 50 years) limits explicitly the labour humans should perform and the property accumulated (Exodus 23:10, Leviticus 25:3-7). In remembrance of God humans must rest.”<sup>238</sup>

Biblical passages teach humans to see nature playing the role of helping humans to understand and worship God better. “The heavens declare the glory of God... and their voice goes out into all the Earth.” (Psalm 19:14) “And the sea and everything in it sings God’s praises” (Psalm 96:11). And the book of Job describes creation as signs of the greatness of God. In conclusion, new ecotheological readings of the Bible indicates that scripturally based forms of Christianity are not alien to environmentalism, and therefore should be valuable in the sustainable development discourse.<sup>239</sup>

234 Ranchor Prime p. 4, 9.

235 Gottlieb, R. S. 2006. *A Greener Faith*. Oxford, UK, Oxford Univ Press, p. 23.

236 Gottlieb, R. S. 2006. *A Greener Faith*. Oxford, UK, Oxford Univ Press, pp. 24 – 27.

237 *Ibid.*

238 *Ibid.*

239 *Ibid.*

## Islam and Ecological Wisdom

In Islam, ecological wisdom is considered an integral component of the Muslim's religious beliefs. The religion teaches the spiritual meaning and significance of the environment as well as the ecological balance/*mizan*/equilibrium that exists with nature. It is on the basis of such an ecological understanding that a sound culture of environmental health is created as seen through the success of traditional Islamic civilization in its Golden Era of the 8-13<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. (Bakar, 2007, p. 5).

By definition a Muslim is someone who believes in divine unity, which is linked to the concept of the unity of nature. This means that everything is interrelated in numerous laws/ways. Because of the intrinsic link between the spiritual idea of Divine and the ecological balance, maintaining this balance would be akin to Muslims fulfilling their *ibadah* (service to God) duties.

As has been explained in the context of Hinduism and Taoism earlier on, tied with the Islamic view of nature is the attitude towards modern scientific and technological culture. Osman Bakar (2007, p. 19), for example, believes that much of the environmental disasters that have taken place are because of modern society's clinging to the reductionist view of the environment as well as the "unethical" use of science and technology through and within the environment.

Putting it simply, Muslim scholars such as S. H. Nasr and Osman Bakar (2007) have described the environmental crisis (strong factor leading to unsustainability) as being due to 'an impoverished' view of nature by modern/materialistic society who perceive science as investigating and delivering principally material/ products. This is not to deny what benefits science and technology has provided to humankind, it is just to underscore the fact that science and technology cannot fulfill man's non-material need. For Muslims today, the need to find a place for revelational truth in their epistemological beliefs is an urgent one. Some of these epistemological beliefs include:

**The doctrine of unity/tauhid:** All things in nature are related to each other. This means that earth's destiny is inextricably linked to the destiny of the cosmos. "God directs the affairs from the heavens to the earth."<sup>240</sup>

**The earth is a unique life-supporting planet:** "Do they not look at the earth-how many noble things of all kinds we have produced therein?"<sup>241</sup>

**Other creatures form communities as humans do, therefore they deserve human's respect:** "There is not an animal on earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you."<sup>242</sup>

**Ecological balance and equilibrium:** "And the firmament He has raised high and He has set up the balance of everything in order that you (humans) may not transgress the balance. So maintain the balance with equality and fall not short in it."<sup>243</sup>

**Avoidance/prohibition of waste and excess/consumerism:** "It is He who produces gardens... and plantations with produce of all kinds... eat of their fruit in their season, but render the dues that are proper on the day that harvest is gathered. But waste not by excess for Allah does not love the wasters."<sup>244</sup>

Humans are the vicegerent/*khalifah* of God. As *khalifah*, the Quran asks humans to sustain the earth, to see the latter as His creation that needs to be looked after and not plundered to beyond the limits of the earth's carrying capacity itself. The Quran describes God as the origin, creator, lord, ruler, author and revealer of the universe. The relationship between God who presents himself as the omniscient, omnipotent and all-wise Creator (*al-Khaliq*) and the universe as his created order (*Khalq*), as the domain of his creatures (physical/non-physical, animate/non-animate) is described in the Quran.<sup>245</sup> Hence the Quran is amongst others a most important source of environmental ethics for sustainability.

240 Al-Quran, Chapter 32 (The Prostration): Verse 5.

241 Al-Quran, Chapter 6 (The Cattle) Verse 99; Chapter 26 (The Poets): Verse 7; Chapter 55 (The Most Gracious): Verse 10-12.

242 Al-Quran, Chapter 6 (The Cattle): Verse 38.

243 Al-Quran, Chapter 55 (The Most Gracious): Verse 7-9.

244 Al-Quran, Chapter 6 (The Cattle): Verse 141.

245 Al-Quran, Chapter 2 (The Heifer): Verse 29; Chapter 6 (The Cattle): Verse 73; Chapter 7 (The Heights): Verse 54; Chapter 13 (The Thunder): Verse 16; Chapter 27 (The Ants): Verse 60-61.



## Conclusion

Technology is not culture-neutral nor is it value-neutral. To adopt a technology is to adopt the matrix of suppositions in which the technology is embedded. Modern technology for the most part is embedded in the Baconian-Newtonian complex of ideas i.e. science as manipulative power over an inert, material and mechanical nature. Unfortunately, says Callicot and Baird, this is the dominant modern paradigm today. Therefore societies able to draw upon their ecological and cultural-religious ideas must adopt these so-called technologies with care and circumspection.<sup>246</sup> This is critical in the context of a region, because enveloped in a mood of urgency, many developing (religious) countries are just in a hurry to catch up with the “developed” West and capital-consuming environmental counter-measures such as pollution abatement, sewage treatment technologies, or effective timber harvesting, and forest regeneration are seen as too much work.

Religions of the world play a significant role in addressing the moral dilemmas created by the environmental crisis which is one of the four major compartments of SD’s concerns. Increasingly it is becoming clear that despite abundant scientific knowledge of the crisis and numerous political and economic strategies being formulated, still not much has happened. Scientific, economic and political leadership do not seem to be able to effect changes. What is needed is religious commitment and ethical engagement to transform the issue as stated on paper to effective policy to action.<sup>247</sup> But where have the religions been on the issues surrounding environmental crisis and SD?

In discussing the involvement of religions, we also have to be wary of their institutional expressions and dogmatic forms. Religions are seen by many to have been the source of enormous manipulation of power in fostering wars, gender inequalities and social injustice to name a few problems associated with the image of religion. It may appear that there seems to be a kind of disruption in the flow between idealism and reality, theory and practice in religion, and it is this disjunction that has been a constant source of disillusionment, cynicism and skepticism amongst many. Realistic estimation does show however that the complex worldviews and rich cosmologies embedded in religions cannot be simply invalidated. Not wishing to minimize the disjunction and tensions that exist, John Grim for example suggests that religion and ecology is a viable new field of study where there will be an opportunity for religion to reflect on how they should conceive their roles, missions and identities and such reflections begins by religions dwelling upon the inseparableness of the sacred from the earth. Environmental and SD studies, on the other hand will have to recognize that religions have historically helped to shape attitudes and behavior towards nature which has sustainability implication for the future.

In the context of SD, no other discipline or field of knowledge can support religion’s capacity/potential for providing the transformative energies for stronger ethics/practices in correcting socio-economic imbalance, in protecting ecosystems, threatened species, and dwindling resources.

In portraying techniques/principles of various religious traditions we make no claims at comprehensiveness, the major focus is inclusivity. We recognize the diverse frameworks of institutions, contexts, and historical complexities of each tradition. The idea of providing “excerpts” from different tradition is just to provide an insight to the vast expanse of knowledge still awaiting the reader/user of this module with regards to religion’s /spirituality’s resources.

246 J. Baird Callicott, R. Ames (eds) 1989. *Nature in Asian Traditions Thought*. Albany, State University of New York Press, pp. ix.

247 Foltz, R. C., Denny, F. M., Baharuddin, A. (eds) 2003. *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Boston, MA, University of Harvard Press, pp. 20-23.

Ecological awareness is today on the increase. People are not merely concerned with cleaning their surroundings, but a profound shift in worldview or consciousness is also taking place. This is critical for SD. The level of environmental awareness required is not merely to clean up the environment but to see what is wrong with the industrial worldview itself. What is wrong is connected to the way we think and act in the world and religion is truly relevant in this context.



## Commentary

### *Balambal Ramaswamy, India*

The paper starts with explaining the meaning of “religion” and “spirituality”. It is not clear whether the author agrees with the ideas of Garry. It cannot be accepted that human beings are contextless and groundless as Garry says. Human ego and domination are to be condemned. For religious persons, fear and respect for God or religion will make them follow discipline and values. Human beings cannot be reduced to nothing.

Various Asian and Arab traditions are quoted to stress the contribution of religion and spirituality. There is a thin line dividing religion from spirituality. Even a non-religious person could be spiritual. There is no need for a person to be religious to follow ethics. The author quotes Pierre and Kamrad, but did not say whether she agrees with their views. Knowledge is different from wisdom. Reading scriptures may add to knowledge, but it should contribute to wisdom.

The human-centred and life-centred discussion is very interesting. Humans are responsible for all pollution. The society is affected by the same, especially the general public. One should realize the importance of ecology and economy. Ethics are more important than religion. Life-centred principles are more important than human-centred ones. Human-centred ethics are not ethics at all.

Religious teaching can contribute to sustainable development. Our scientists have already found that plants have life. Though all religions have their doctrines, the basic things are the same.

Hinduism specifies the significance of five natural elements for the progress of all living beings. Science can say how it happened but not why it happened. The merits and demerits of science are to be well understood. All should realize that preaching is different from practice. It is easy to preach but difficult to follow.

Child labour and bonded labour should be abolished. The author gives examples from many religions. One should not give all importance to science and technology. If anything is said through religion, illiterate and orthodox people follow without refuting. What about the beliefs of atheists? Religion is important but not fanaticism. Religious, spiritual and ethical values are to be practiced for sustainable development. The views of the atheists without reason and fundamentalists without compassion for fellow human beings are to be condemned. Many references are given at the end. On the whole the paper deals with important problems of modern times.

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# Human Dignity and Environmental Integrity

*Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh, Jordan*

## Definitions

**Ecology:** The study of structure and function of nature (Origin from Greek, and household is *Oikos*).

**Eco-system:** Human, animal and plant ecology within the framework of the relationship between organisms and their environment.

**Ecocentrism:** Awareness of nature and its complicated interdependence, based on a life-centered morality, not a human-centered one.

**Environmental Integrity:** An ecocentric perception of the environment where the integrity of all organisms is essential for a sustainable environment.

**Anthropocentrism:** Moral obligations, concerning economical and socio-political obligations, of rational human-centered ethics. The feeling of duty towards the extinction of some species, depletion of resources (versus sustainability), dangers of technology, global warming, etc.

**Moral Philosophy:** The methodology of critically questioning our beliefs and values prescribing (not describing as in social sciences) human behavior according to how we "ought to" act, being normative, and at the same time asking a meta-ethical question of what we mean by "right" or "wrong"?

## Introduction

Dignity is a concept related to bioethics, and is also related to the autonomy of human beings, their welfare and rights. The concept of dignity can be problematic from a biocentric perception of the world, as it is usually connected with certain species. So, is it possible not to be anthropocentric and yet discuss the issue of human dignity and environmental integrity? If we define dignity as the "state of being worthy of respect", we need to ask how can we be worthy of respect? Is it by decency, courtesy, generosity, education, wealth, power and/or pride?

Human dignity can be perceived as a relativistic concept. Changing with time and place, from one culture to another. It is also structurally connected to the moral community, which has widened since ancient Greece: women, working men, barbarians and slaves. The issue of their dignity was not properly taken into consideration. Nowadays, animals, trees and other biological elements are looked upon as important elements in the ecosystem.

Some philosophers are now calling for animal rights, talking about feelings of boredom in closed farms; some are arguing that even trees should have a stand to facilitate I and Thou relations (Buber, 2004). The universe is a series of events and interactions; it is a continuous interrelated process between all its elements, which constitute its environmental integrity. Meanwhile, many people in poor countries can hardly access drinking water and necessary food supplies for survival. Therefore, we think that environmental integrity is essential to preserve human integrity. This is why we are trying here to connect the two together.

## A Historical Review

In ancient religions, every logical ecological entity had a guardian spirit. Animism considered nature as sacred (such as Native Americans), while in Monotheism nature is not divine - God is transcendental, so he cannot dwell in nature, and only the temple of Jerusalem in Judaism is sacred. In most forms of Christianity and Islam only certain places are sacred. Early Christians considered nature as a temporary

dwelling, the land of the devil; only churches and church property were sacred. Humans could thus exploit nature to their needs. The natural world was created to serve human needs and nature can be exploited for teleological ends (Hargrove, 1986; Hughes, 1988).

The Greeks started the phenomenon of considering humans as rational animals capable of political organization by their nature. In Greek philosophy nature is an object to rational analysis serving human needs too, and the Romans considered nature as a conquered province (White, 1967). With Descartes in the 17th century a new vision of the mind/body problem had arisen. The former is more important and can seek knowledge on its own. This turning point in history gave rationality a divine status, as reason became the center of the universe. This coincided with the Scientific Revolution, which swept across Europe.

On the other hand, nature became a great machine, very much like the mechanical clock, which appeared as the ideal example of a perfect machine. Developing sciences have convinced people that we can control nature and make use of it for our benefits; this is what Sir Francis Bacon in England announced. The scientific revolution intensified in the 17th century as the earlier Copernican Revolution had dismissed the earth as the centre of the universe. Earth has become like any other planet revolving around the Sun. Kepler, Galileo and Newton announced their cosmic and terrestrial laws of motion. Nature became an obedient object to their laws. The invention of the telescope, microscope, thermometer and barometer all helped in surveying the skies and testing the laws of motion. This great clock, Earth, was beautifully obeying human laws, which humans, through science, had discovered (Stevenson, 1988).

Romanticism came as a response to the mechanical world that worked precisely like a clock model, working promptly without feelings. It also started in the late eighteenth century as a response to the Industrial Revolution and civil wars, which swept Europe, particularly in Germany, England and France. Nature is innocent while the city is corrupt! Nature is where we seek solitude and tranquility. Rousseau (1712–1778), declared that humans are good by their nature, but destroyed by civilization. William Blake (1757–1827) and William Wordsworth (1770–1850) were whispering to people to follow their emotions and dismiss thought (Russell, 1961). In America, Henry Thoreau (1817–1862) expressed his resentment by leaving his town to live in the woods for two years. As Earth had become a smaller planet wondering in a hostile universe, Darwin's evolutionary theory in the 19th century helped to link different species to the same origin. Materialism too assured our kinship to matter and thus laid the foundations to intrinsic values of all matter and hence the integrity of the environment.

The unprecedented Industrial Revolution in the West, which intensified during the 19th century, had also reflected on the conflict between human dignity, environmental integrity and sustainability, as capitalist ethics prevailed. Capitalism considered land as a private property and as a commodity, which could be exploited with no limits. Nationalism, on the other hand, made the national state sacred, and thus other states were not, paving the way to imperialism and further exploitation to other countries. The two world wars reflected the fierce competition of capitalist countries to control the world.

The dramatic ending of the Second World War by detonating two nuclear bombs and destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in 1945 marked a new beginning considering that human dignity was subdued by force, and also in regards to environmental integrity devastated by war machines. There was also concern about radioactive pollution that would remain for millions of years to come. This nuclear radiation alarmed people, but the level of alarm rose even further after the Soviet Union started its own nuclear experiments near the North Pole, and it was discovered that the winds moving from North to South had carried radiation as far as the South Pole, where traces of radioactive pollution were found in the fatty skin of the penguins. This triggered a great alarm in the world.

In 1948, we started to see books published about the environment. The environmental revolution probably started on a global scale when Rachel Carson published her book, *Silent Spring* in 1962. Our improved chemicals can kill life on earth, such as the DDT, which killed millions of birds treasured by human beings. Since then the world has announced the beginning of its environmental revolution. A review of the book in *Time* magazine attacked her as doing harm to the non-technical public as many pesticides are not harmful. Nevertheless, Earth Day was dedicated in 1970 to pay respect to the planet.

We can wonder why DDT inspired more publications than! Our main concerns will probably shift in 50 years time from worries about the ozone layer and carbon oxides to worries about contamination from radioactivity, problems rising from population growth, water shortages, etc. Whatever the causes of concern to the environment will be, there still remains the question for philosophy: What sort of commitments do we have towards environmental integrity and its impact on human dignity?

## Philosophical Stances

There is an urgent need to shift our anthropocentric behavior into a biocentric one, which assigns intrinsic values to every living organism. As Planet Earth works like an ecosystem built up on interrelated relations between the wide variety of species, then we can understand that it would be easier to think of the concept of conservation as a state of balance and harmony between Earth and human needs. We are faced with two trends in perceiving environmental issues and finding solutions. A strategy based on shallow perceptions that seek spontaneous treatment of pollution or spreading pollution equally over the world, as the Kyoto agreement had specified, enabling rich countries to buy quotas from poor countries in the South. Meanwhile, a deep perception strategy looks at the issue from another perspective: we need to establish long-term solutions by utilizing clean energy resources, such as solar energy, wind, hydropower, wave energy, geothermal energy and so forth.

We must also learn from ancient civilizations, such as the Mayans, that the depletion of the environment and the exhaustion of resources can annihilated existence. This is a technological approach to the issue, so what about the philosophical approach? We have to use philosophy to modernize our language, seeking refutation of the overwhelming propaganda in marketing industrial goods and developing construction sites, destroying forests and reshaping the surface of the Earth.

We must change the logo that was set by Sir Francis Bacon in the early 17th century (knowledge is power that can conquer Earth) and change our perception of making progress at the expense of polluting earth and using its limited resources. We should adapt new ethical standards that can change the idea of unlimited profit at any cost into limited human needs in harmony with nature. How can we do that?

The starting point is learning what damage we have inflicted on the environment. Having connected environmental enmity to politics, economics and North-South relations, some argue that socialism is a solution. It might be so, but our concern in this paper is to establish a philosophical stance towards this issue.

Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), founder of the Franciscan friars, de-emphasizes dualism and hierarchies in nature and perceives biodiversity as a direct relationship with God. He stressed on a non-hierarchical spiritual egalitarianism with nature. Nature is not a group of “things”, but rather an I-Thou relationship. He practiced natural theology for a better understanding of God. He is a patron saint for ecologists. Saint Francis tried to chat with birds and wolves, trying to get men closer to nature.<sup>248</sup> However, they were actually theological trials closely related to teaching humans how to love God, be thankful to Him and glorify Him more than anything else.

Another philosophical perception used is Pantheism. The universe and God are one coin with two faces. God includes the world, but not vice versa. Harold Wood proposed this philosophy as the basis for Environmental Ethics. Environmental philosophy is the branch of philosophy concerned with the value of the environment, so if we trap the reality of the environment in our consciousness, like the philosophy of George Berkeley (1685-1753), how can we talk about environmental ethics and its value objectively?

We can seek to promote ecotourism by consolidating sacred elements of nature. This includes the use of religion in the environment to explain the intrinsic values of members of the ecosystem. Through sacred trees and animals, for example, we eventually can preserve nature and upgrade the standard of living at the same time.

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248 See St. Francis of Assisi's poem "The Canticle of Brother Sun."

"Love of life" is a philosophy being established which goes as far as defining bioethics simply as the "love of life" (Macer, 1998). As love is a common factor among all peoples of the world, we are fortunate to have had a long gestation period in our mother's wombs for nine months, which helped develop love feelings and affection.

We can also learn from the North American Native American culture on how to offer sacrifices by letting animals go free, not by killing them. Native Americans also considered it a sin to scorch or harm the surface of the Earth, as in doing so we are scaring Mother Earth's breasts that feed us. Ecosystems are creative matrixes that generate more kinds of species and preserve species. They don't have value in themselves but they have systemic value. So, value is not connected only with consciousness but to biology and psychology. Value is a continuum intrinsic objective not subjectively related to us (Rolston, 1988).

In Shinto faith, some forests were believed to harbour a divine atmosphere. Therefore, no one would dare harm them. In Taiwan, there exist some sacred trees and lands where Gods reside. Who would want to harm Gods? We can learn from Taoism, founded in the 6th century B.C. in China, that the perfect person is connected with the primary virtues of love, compassion, patience, and the unconditional generosity towards all living beings (Macer, 1998). Buddhism can teach us the philosophy of non-violence, which respects all forms of life.

The mystical philosophy of "I and Thou", as explained by Martin Buber in the 1920s, considers trees as necessary means to reach the Eternal Thou. According to Buber on Pantheism: "Certainly the world dwells in me as an image, just as I dwell in it as a thing... The world and I are mutually included, the one in the other" (Buber, 1923). I cannot be one with the Eternal Thou (God) unless I build up a relationship with the "it" world first, followed by I-Thou relations with other people, as an essential means to unite with the Eternal Thou.

Materialism and Darwinism propose a view that by evolution we are the descendants of early life. The sea was our habitat, now it is land. Therefore, we have a duty to protect our heritage back to the simplest forms of life on Earth. Richard Dawkins sees that the atheists must lobby together to prove that their ethical behavior is rational and historic, and far more useful to the world and nature than the ethics taught in the scriptures, which is practiced by people driven by fear of punishment (Dawkins, 2006). His view is that humans inaugurated themselves as "moral animals" partly to avoid the punishment from the Gods that they invented in their imagination to compensate for their weaknesses and to compensate for their ignorance of natural phenomena. Now that we do understand the birth mechanism of the universe and the long and complex trends of our evolution, we must treasure life, which is rare in the universe, if not unique, and thereafter seek to preserve and protect all forms of life. Every element has an intrinsic value without which life could never have developed.

But before we do that we must make sure that humans can show empathy towards their fellow humans before they show empathy towards other species! Is this possible in a world so diverse and so preoccupied with wars?

## Cultural Diversity and Justice

To bridge the diversity between the great varieties of nations in a gradual manner, we need to share wealth and technology in a similar way to what happened in the European Union. How far have we progressed in achieving that so far? An Ethiopian in Africa uses 1/600<sup>th</sup> the amount of energy consumed by an American in the USA. Obesity there is a common illness while many Africans suffer from hunger and starvation! So, what does the "developed" world suggest?

We need to change our values, promote the use of environmentally friendly means of transport, choosing our food, furniture, etc., based on the love of life. If we love life sincerely we can thus avoid damaging it. We can impose luxury tax on non-friendly goods as to improve human dignity through welfare. But do all these actions make the world a just place to live in? We have to set a definition for justice.

Unfortunately, justice is nowadays understood in very much the same way the young sophist Thrasymachus defined it in Plato's *Republic*. He defined justice as follows: justice is whatever the strongest people decide according to their best interest (Russell, 1967). Socrates dismisses this definition by arguing that the strongest people hardly know where their interests lie. Answering the question about the Just State, Plato perceives that it must embody four great virtues: courage, wisdom, temperance and justice. Courage characterizes the class of people which constitutes the "Auxiliaries" (the army and police), while wisdom displays itself in the group of people Plato calls the "Guardians", who are supposed to be the best and the brightest amongst the population of the republic. As for the third virtue (temperance), a state is said to have temperance if the Auxiliaries obey the Guardians in all things in the same manner that the "Producers" (the largest group in the society who constitute workers, farmers, etc.) obey both the Auxiliaries and the Guardians in all matters.

Finally, a state is said to be just if the Auxiliaries do not only obey the Guardians but enjoy doing so too, and the same applies to the Producers, as in a just state they are to obey the other two classes willingly and without coercion and at the same time enjoy doing so. Consequently, the ideal state is an aristocratic state (in Greek: the rule by the best), and it is just because everybody obeys the aristocracy and enjoys doing so too. This is not too far from Thrasymachus' definition of justice. Yet, it is quite different from that of Aristotle. Aristotle defined justice as a balancing act of moderation toward one self and others. We need to promote Aristotle's definition, but is it possible in a world controlled by a capitalist mode of production?

As for cultural diversity and the culture of the privileged, Levi-Strauss is a Franco-Belgian social anthropologist and philosopher who developed structural anthropology. He rejected the ideology of the privileged and the concept of unique Western Civilization, and set off to prove that the savage mind is equal to the civilized mind. He spent decades studying the social organization of Southern and Northern American Indian tribes through structuralism, where he was searching for unsuspected harmonies. The pattern of the words form a structure, which is comparable to other patterns in other cultures.

Levi-Strauss also uses deconstruction to undermine the hierarchy constructed by cultures. As the structuralists perceive binary opposites (rational vs. emotional; white vs. black, etc.) organizing human thought, he proposes deconstruction to show that the text itself undermines any hierarchy imposed by a given culture through emphasizing the inferior item in the hierarchical scale and giving it positive assets to push it up the ladder (Levi-Strauss, 1968). As this method can be used to upgrade emotions, class, colour, etc, it can also be used exactly in the same manner to deal with environmental issues to upgrade the values towards other cultures and natural objects shifting from an anthropocentric perception of the world into an ecocentric one.

What concerns us here is the study of kinship between cultures, which we can extend further to encompass the whole world. Discovering kinship in every form of life is a message of ecocentric dimensions. To do that we must take a stand against contemporary philosophy which has left us the heritage of a dependent world - that is a world dependent on our conscious, language, theory, text, etc. We should be striving to be free from this hierarchy and move towards perceiving an independent world, evaluating binary opposites in favor of the Other rather than Us.

## Towards "Ecosophy"

Deep ecology tries to shift from anthropocentrism to biocentrism (Henry Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, George Santayana, Aldous Huxley, etc.), criticizing Western philosophy as focusing on humans as the centre of the universe, thus igniting a Copernican Revolution in philosophy and environmental ethics based on Eastern biocentric philosophies which are thought to be useful as a universalistic philosophy for deep ecology (e.g. John Muir, *The Taoist of the American West*).<sup>249</sup>

249 Bill Devall. *John Muir As Deep Ecologist*, Humboldt State University. Available at [www.jstor.org/pss/3984050](http://www.jstor.org/pss/3984050). Accessed on 12 March 2010.



They also call for the restoration of the degraded nature to pristine status, thus inspiring ideas such as birth control and reduction in population. In poor countries inequitable conservation, such as natural reserves, puts the interests of animals over the interests of the poor population, nomads or farmers, as in India (tiger reserves) and in Jordan (desert animal reserves). This also is to the benefit of rich tourists (Guha, 1989).

The East has manipulated nature to its needs, regardless of religions. The Taoist Lao Tzu reflected “on the spiritual essence of human relations with nature” (Ramachandra, 1989, p. 300), but in the context of an agrarian society indulged in complicated relations with nature. On the other hand Western preservations are aesthetically and conveniently adding to amenity of the industrial world and the consumer society. The integrity of the environment and the spiritual relations with nature were essential to organizing the human-nature relationship in an agrarian society, where weather, soil, air and biodiversity in the environment controlled the harvest, which was necessary for survival. Is this viable today?

“Deep ecology” questions the fundamental presuppositions of ethics (value priorities), religion and philosophy, which underlie Western society's economic agendas. The socio-economic dimension is highlighted by Naess (1988), considering the members of the deep ecology movement as having things in common, such as attitudes, beliefs, similar lifestyle and agreeing on many political issues. This triggers the North-South problematic again on what presuppositions of ethics that make people rally together. Deep ecology can be derived from Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism and Bahai, as well as from other philosophies, as Naess suggests; but isn't that an eclectic type of methodology that chooses the good aspects of every culture? Naess then launches a personal philosophy called “Ecosophy T” based on “maximizing long-range universal self-realization”. Naess and George Sessions formulated a definition for deep ecology in 1984, which is mainly based on the following:

1. All the riches and diversity in life form have intrinsic inherent values in themselves regardless of their usefulness to humans.
2. Humans have no right to subjugate other life forms to their wants, but can satisfy their vital needs in controlled human population growth.
3. Agreement on substantial measures necessary to mitigate the damage done to the ecosystem, controlling growth and raising awareness.

Education, awe and love are a step towards wisdom. But what about many peoples in the South who are deprived of love, security, food and basic needs, and above all lack an egalitarian system, in many cases by the blessing of the North? What can we expect from the South regarding wisdom, awe and love towards their ecosystems? “Ecosophy T” of self-realization is inspired by certain Eastern traditions (Atman), then enlarged to a global self-realization enhancing the feelings of duty, altruism and the Kantian idea of good actions based on inclination not on the feeling of duty (Naess, 1988, p. 447).

This philosophy is an evolutionary process, as humankind matures from selfishness to the realization of the self-accommodating to a modest and simple lifestyle. This reminds us of Kant's notion on the rational development of ethics, which he proposed as a natural trend that will allow the culture of peace to prevail!

A new approach by Jeremy Rifkin (1985) calls for seeking empathy and participation in the pursuit of knowledge. Nicholas Maxwell (1984) calls for a transformation from the “philosophy of knowledge” to the “philosophy of wisdom”. Ethics, aesthetics, religion, science and philosophy of nature are linked together in Rolston's Environmental Ethics. He looks at the possible defects in nature to prove that the instant disvalues that are seen in nature (death, suffering, etc.) are actually precious values that keep nature's evolution running once we reflect on them (Preston/Kirk, 2007).

The ecosystem has a precious value in our conscious that is embedded deep down in our inner selves. All we have to do is remember it and start practicing universal ethics, extending gradually from a feeling of belonging to the world and beyond (the universe) - a feeling of the “ethosphere” extending to a feeling of the “cosmosphere”, extending beyond earth, religions, race and cultures (Sharma, 2003).

## Conclusion

What religions could not overcome, concerning our differences is a future prospect for philosophy, which can hopefully create a unity of purpose and surpass regional conflicts towards assimilation in the cosmosphere of the universe. How successful has “Ecosophy” been? Although we have discussed many philosophical trends we must admit that their impact on the world is very limited. Our minds can conceptualize the infinite, yet we cannot do something to conserve the finite nature, which we are destroying every day.

If social, economic and political factors are so great in controlling the relationship of human dignity with environmental integrity, as we have seen in this paper, we should never stop seeking a philosophical solution based on an ever-improving “Ecosophy” that will enrich our lives and that of the ecosystem in such a way that will restore the integrity of the environment and the human dignity connected to it, thus opening the way to the nourishment of a peaceful culture in this turbulent world.

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# A World and The World: The Problem of Demarcation

## *Amarbayasgalan Dorjderem, Mongolia*

This is a modified and substantially expanded version of my commentary on Dr. Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh's paper "Human Dignity and Environmental Integrity" that he presented at the UNESCO Asia-Arab Philosophical Dialogue, 17-19 May 2010, Port Dickson, Malaysia. In his paper, Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh addressed the concept of dignity with a view to explore a philosophical ground for, using his words, a "new ethical paradigm or new ethical standards" that could accommodate both human dignity and environmental integrity." The initial commentary was focused on: 1) the "burden of proof" argument on moral inclusiveness and egalitarianism among all living beings; 2) that in case of moral dilemma, a pleasure/preference of human beings must be satisfied prior to those of other living beings; and 3) sacred sites are not necessarily based on intrinsic non-anthropocentric values but often grounded on taboo.

The author acknowledged that: "We must make sure that humans can show empathy towards their fellow humans before they show empathy towards other species" and I take this position as well. The natural environment is a necessity for human survival and it is also a vital source for our well-being. Would it be termed as Mill's qualitative hedonism to satisfy the higher order of pleasure, weak anthropocentrism or light green environmentalism? Therefore, whether motivated by Mill's qualitative hedonism to satisfy the high order of pleasure, weak anthropocentrism, or light green environmentalism, we nevertheless have a reason to act if environmental changes pose a threat to human survival. This approach is not novel because our concern over nature and a prudential duty to protect it could be ascribed within the human rights context, for example, the proclamation of a freedom from fear and freedom from want with subsequent requirements<sup>250</sup> to enjoy the highest attainable living standards. Furthermore, since the UN Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 and the rise of the "third generation of human rights";<sup>251</sup> the so-called "solidarity" rights for peace and development, inter- and intra-generational equality, and a healthy environment have become an integral part of the human socio-economic, physical and mental well-being and therefore, a prerequisite condition in fulfilling the human dignity.

The problem with *dignitas*, then, among others, is that it contradicts equality and leads to distinguishing one human being from another.<sup>252</sup> As for the term of justice and just state, Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh's interpretation of Plato and Aristotle seems to be a version of philosophical anarchism. For example, Wolff argued in similar fashion that anarchism is the only doctrine that is compatible with the virtue of personal autonomy.<sup>253</sup> For John Simmons, if one has to defend that "every possible state is immune to any systematic non-comparative moral objections. Or it might be taken to involve showing that any possible state is preferable to (or as good as) any possible condition of statelessness. If we understand "justifying the state" in either of these senses, then justifying the state is, I think, impossible."<sup>254</sup>

However, it is taken for granted that human centered value system is not a sufficient foundation for environmental ethics.<sup>255</sup> Following Richard Sylvan (formerly Richard Routley) one of the strategies to construct new environmental ethics implies a deconstruction of anthropocentric values. I shall return

250 For example, Article 3 and 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

251 The term 'third generation of human rights' is used to classify different normative instruments on the basis of their adoption and objectives, and these are primarily environmental laws.

252 For different sources of dignity and their implications in bioethics, see A. Schulman, 2008. Bioethics and the Question of Human Dignity; A. Schulman & T.W. Merrill (eds.), *Human Dignity and Bioethics: Essays Commissioned by the President's Council on Bioethics*. pp. 7-19.

253 See R. T. Wolff, 1970. *In Defense of Anarchism*. University of California Press.

254 See J. A. Simmons, 1999. Legitimacy and Justification. *Ethics*, Vol. 109, No. 4, p. 741.

255 See C. Palmer, 2003. *An Overview of Environmental Ethics*, section on Central questions in environmental ethics. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III (3rd ed.), *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*. Oxford, UK, Blackwell, pp.16-18. For a broader approach on the scope and objectives of environmental ethics, see D. R. J. Macer, 2006. *A Cross-Cultural Introduction to Bioethics*. Bangkok, Eubios Ethics Institute.

to this point, which was the focus of my initial commentary on Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh's paper.<sup>256</sup> But I am more puzzled by another approach which implies that computing value systems are different from the anthropocentric one. This approach, which criticises anthropocentrism, suggests abandoning it while its alternative leans on environmental approaches that preceded the scientific revolution. First, let me turn to the first approach in constructing a new environmental ethics.

In a quest for new ethics in the human-nature relationship, one may recall Richard Sylvan's "last man" argument against the "basic (human) chauvinism" - that is, his reference to anthropocentrism or a domination position over the environment. Human chauvinism is in "conflict with stewardship and cooperation principles" (Sylvan, 2003, p. 50),<sup>257</sup> nevertheless it is inevitable on the grounds that it is "dictated by the logic of evaluative and moral concepts" (Routley and Routley, 1995, pp. 105-107),<sup>258</sup> whereas, "both value and morality [are] ultimately reduced to a matter of interest or concern to the class of humans" (Sylvan, 2003, p. 48; Routley and Routley, 1995, p. 105).<sup>259</sup> In order to eliminate "these deep rooted assumptions" (p.105), Sylvan negates the value and harms the principles by exhibiting that something (nature) is valuable even though it is not used by human beings, and that human actions are wrong even though they do not harm human beings (Benson, 2000, pp. 5-15).<sup>260</sup> Upon this formula Sylvan suggested constructing a new "detached" or "non-chauvinistic" environmental ethics. However, the framework and constituting elements of Sylvan's formula for the new environmental ethics, giving the contrast of value attributes between the anthropocentrism and his detached or non-chauvinistic values are bonded with perceived dichotomies on intrinsic versus extrinsic values, value versus evaluator, sources versus location of values and the like.

It is reported that affective reactions are the main predictors of judgment but not the perception of harmfulness. Routley was not alone in pointing to the non-harm based morality.<sup>261</sup> Even reducing it to this highly abstract level, when any possibilities of inter-subjective human relationship is totally eliminated, Routley's "last man" as a human being is not free from a reflective mood, feeling, impression and experiences, or chauvinism. For example, on an intuitive-emotional ground, which I also extend to the technical sense in using it to represent the internal experience of the external objects as a "feeling-into" or "feeling-with" that external object as such in an empathetic and sympathetic experience of the embodied mind, the last man's action is invalid. From an aesthetic, values-based account of an appreciation of the wilderness or of a picturesque scene of nature, the last man's action is invalid. It is equally invalid from the perspective of cost-benefit (and risk-benefit) analysis, when we weigh that physical effort, energy and timing needed to destroy surrounding environment against saving it. Giving due consideration of potential accidents that may occur, it is not wise for the last man to destroy the environment.

256 I disagree with Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh's interpretation over the 'strategies' on deep and shallow perceptions in finding the solutions to environmental problems as he has claimed that "[A] Strategy based on shallow perceptions that seek spontaneous treatment of pollution or spreading pollution equally over the world, as Kyoto Agreement had specified, enabling rich countries to buy quota from poor countries in the South." This is misunderstanding of a burden sharing and differentiated responsibilities that derived from the concept of common concern. See for example, The Implications of the "Common Concern of Mankind Concept" on Global Environmental Issues. UNEP. Legal experts meeting, Malta, December 13-15, 1990. See also Jasdev S. Rai et al. 2010. *Universalism and Ethical Values for the Environment*. Bangkok, UNESCO, pp.17-21). Furthermore, clean development mechanism and emission trade regarded as additional and supplemental to the domestic actions in meeting the commitments on mitigation.

257 Sylvan, R. 2003. Is There a Need for a New, an Environmental, Ethic? In Light, Andrew & Rolston III, Holmes (eds.). *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*. Oxford, UK, Blackwell, p. 48.

258 Routley, R. & Routley, V. 1995. Against The Inevitability of Human Chauvinism. Elliot, R. (ed.), *Environmental Ethics*. Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press..

259 *Ibid.*, p.105 and Sylvan, R. 2003. p. 48.

260 Benson, J. 2000. *Environmental Ethics: An introduction with Readings*. London, Routledge.

261 Cognitive development theory has limited the domain of morality to actions that affect the material or psychological wellbeing of people; and the moral regulation, given the centrality of self and autonomy, is to advance personal preferences and maximize choices. Subsequently, restricted to the ethics of autonomy, the domain of morality (moral violation) is harm-based. In contrast, it is argued for ethics of community and divine, wherein self is a part of a larger interdependent enterprise and should attain purity. See J. Haidt et al. 1993. *Affect, Culture, and Morality or Is It Wrong to Eat Your Dog?*; Macer, Darryl R. J. 1998. *Bioethics is Love of Life: An Alternative Textbook*. Christchurch, NZ, Eubios Ethics Institute.

As for the second approach in constructing a new environmental ethics, it is taken for granted that anthropocentrism is the source of environmental destruction; therefore, the search for its ideological-philosophical origin is an important part in the discourse of environmental philosophy. Considerably accounted in the Historic Review section of Ayoub Abu-Dayeesh's paper, a total interference with nature at its initial stage seemed in manifestation of the mechanical philosophy. Descartes' mind and body problem was a "turning point in history, giving rationality a divine status, as reason has become the center of the universe", and along with the "Scientific Revolution that swept Europe", Ayoub Abu-Dayeesh continues, it gave an effect to Sir Francis Bacon's inquiry that "knowledge is power that can conquer the Earth." At the latter period the author argued that, that capitalism is that which regards the environment "as a private property and as a commodity [...]", open for us to "exploit to no limits."

Having this outline as "the historical evolution of philosophical perceptions towards the environment", Ayoub Abu-Dayeesh concludes that "there is an urgent need to shift our anthropocentric behavior into a biocentric one, which assigns intrinsic values for every living organism". On this ground, he has appealed to quite a variety of approaches to the environment that we should revisit and learn from, including: the weak anthropocentrism, bio- and eco-centrism, shallow and deep movements of political ecology, and different belief systems like early Greek Olympic pantheon, animism of the Native Americans and the Medieval natural theology represented by St. Francis of Assisi.

It should be mentioned that there are different accents and emphases in mechanical philosophy. Some, like Peter Machamer, argued that mechanical philosophy does not reject either the Creator or rationality. Likewise, in natural theology or Cartesian mechanical philosophy, inquiry to identify normative aspects of the human-nature relationship should then be based upon the mechanistic understanding and perception of nature.<sup>262</sup> For others, the rational accounts of mechanics undermine the mystical explanation of God, but despite this inference with the final authority of *sola scriptura*, the mechanical philosophy has given rise to a natural theology. In other words, the "knowledge of God that is based on divine revelation as set down in scripture (a reference to revealed theology) supported by the wonders of natural world and on development of natural science, [therefore], natural theology – a celebration of the beauty of the natural world and the power, wisdom, and goodness of its Creator, as revealed by the scientific study of nature."<sup>263</sup> According to Richard Allen and Giorgio Baruchello (2007),<sup>264</sup> the implication on attitudes towards the natural world, especially in a life-supporting system, can be summed up as reductionist. These include a reductionism in methods with prevailed methodology from natural science, while any given level of realm reduces to the lower mass-energy motion.

The concern is whether the anthropocentrism, to say the human self-centered interest, which ignores the "needs and interests" of the environment, is a natural outcome of Cartesian mechanical philosophy<sup>265</sup> - intertwining with rationality and empirical sciences. Related but more hidden issues are the cause-and-effect, functional relationship between scientific discoveries and values, the problem of incommensurability, the purpose of science if opposing know-how and know-why. To some extent this also involves the debate on status and methods of philosophy of science, and the distinction between the natural and human sciences.

262 Machamer, P. 2005 Dualism. *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Farmington Hills, MI, The Gale Group Inc., pp. 605-606.

263 *Ibid.*, p. 1610.

264 Allen, R., Baruchello, G. 2007. Life Responsibility versus Mechanical Reductionism: Western World-Views of Nature from Pantheism to Positivism. *Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS)*. Developed under auspices of the UNESCO. Oxford, UK, Eolss Publisher. [<http://www.eolss.net>].

265 Within the context of mechanical philosophy perhaps it is more appropriate to use the term Cartesian mechanical philosophy (also referred as Cartesian mechanism, Cartesian dualism or mechanical philosophy). Though named after Descartes (Rene Descartes) its subject matter, however, is far beyond Descartes own work on mind and body dualism and reflects the agenda of rationalist metaphysics of the XVII-XVIII centuries (the objective physical world as a continuum of our mind is accessible by reducing the Aristotelian four 'causes' into the matter and motion - a universal explanation of the natural phenomena). The term Cartesian dualism also informative as it accommodates different versions of Cartesianism and the works of Newton, Spinoza and Leibniz. On different approaches on metaphysics, for example, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Science* (2008), see the entry on metaphysics. Also, *Science and Religion in Holmes Rolston, III* (1997), pp. 33-78 and, see the entry Cartesianism in Machamer, P. 2005, *op. cit.*, pp. 268-270.

In short, there is a demarcation problem, which I borrowed from Karl Popper<sup>266</sup> to whom it first appeared as a Kantian problem on the limits of scientific knowledge. For Karl Popper, it is “the problem of finding a criterion which would enable us to distinguish between the empirical sciences on the one hand, and mathematics and logic as well as ‘metaphysical’ systems on the other hand, which I call the problem of demarcation” (Popper, 2005:11).<sup>267</sup> Accordingly, religion and philosophy as well as value theories are also part of that metaphysical system (Nickles, 2006).<sup>268</sup> Unlike the empiricists (logical positivists), he doesn’t deny their role in science nor does he regard them as cognitively insignificant or meaningless. As a faith in idea metaphysics is speculative from a physiological stand point, “a faith which is completely unwarranted from the point of view of science, and which, to that extent, is ‘metaphysical’” (Popper, 2005:16).<sup>269</sup> Thus understood, faith, as a metaphysical system, is out of the range of Popper’s falsifiability criterion.

In contrast, it is argued that faith precedes the rationality and St. Augustine’s *nisi credideritis, non intelligitis* (“Unless you believe, you shall not understand”), often referred to support this line of thought. For example, Michael Polanyi wrote that: “The past four or five centuries, which have gradually destroyed or overshadowed the whole medieval cosmos, have enriched us mentally and morally to an extent unrivalled by any period of similar duration. But its incandescence has fed on the combustion of the Christian heritage in the oxygen of Greek rationalism and when this fuel was exhausted the critical framework [his reference to reason and experience] itself burnt away.”<sup>270</sup>

He has suggested that we should “go back to St. Augustine to restore the balance of our cognitive powers”<sup>271</sup>. Following Thomas Kuhn’s vision on the history of science, I shall try to outline the trend of “why people decided to change their belief about nature and why the incremental change took place” (Kuhn, 2002, p. 112).<sup>272</sup>

The premises of the Cartesian mechanical philosophy is that mind, as an extension of matter, is intelligible and explainable on the basis of our understanding of mechanical dynamics of matter and motion yet does not specifically and directly prescribe how we should regard the nature. Similarly, no prescriptions are given by Newton’s hypothesis on universal gravitation or cosmic system. Otherwise, it is equal to claim that people before Copernicus (1473-1543), Kepler (1571-1630) and Newton (1642-1727) have had different, at least from that of anthropocentrism, values towards the nature. And that is primarily due to their different perception of the solar system based on the Ptolemaic-Aristotelian view. Furthermore, Darwin’s (1809-1882) theory of evolution reversed the “assumption of the classical science that objectivity dependent upon the separation of the knowing observer from the world of nature” (Steven Cassedy),<sup>273</sup> whereas Ilya Prigogine (1917-2003) on epistemic phenomena of nature described nature as nonlinear and chaotic, untenable for definitive description and incompatible with the reductionist mechanical philosophy.<sup>274</sup> Modern computation in cognitive science is irreconcilable with Descartes’ mind and body dualism in the effect that mind is inherently embodied while thought is mostly unconscious.<sup>275</sup> Following these changes in science and theory, if Ayoub Abu-Dayeesh is correct, then the human approaches to nature and our values of nature specifically as an effect of those changes in theory must had been altered each time. This in turn would entail that any changes in effect, for this

266 Popper, K. R. 2005. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London, UK, Taylor & Francis e-Library.

267 *Ibid.*, p.11.

268 Nickles, T. 2006. The Problem of Demarcation. Sarkar, S. & Pfeifer, J. (eds.). *The Philosophy of Science: An Encyclopedia*. New York, Routledge.

269 Popper, K. R. 2005. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London and New York, Taylor & Francis e-Library. p.16.

270 Polanyi, M. *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. London, Taylor & Francis e-Library. pp. 279-280.

271 *Ibid.*, p. 280.

272 Kuhn, T. S. 2002. The Trouble with the Historical Philosophy of Science. Conant, J. & Haugeland, J. (eds.) *The Road Since Structure: Philosophical Essays, 1970-1993*, with an autobiographical interview. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press Ltd.

273 Machamer, P. 2005, *op. cit.* See the entry “Nature”, pp. 1615-1619.

274 *Ibid.*, p.1619.

275 Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. 1999. *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*. New York, Basic Books, p.p. 3-7 and pp. 74-93.

discussion a suggestion to abandon and substitute the anthropocentric view, would take place if and only if the corresponding theory had changed first.

But it so happens that the anthropocentric view has “survived” despite these theoretical changes in physics, biology, cognitive and life sciences. Even so, “the heavens of the Greeks were incredibly different from ours. [...] that could only have resulted from a scientific revolution.”<sup>276</sup> Instead, what has been proposed is to return to pre-mechanical worldviews.

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276 Kuhn, T. S. 2002. *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.

# Using Karl Marx's Dialectical Materialism in Developing an Environmental Ethics Education Curriculum

*Ngo Thi Tuyen, Viet Nam*

Philosophy considers the world as a perfect whole and tries to order a system of concepts about the whole. Philosophy studies the most common things in the natural world: society and people, the relations between people, and their thoughts about the surrounding world. The relations between thought and being, between soul and body, between awareness and material, are critical questions, and we could say the ultimate matter of philosophy.

The first question is: What is the relationship between the world, which is created by people's minds, and the one outside? From this, a second question emerges: Can human thought understand the real being of the world? The main task of philosophy is to clarify people's awareness, to understand the relations between people's knowledge, what needs to be known, and what is not known. The process of finding out the solution for these questions has formed certain conceptions, in which emotion, intelligence, knowledge and belief elements go together in a united block.

All the conceptions about the world, the position of humans in the world, about people and their life and human beings themselves form the worldview of a person, or a community in a certain era. With a system of the conceptions about the world, humans seek to discover the mystery of the natural world, of which humans themselves are a product. Philosophy is the nucleus of arguments about the world, a system of common viewpoints on the world and on the human position in the world.

## Dialectical Materialism

Materialism asserts the primacy of the material world: in short, matter precedes thought. Materialism holds that the world is material. All phenomena in the universe consist of "matter in motion", wherein all things are inter-dependent, inter-connected, and develop according to natural law. The world exists outside us and independently of our perception of it. Thought is a reflection of the material world in the brain, and the world is in principle knowable.

Karl Marx in *Das Kapital*, Vol. 1, said: "The ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." Dialectics is the science of the general and abstract laws of the development of nature, society, and thought. Its principal features are that the universe is an integral whole in which things are interdependent, rather than a mixture of things isolated from each other, and that the natural world or cosmos is in a state of constant motion.

As Friedrich Engels wrote in *Dialectics of Nature*: "All nature, from the smallest thing to the biggest, from a grain of sand to the sun, from the protista to man, is in a constant state of coming into being and going out of being, in a constant flux, in a ceaseless state of movement and change." Motion is a natural and inborn attribute, a viable mode of matter. Matter can be viable with motion, and through motion it bares its existence. Therefore, to understand things and phenomena, you must study them in motion.

Development is a process whereby insignificant and imperceptible quantitative changes lead to fundamental, qualitative changes. Qualitative changes occur not gradually, but rapidly and abruptly, as it leaps from one state to another. A simple example from the physical world is the heating of water: a one degree increase in temperature is a quantitative change, but between 99 and 100 degrees Celsius there is a qualitative change - water to steam. Karl Marx in *Das Capital*, Vol. 1, also said: "Merely quantitative differences, beyond a certain point, pass into qualitative changes."

Development is a category of philosophy which is used to generate the motion process forward, from the low to the high, from the simple to the complicated, from the under-developed to the developed.



Development is a process of the thing's and phenomenon's own. In other words, development is an objective process, independent of human awareness. Development has a common character, and happens in every area, from nature to society.

All things contain within themselves internal dialectical contradictions, which are the primary cause of motion, change, and development in the world. It is important to note that dialectical contradiction is not about simple opposites or negation. For formal approaches, the core message of dialectical opposition/contradiction must be understood as "some sense" of opposition between the objects involved in a directly associated context.

In 1914, Lenin made some brief notes outlining three "elements" of logic - the elements of dialectics. They are:

1. The determination of the concept out of itself: the thing itself must be considered in its relations and in its development.
2. The contradictory nature of the thing itself (the other of itself): the contradictory forces and tendencies in each phenomenon.
3. The union of analysis and synthesis.

## **The Methodology of Dialectical Materialism and Scientific Awareness**

### ***History and Logic***

Each thing, natural or social phenomenon has a process of giving birth, developing and declining. It is a history of things. The development of the history of things always follows its integral laws. We call the laws the objective logic of thing, the objective logic of history.

Logic of thought is the reflection of history of things in a system of concepts, categories, principles and laws. History determines logic; logic is the reflection of history. That is why to study things is to start from their history. This is the principle that logic must be suitable with history. The suitability between logic and history is the accordance in nature and in laws.

Scientific acknowledgement requires the nature and laws of the things, and at the same time, their history. That is why the methodology of history and the methodology of logic have been used in attaining scientific awareness.

### ***Abstract and Concrete***

Things or phenomena of the objective world always exist in a concrete form. An objective concretization is reflected in the two forms: impulsive concretization, and concretization in the mind.

With the first meaning, the concretization is the start of research, the start of direct observation and symbolism. This is the impulsive concretization which we can perceive with our senses.

With the second meaning, the concretization is the result of theoretical thinking process and research which express the objective concretization with a system of concepts, categories and laws. This is the process of making something concrete in our mind. Concretization in mind is the product of a complex process of plentiful stipulation and relation-building, a system of conceptions, categories, principles and laws, which reflect the nature, development and motion laws of the objective concretization. Therefore, making something concrete in our mind is the deep and universal reflection of reality.

## Building Environmental Ethics Education Curriculum Based on the Points of Views of Dialectical Materialism

An education curriculum can consist of three basic areas: science, fine arts and ethics. The nature of science is a system of scientific concepts which have the main task of developing human reason. Fine art still has concepts inside as a core, but having concepts does not mean having fine art. Fine art focuses on developing the human emotion. Building ethics has a basis in scientific concepts as its foundation, but we still do not find its mechanism. Ethics (including belief) is human will.

Learning is a process which can be formulated in this way: "A → a". A (big A) is what we need to study, → is the method to transfer big A into learners' mind and a (small a) is the product in the learners' mind. Big A is the human physical and spiritual achievement refined and objectivised. Big A is determined by the social requirement. Big A is often called education contents.

Arrow → is the technological process, transferring outside into inside process, making big A become small a, basing the results of analyzing the education itself, operating and manipulating it, and systematizing it according to the timeline. Arrow → is often called education methods.

Small a is called an education product, which is the existence of big A in each child's personality. Small a is the product of big A and arrow → as well. Big A and arrow → accord with each other and we cannot say there is a pure content or a pure method.

It should be noticed that the formula "A → a" can illustrate any learning process in reality. Relating how the process happens in fact depends on the way you choose big A and design small a.

Building an education curriculum needs to answer two main questions: what to learn and how to learn. What is the fundamental basis of creating the what and the how? According to my experience at the Center for Educational Technology in Viet Nam, the basis lies in three firm pillars: scientific subject areas, psychology and the philosophy of dialectical materialism. Using the philosophy of dialectical materialism, the principles below can be fundamental for building a curriculum for Environmental Ethics Education (EEE).

### Principles of Objectivity and Accuracy

Building the contents of an EEE curriculum (big A) should follow these conditions:

**Factual Accuracy:** The physical world exists objectively and independently of human awareness. An EEE curriculum needs to be objective and accurate in describing environmental problems, issues, conditions, and in reflecting the diversity of perspectives on them. EEE materials should reflect sound theories and well-documented facts about subjects and issues. Sources of factual information are clearly referenced. Data is drawn from current and identified sources of information. Knowing the source of information can aid in judging its trustworthiness or identifying possible bias.

Information comes from primary sources which provide context, documentation and explanation rather than from reviews or newspapers articles, that simply provide bits and pieces of arguments or evidence. A range of experts in the appropriate fields review the materials or participate in their development in another way. The materials provide a list of people involved in development and review and their areas of expertise.

**Balanced presentation of different viewpoints and theories:** Where there are differences of opinion or competing scientific explanations, the range of perspectives should be presented in a balanced way. Scientifically and socially credible positions and explanations are covered thoroughly, while other positions are also mentioned. Balanced presentation of different viewpoints and theories does not mean giving equal time and space to every opinion or perspective, but treating major positions fairly. Materials communicate areas of consensus among scientists or other experts.

**Openness to inquiry:** Materials should encourage learners to study different perspectives and to build their own opinions. Educators are given tools to use in helping learners to form and express their opinions about competing theories. Exercises are suggested to help learners to explore personal and societal values as well as conflicting perspectives within the context of the issue. Materials promote an atmosphere of respect for different opinions and are open to new ideas. There are exercises that encourage learners to understand opinions of their peers. Materials suggest projects that involve learners in collecting and analyzing their own data and comparing those data to similar data from other places.

**Reflection of Diversity:** Different cultures, genders, races, social groups, ages, etc., are included with respect and equity. The content and illustrations depict rural, suburban, and urban settings. If the material is designed for nationwide use, the content and illustrations reflect geographic differences appropriately. Readings and additional resources that present concepts and perspectives from different cultures are offered.

## Principle of Development

EEE materials should foster awareness of the natural and built environment, an understanding of environmental concepts, conditions and issues, and an awareness of the feelings, values, attitudes and perceptions at the heart of environmental issues, as appropriate for different developmental levels. EEE curriculum should cover a system of scientific concepts and the concepts operate with their own inside logics, from abstract to concrete, from less developed to developed. In their operation, we can see their history, indispensability in the past and newness in the future.

As appropriate for the developmental level, opportunities are provided for learners to explore the world around them. Activities provide opportunities for experiences that increase learners' awareness of the natural and built environments. Exercises and activities encourage students to identify, express their own positions regarding environmental issues, and focus on concepts, rather than presenting a series of facts. Materials should use unifying themes and important concepts.

Concepts from environmental science fields such as ecology, earth science, chemistry, conservation biology, etc., are presented as appropriate for the intended developmental level. Concepts from social science fields such as economics, anthropology, sociology, history, and political science are presented as appropriate for the intended developmental level. Facts are presented and vocabulary words introduced and defined in context and support of the important concepts.

Ideas are presented logically and are connected throughout the materials, emphasizing a depth of understanding rather than encyclopedic breadth. Materials include a clearly articulated conceptual framework that states the concepts to be learned and relates them to each other. Environmental concepts should be set in a context that includes social and economic as well as ecological aspects. Environmental issues are explained in terms of specific concepts. Historical, ethical, cultural, geographic, economic, and sociopolitical relationships are addressed, as appropriate. Learners are offered opportunities to examine multiple perspectives on an issue and to gain an understanding of the complexity of issues, as appropriate for their developmental level.

Further investigations help learners probe more deeply into the ecological, social, and economic aspects of issues, and their interrelationships. Concepts are introduced through experiences relevant to learners' lives. Materials help learners to make connections among the concepts. Learning is based on students constructing knowledge through research, discussion, and application to gain conceptual understanding. Environmental issues should be explored using a variety of scales as appropriate, such as short-to-long time spans, localized to global effects, and local to international community levels. Materials consider communities of different scales. These scales include the local, regional, national, and global levels.

## Interconnected Principle

According to Dialectical Materialism, the world is formulated by two different things, phenomena and processes, each of which are tied and determined by each other. Therefore, current environmental issues are connected closely, tied and determined each other. Building an EEE curriculum should stand on the basis of system thinking, in connection with other areas such as economy, policy, culture, society, etc.

Materials help learners understand the interdependence of all life forms, including humans (i.e. dependence of human life on the resources of the planet and on a healthy environment). Materials should recognize the interdisciplinary nature of environmental education. Materials should clearly list the subject disciplines integrated into each lesson or lessons, suggest tie-ins with other subject areas, such as the science disciplines, social studies, math, geography, English, arts, physical education, occupational education, etc.

Concepts of the environment should be placed in the context of different aspects of society, economy and ecology. The relations between history, morality, culture, geography, economy, society and policy are mentioned appropriately, helping learners more deeply understand the aspects of economy, society and ecology of the subject matters and their interrelation. Materials should help learners connect concepts with each other. Concepts should be presented logically and clearly. Local, regional, continental, and global geographic scales are used to help learners understand that issues can be important, widespread, and complex. Materials examine issues over a variety of temporal scales so that short-term and long-term problems, actions, and impacts are clear.

## Concrete Principle

We know that things or phenomena of the objective world always exist in a concrete form. An objective concretization is reflected in the two forms: impulsive concretization, and concretization in mind. Relating the principle to study the world is to start with a concrete environmental issue or environmental concept. Learners can perceive the issue or concept with their senses: they can “listen” to it with ears, “see” it with eyes, “touch” it with hands, “smell” it with a nose. With the second meaning, the product of learning process should not be an isolated complex of concrete environmental phenomena, but a system of conceptions, categories, principles and laws. By this way, the product can become a tool to understand the other concept in its development. The process to attain an objective and use its product as a tool happens regularly so that we can see the development of a learner. The matter is how to make something concrete and reflect the nature, development and motion laws of the objective concretization in our mind.

In conclusion, we can say that there are other principles, which can be used to design an EEE curriculum, based on the science of psychology, and on the law of learning process. This paper is to report how to use Dialectical Materialism to present some principles of developing EEE curriculum only, not all the principles of building the curriculum.



## Commentary

### *Makram Abbes, Tunisia*

I will try to sum up briefly the fundamental thesis of Ngo Thi Tuyen's paper. Now, the very idea in which her paper is grounded is how to build an effective environmental ethics education. In a nutshell, I believe Tuyen's answer is that dialectical materialism offers the methodological tools we need to achieve this aim. What seems most seductive about dialectical materialism is not only the primacy it gives to both material world and the phenomenon of change and motion, but also the very idea that all the elements that constitute the world are related in some way to one another.

To say it briefly, an environmental ethics needs to be grounded on dialectical materialism since this theoretical framework takes seriously the importance of the material world, stressing the fact that if you introduce even a little change in it, this change will probably affect the whole world. Now the purpose is very clear: the holistic vision of the world, added to the primacy given to "concrete nature".

I want to ask if Tuyen really thinks that Marx would agree with her about her ecological use of this political economic and social theory. Why not simply use ancient Greek philosophy to teach the respect of nature and the essential relation between all the elements that constitute the cosmos? My next question is about the formula on which her work is based. Although she is describing a dialectical approach to education, her formula is neither dynamic, nor interactive or dialectic. As she describes it, the moves to big A is a transfer, and it does not suppose any exchange since it appears as dogmatic knowledge that moves from one side to another. How can one explain this issue?

# Friday Offerings: On the Uses of Political Theology

John Giordano, Thailand

## Accommodation

I invite a certain danger by speaking of politics, of religion, of the absolute and of the global. As soon as one does so, one often puts oneself in a position of a God or a tyrant - an eye in the intellectual sky, which bends the world beneath its gaze. So let me proceed cautiously.

Let me begin with showing a Sukhothai statue of Siva consecrated at Kampheng Phet in 1510. The accompanying inscription states that the purpose of this sculpture is for "protecting all beings [...] and conducting to exalt all religions, the religion of the Buddha, the Brahmanic religion, and the worship of the gods, so they may not be obscured and merged into one" (Coedes, 1924). Notice it is both identity and difference at play here - to know what is one's own by knowing what is another's, and to protect all beings, by giving all gods their due respect. This accommodation has a deep history within South East Asia. It begins with the spread of Indian tradition throughout Sumatra and Java. This continues with the peaceful coexistence of Buddhism and Vaishnavism in Java, and the accommodation of these early traditions by Islam. It includes the influence of Chinese art and culture. And finally it extends to the accommodations of Animism and Brahmanism with Buddhism in Cambodia and Thailand. In Thai and other South East Asian history, one sees a very powerful pluralistic tradition. The rich contours of the religious and cultural traditions have been shaped by a fluid cross-pollination of ideas, forms and rituals.

## Usefulness

I was once speaking to a neoconservative sociologist at a conference. Our conversation turned to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century German political philosopher Carl Schmitt. The sociologist told me that he finds Carl Schmitt "useful," more useful for instance than a thinker like Habermas. In fact this confirmed my suspicion that Schmitt plays an important theoretical role in shaping the ideology of neoconservatism and the foreign policy of the West. He was a deep influence on Leo Strauss, and also on Samuel Huntington who is credited with the catchphrase "clash of civilizations".

Most people, when they think of Schmitt, think of his conceptions of sovereignty, the state of exception and the concept of the political. The political is distinguished from politics. Politics can represent the multiplicity of factions and individuals who compete with one another in the political process. But the political is an idea, and it represents a unity - what Fichte earlier called "spirit". Within the political, all factions and individuals recognize themselves as members of a larger unity. This recognition is made possible, not only through internal cohesion and fidelity, but also through the threat of an outside enemy. Schmitt's most famous formula is that the political is impossible without the friend/enemy distinction.

Carl Schmitt's work is also a political theology. Politics and religion are intimately related. On one hand religion can pose a danger to the unity of the political. This danger involves its possible alliance with factions (such as labour unions), or its tendency to appeal to authorities outside the state. Tracy B. Strong in her forward to Schmitt's *Political Theology* explains this. On the other hand, he notes, as had Hobbes, that there is in Christianity a dangerous tendency to introduce rebellion into the political realm. Hobbes and Hegel in particular try to tame this tendency and make use of it in the political realm, by linking religion to the State. Schmitt's approval is strong: they are what he calls "katechons", defined by St. Paul in 2 Thessalonians, 2:6-7 as "those who hold back the Apocalypse" - thus for Schmitt those who slow down the complete neutralization of what is important about religion for the State. The greatest katechon has been the Catholic Church, and Schmitt thus finds himself in alliance with the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky.

Schmitt has discussed this in his book, *The Nomos of the Earth*. The secular state needs to take on the task of a katechon. For St. Paul, the apocalypse, the end of times, will be ushered in by not only external threats, but also by internal division and lawlessness. This brings about *Parousia*, the second coming of Christ. Schmitt transposes this to the political realm. For this reason, he is resistant to pluralism. Pluralism erodes the unity of the political.

Secular political order has theological presuppositions. He goes so far as to say: "All significant concepts of the theory of the modern state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipresent God became the omnipresent lawgiver - but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts. The exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology" (Schmitt, 2005).

To preserve the political, it is necessary to recognize this essential unity of the state and religion. And following the logic of the friend/enemy distinction, every faith is an existential threat to every other faith. Heinrich Meier (1998), in his book on Schmitt's political theology writes: "According to Schmitt's teaching, faith is always opposed to faith, metaphysics to metaphysics, religion to religion, even if the opponent poses as unfaith, antimetaphysics or irreligion. Metaphysics is something unavoidable. But unlike the follower of the 'agonal principle' who believes he has reached the final reality in the sheer irrationality of the battle of faith and who regards the clash of attitudes of faith, which can no longer be accounted for, as part of the great play of the world, the political theologian insists that the battle between true and heretical metaphysics be fought out" (Meier, 1998, p. 43).

One's religious or metaphysical position is meaningless unless it establishes itself as real by the annihilation of its competing positions. That means by a decision. Let us remember that decision would mean a cutting-away from.

Schmitt (1996) rejects the thought of a peaceful pluralistic world: "A world in which the possibility of war is utterly eliminated, a completely pacified globe, would be a world without the distinction of friend and enemy and hence a world without politics. It is conceivable that such a world might contain many very interesting antitheses and contrasts, competitions and intrigues of every kind, but there would not be a meaningful antithesis whereby men could be required to sacrifice life, authorized to shed blood, and kill other human beings. For the definition of the political, it is here even irrelevant whether such a world without politics is desirable as an ideal situation. The phenomenon of the political can be understood only in the context of the ever-present possibility of the friend-and-enemy grouping, regardless of the aspects, which this possibility implies for morality, aesthetics, and economics."

In fact, Schmitt reminds us that the Antichrist is the one who comes promising peace. It is the state and this mechanism of preserving itself and resisting its enemies that comes prior to even morality. It makes a particular morality possible.

Now you can see how "useful" this is because it serves as a paradigm that justifies conquest and imperialism. And religion is used to foster division, hatred and conflict. As the world continues to globalize, the enemy is no longer merely on the outside but also on the inside. We now live in the so-called age of the "war on terrorism". And notice the theological counter-resistance in such thinkers as Sayyid Qutb. He too proposed a paradigm of resistance, which is identical to Schmitt's. He too tried to maintain the purity of faith by emphasizing the friend/enemy distinction. The world outside his faith becomes a threat, what he calls "*Jahilyyah*". We can see how such a paradigm imported into the global political realm replicates and reinforces itself.

## Aesthetics of Diversity

Schmitt rejects a diverse but peacefully unified world because it would represent the repudiation of his faith. But there is another way to appreciate diversity without following Schmitt's warrior ethic. Or the toothless affirmations of alternative life-views one finds in most post-modern thought.

Victor Segalen was a French writer from the beginning of the twentieth century. He traveled extensively and lived in Tahiti and then in China. He wrote several novels based on his travels and an important theoretical work called *Essay on Exoticism*. In this work he attempted to develop a positive idea of the “exotic”, even as he witnessed global diversity slowly slipping away. Much of the essay was a reaction to his friend Jules de Gaultier. Here Segalen compares their two approaches to the intellectual:

“The wise man recognizes that he almost took a particular liking for something as a principle of certainty, and that in the space of an instant he has conceived his desire as the center of the universe; he is all too aware of the passionate origin of the theory which has overwhelmed him. This is how he recognizes its relativity he knows the precise place where this theory has broken the chain of causality to attain his support by leaning on his will. [...] But as for me, my particular aptitude is the ability to sense diversity, which I strive to erect as an aesthetic principle deriving from my knowledge of the world. I know where it comes from – from within myself. I know that it is no more valid than any other principle, but also that it is no less valid. I believe only that I am that individual whose duty it is to bring it to light, and that in doing so I will have fulfilled my mission. ‘See the world, then put forth one’s vision of the world,’ I have seen the world in its diversity. In turn, I wished to make others experience its flavor” (Segalen, 2002, p. 26).

Segalen here contrasts between two individuals. In fact, he recognizes that one’s ability to experience the aesthetics of difference is connected with one’s individual character. He writes: “Only those with a strong individuality can sense difference.” Notice that Schmitt’s idea of the political would be an extreme version of the first character projected out into the political sphere.

So if there are two types of human experiences: one, which uses difference to strengthen belief, the other which appreciates the aesthetic dimension of diversity. What is the basis for choosing the latter? Where does this leave us? I would like to suggest that perhaps it is not me who is speaking. On a personal note, I myself have been accommodated. My experience has been shaped by a prolonged exposure to the hospitality of other cultures. My own provinciality has slowly been burned away. Other voices emerge through my own voice. “But also, this is increasingly the outer world and the inner world in which we are all living in. As communication quickens, as people’s lives become increasingly interconnected, we are living in a world where the older models of belief, need to be supplanted with this “aesthetics of diversity.”

Here we are all like Segalen in the sense that we are people of the world. And even if we followed Schmitt’s sociology of the concept, we would find that the sociology of our period of history is one of media interconnection where we navigate by a complex plurality of rituals, laws, theologies and ideas. The sociological character of the age has become our psychological character. To lash out at other religions would be to lash out against ourselves. Yet is this a world where we need blur the distinctions of religious faith? Do we risk the uninteresting apolitical environment, which Schmitt tries to remedy with conflict? Segalen also speaks of a “kingdom of the lukewarm”:

“If the homogenous prevails in the deepest reality, nothing prevents one from believing in its eventual triumph over sensory reality that which we touch, finger, clutch, and devour with all our teeth and with all the buds of our senses. Then the way will be cleared for the Kingdom of the Lukewarm; that moment of viscous mush without inequalities, falls, or reboundings, was prefigured grotesquely by the disappearance of ethnographic diversity. If, happily, diversity begins to manifest itself more and more acutely as a result of our insistence and understanding of it, then there is hope. We should have faith that some fundamental differences will never end up being a real fabric without some sewing or restitching of fragments; and that the increasing fusion, the destruction of barriers, the great short cuts through space, must of their own accord compensate themselves by means of new partitions and unforeseen lacuna” (Segalen, 2002, p. 57).

Let me add that these partitions and lacuna can become very dangerous with the increased connections of globalizations coupled with growing population, poverty and limitations of natural resources. As the world compresses, cracks begin to emerge. Yet to follow a friend/enemy political theory is to exacerbate these divisions and contribute to a global machine of violence. The appreciation of diversity, even in its most minor levels, allows our own belief systems to sidestep external manipulations that allow certain groups to profit from violence.



## Offerings

Beauty is not lawlessness but harmony of laws, not arbitrariness, but the utmost inner necessity; the latter do not reflect that the definiteness which they equally rightly demand of beauty consists not in the exclusion of certain realities but in the absolute inclusion of them all, so that it is therefore not restriction but infinity (Schiller, 1965, p. 90).

I was once speaking with one of my Thai colleagues who related to me a story about taking one of his Western friends to a monastery to study vipassana meditation. He then asked me: "Why is it that Western people always want to perfect their spirituality in this life? We Thais feel that it is perfectly fine to grow in our spirituality gradually, to have a wife and family, to have a business, to balance the various aspects of our life. We can leave it to a future life to achieve nirvana."

This brings up an interesting problem that not only relates to how life is lived, but also how life is thought. What does it mean to create a political theory? What does it mean to apply it or use it? Much of the Western philosophy of law and its relation to violence assumes a dualism between the law and its other, between the law and bare life, between reason and its other. But there are many layers of law, especially outside of the West. There are many rationalities, just as there are many moralities, rituals of atonement, gestures of submission to God, acts of hospitality, and acts of humility.

As recognized by my Thai colleague, the Western mind has a tendency to push everything towards completion, even by those who affirm difference and alterity. But here in Thailand theory and time are not related in the same manner. There is more tolerance of contradictions. It is not always the role of the theorist to resolve contradictions. The unfolding of time will do this.

The Western theorist, like Schmitt, draws a theory of law and legitimacy based upon his faith. In doing so he directs all political action and history toward a vanishing point, a singularity, an apocalypse derived from his particular religion. Apocalypse – as final revelation and end of all things - does not result here from plurality, but from driving the world toward one final idea. This would suggest that those who act upon his theory, those who use his theory to guide their decisions, are bringing about this apocalypse.

And there is an additional irony to this; Schmitt was critical of the merely commercial aspects of an apolitical world. He writes: "Today nothing is more modern than the onslaught against the political. American financiers, industrial technicians, Marxist socialists, and anarchic-syndicalist revolutionaries unite in demanding that the biased rule of politics over unbiased economic management be done away with. There must no longer be political problems, only organizational-technical and economic-sociological tasks. The kind of economic-technical thinking that prevails today is no longer capable of perceiving a political idea." The modern state seems to have actually become what Max Weber envisioned: a huge industrial plant. (Schmitt, 2005, p. 63)

But strangely enough, Schmitt's paradigm and its usefulness has plugged itself into geo-politics; trans-national machines of economic expansion and control which justifies their expansion based upon resistance and otherness, and where individuals, cultures and religions are mere servants of this machine.

In the end, the political and its faith becomes merely a flow of capital, a series of digital calculations. It becomes a global ghost in a machine worshipping its own God, a ghost who is not happy until it has reduced all of the world's natural resources, human resources and cultural resources to digital calculations and ownership. And what of this God, which it worships? It is not a traditional idea of God. It is not merely a God of greed, because greed is only one of the mechanisms by which it functions. It is not the deist God of democracy, since Schmitt and neoconservatives see democracy as a failure as it undermines the cohesion of the state. Such ideas as democracy and God are used only as a means of mobilizing people to fight in wars against the enemy. And the enemy becomes ultimately anything, which resists the appropriation by the system. The God worshiped by this ghost is a god of annihilation, of nothingness.

And, what is a religion, which has eliminated all other faiths? Likewise it would represent the Apocalypse, the leading of history to a singular final revelation. The irony of the usefulness of Schmitt is that it leads

to nothingness. The apocalypse, which Schmitt feared in plurality and lawlessness, shows up instead in final visions of unity and solidarity.

Just as our inscription and sculpture was designed in order to accommodate and negotiate multiple religious beliefs within the Sukhothai kingdom, we are now forced into similar accommodations and negotiations as we are increasingly experiencing a world of instantaneous communication and the collapsing of distances. And yet we need to recognize that the root of such negotiations begins at the local level.

In a neighborhood in Bangkok near my apartment there is a *San Phra Phum*, or Spirit House. This is in respect for the *Phra Phum*, the lord of the land, a deity patterned after Varuna in Indian mythology. He represents the Spirit who is the true owner of the land. Also honored are the *Chao Tii*, or the spirits of the deceased who once occupied that land. Offerings are usually made on *Wan Phra* days, but in this neighborhood I am told, offerings are made by people on Friday. This is in honor of the Muslim spirits, since this was, in earlier times, Muslim land. This is done, even though the local Muslims do not believe in spirits. This, it seems to me, is a remarkable minor act of accommodation.

Pluralism is not as Schmitt would contend a kind of political theory that falls into self-contradiction. It is a reality within which we live. It is a part of the consciousness of the people. And so what matters are our own minor acts of accommodation, since on the one hand we are different from one another, and on the other we are interconnected. Also notice that for a supporter of pluralism like Isaiah Berlin, the dignity of the human being is rooted in his or her opportunity to choose.

Eclecticism is a very powerful force in the history of South-East Asia. Notice that it not only protects a constellation of cultural and religious practices, but also protects traditional practices from the eroding effect of imported cultures and practices. There are both fractures and connections between individuals and communities within our global landscapes. I possess within me a certain unity that allows my subjectivity and my belief systems. But I also possess an internal diversity. Amartya Sen in a recent interview recognizes a "multiplicity of identities" which undermines the rhetoric of the "clash of civilizations". He calls it a "wholly wrong expression" because: "These divisions of civilization are done on grounds of religion. But we do not have only religious and civilizational identity. When I talk with a Muslim friend, I happen to come from a Hindu background whether in India or in Pakistan or in Bangladesh, or for that matter in Egypt or Britain, it's not a relation between a Hindu civilization and a Muslim civilization. It could be two Indians chatting, or two sub-continentals chatting. Or two South Asians chatting, or it could be two people from developing countries chatting. There are all kinds of ways in which we have things in common. So the civilizational division is a very impoverished way of understanding human beings. In fact, classifying the world population into civilizations and seeing them in that form is a very quick and efficient way of misunderstanding absolutely everybody in the world" (Sen, 2007).

I began by acknowledging the danger of speaking, of reflecting. Here, now, my voice is channeled through a microphone and amplified to fill the room. It creates a particular enveloping of the world and the amplification of a position. It is too easy in today's media age to allow political or religious ideas to become themselves amplified and complicit in the machinery of exploitation. The big difference between the approach of Schmitt and the approach of Segalen lies within the individual. Schmitt takes a model of religion and the political at the individual level and amplifies it at the level of the state. Segalen feels content to straddle the diversity he experiences.

We must realize that everything meaningful takes place at the level of our individual lives and communities. While we cannot escape politics with its decisions and conflicts, we also must recognize a need for a kind of anti-politics - not a mere refusal in the manner of St. Augustine, but a resistance against the abuses which politics makes of religion. As individual and as communities, we need to focus upon our minor acts of both resistance and accommodation to postpone the Apocalypse. We global citizens, in pursuing our diverse beliefs, would be the true katechons.

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# The State of Human Dignity in Cambodia

*Piseth Thunchhay, Cambodia*

## Human Dignity

When we talk about dignity, we always talk about respect, self-respect, autonomy, human rights, freedom and enlightened reason. Dignity is what humans have innately. Innate dignity cannot be sold, changed, transferred or confiscated. It is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace.

People all over the world have their own innate dignity that no one can violate. Dignity is what people desire. Dignity is not only for a person or group of people - it is for all. Because of unrecognizing and threatening human dignity, this will cause inhumanity all over the world. People become not only the victims of the unpreventable, but also the victims of man himself.

Dignity is a term used in moral, ethical, and political discussions to signify that a being has an innate right to respect and ethical treatment. It is the belief that individuals have inherent, inviolable rights, and thus is closely related to concepts like virtue, respect, self-respect, autonomy, human rights, and enlightened reason. Dignity is generally proscriptive and cautionary. In politics it is usually synonymous with human dignity, and is used to critique the treatment of oppressed and vulnerable groups and peoples (although in some cases this has been extended to apply to cultures and sub-cultures, religious beliefs and ideals, animals used for food or research, and even plants). In more colloquial settings it is used to suggest that someone is not receiving a proper degree of respect, or even that they are failing to treat themselves with proper self-respect.

In this paper, I do not try to focus on the definition of word "dignity"; I just use acceptable practices to promote dignity and involve it in ethics. Human society and ethics or morality stand together. Human beings have to have ethics or morality, they cannot reject them. Humans without ethics are the same as all other animals. As human beings we have minds which we can develop to such an extent that we can differentiate between what is right and what is wrong, between what we should be proud of and what we should be ashamed of.

Ethics and morality are often used interchangeably; most people make a distinction between the two words. Ethics is broader in concept and application. It focuses on the good life, while morality's primary concern is right conduct. Ethics is my consideration of others for their well-being and others' consideration of me for my well-being. It is central to our life with others. Ethics is for promotion of human well-being. Ethics demands that I regard for others' well-being. Ethics or morality is not so much about the good and bad of our actions, but our relationship with others.

All human rights are based on the inviolability of human dignity. Human well-being is to be promoted without violating human dignity. It is unethical and dehumanizing to neglect human well-being and infringe human dignity. An act is judged morally acceptable if it enhances human welfare, preserving the dignity of human life.

Each human being is valuable, *per se*, and demands our recognition, respect and regard. Promotion of human well-being is to be done with respect for the human subject, as a rational, emotional and free being. Policies and programs should be assessed for their potential to advance human welfare with due respect for this human dignity.

All human rights flow from the dignity of the human person as a rational, emotional and free subject. Violation of a fundamental human right thus becomes the violation of human subjectivity and insult to human dignity. If we, as subjects, have right to cognition, emotion and volition, we should accord the same right to other humans.

What about the marginal ones who cannot fully exercise their subjectivity or personality, like infants, the severely mentally challenged and the irreversibly comatose? They also need to be accorded the

same human dignity we are privileged to enjoy. The intent of human existence, at any stage, is for being conscious, emotional and autonomous. We ought to respect this ontological intent or orientation of human life.

We might agree the all interpersonal and social conflicts arise when we deny autonomy and subjectivity to other persons, either by trying to reduce them to ourselves or by attempting to make them objects.

The ethics of inter-subjectivity speak the truth that every human being is a subject and has inalienable dignity and uphold fundamental human rights and personal freedoms. They demand a mutual respect for human dignity and responsibility for human welfare. The ethic of inter-subjectivity makes our fundamental ethical task to be one of living our life with other humans in a truly good and meaningful way. It makes us feel the warmth of our being as “being-with-the-other”, infusing meaning and happiness into our interpersonal and communal existence. It brings peace and prosperity to people, making national and international matrixes work well.

Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected. The dignity of human is not only a fundamental right in itself but constitutes the real basis of fundamental rights. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrined this principle in its preamble: “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

It results that none of the rights laid down in this Charter may be used to harm the dignity of another person, and that the dignity of the human person is part of the substance of the rights laid down in this Charter. It must therefore be respected, even where a right is restricted. The right to dignity recognizes the intrinsic and equal worth of all human beings. As such, all persons are entitled to be treated as worthy of respect and concern.

The concept of intrinsic worth captures the idea that each human life has value, independent of things like social status or economic productivity, etc. The idea of equal worth stresses that this value is the same in all human beings, regardless of their other characteristics such as sex, race, ethnic or social origin, age, disability and so on.

The principle of respect for human dignity has been the basis for all national or international human rights instruments, typically as part of the preamble or as an objective. For instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights refers in its preamble to “inherent dignity” and to “the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family”. The Charter, on the other hand, is one of the few texts that enshrine the principle of dignity in its first article.

Although dignity as a concept seems relatively straightforward, it’s less clear as a legal principle giving rise to specific obligations. Nonetheless, it is relevant to situations where individuals are subject to state treatment and control, e.g., conditions in prisons, psychiatric institutions, state housing, care homes for the elderly, immigration detention centers, etc. In general, any of the following conditions are considered to violate human dignity: torture, abject destitution, humiliating or degrading treatment, cruel and unusual punishment, egregious discrimination on the basis of sex, race, etc., and flagrant denials of fundamental rights, e.g. indefinite extra-judicial detention.

## The State of Human Dignity in Cambodia

As the discussion above, I prefer the meaning of human dignity to human rights, human freedom, human respect, and quality of living. The state of all of these is also the state of human dignity. It is to say that violating human rights also means violating human dignity; violating human freedom also means violating human dignity. The unrecognition, disrespect and inequality of living are also violating human dignity.

Aside from war, there are many proofs that reflect the violation of human dignity in society such as killing, raping, insulting, human trafficking, looting, and corruption. In this paper, I try to show some actions that are happening in society, which reflect the state of human dignity in society. Have these incidents increased?

## Freedom of Expression

The year 2009 has been marked by an increase in restrictions on the freedom of expression, especially against politicians and representatives of civil society organizations critical of the Cambodian government. Consequently, at least 22 complaints were filed by government officials against dissident politicians and civil organization representatives, with an additional 25 complaints against journalists. This year, the situation can be compared to 2005, although there has been a slight improvement in relation to sentencing in defamation cases. No one who has been accused of defamation charges has been jailed and the accused of other charges have been given more chances to escape overseas, as compared with 2005.

## Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press is actually not supposed to be measured by the quantity of printed newspapers, or radio and television stations, *per se*. This freedom must be measured by the extent to which journalists are allowed to criticize the government's actions without any fear. Only when the space for criticism is widely open, can it be said freedom is improved. However, in the event that opposite voices are still threatened, assassinated, or sued by the court of law and imprisoned, then freedom is, in spite of the presence of hundreds of printed newspaper, radio, and televisions facilities, deemed not to be enhanced.

In 2009, there were at least 25 cases in which press professionals were sued by government agencies for defamation, misinformation and other criminal offenses. In some of the above-mentioned cases, the journalists who decried the government's performance were sued without enforcing the Law on the Regime of the Press, resulting in unjust imprisonment.

This has created an unhealthy environment for independent press professionals and journalists in Cambodia because their daily tasks are jeopardized. Those who write on events relating to human rights abuses are intimidated, persecuted, sued or assassinated, resulting in a gradual decline in press freedom.

## Freedom of Assembly

The freedom of assembly - exercised through non-violent protests - has been strongly restricted, particularly in relation to the victims of forced evictions. Various restrictions have been introduced at both the village and commune levels to disperse gatherings and prevent protesters traveling to Phnom Penh. Protestors arriving in Phnom Penh have been banned from staying overnight in public parks or pagodas. Protestors spending the night at Human Rights NGO offices have been harassed by local authorities. Despite fewer crackdowns, as compared with 2008, peaceful demonstrations against private companies linked to high-ranking military officers or government officials have been severely suppressed by the armed forces. Demonstrations against commodity price rises, border disputes, or the implementation of government policies are forbidden.

The new Penal Code and Law on Demonstrations, adopted in 2009, have both raised further concerns on the right to freedom of expression and assembly. Government declarations on the draft NGO Law have created considerable alarm among both international and national NGOs. Despite the number of operational radio and TV stations increasing in 2009, this development cannot of itself be considered a positive sign. Freedom of the press should not be measured through quantitative data, but on the space the Government allows for criticism. In 2009, 25 complaints were filed against journalists for defamation, misinformation and related offences, as was mentioned previously. As a result, a number of journalists have been imprisoned. During the 6<sup>th</sup> Editor Forum, newspaper editors raised 10 points of concern relating to press freedom and made an appeal to the Government to allow the Press Law to supersede the new Penal Code in Cambodia.

Threats against human rights defenders have been a major and continuing concern over the past three years. In 2009, 235 human rights defenders (mostly land rights defenders) were charged with offences

- 147 were arrested, 89 were granted bail, 58 remain in custody, while the remaining 88 have managed to elude questionable arrest warrants. Compared to 2008 with 164 prosecutions, the threat to human rights defenders has increased considerably. Of greater concern still, several human rights defenders have been threatened by the courts with the charge of incitement.

Cambodia's ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 2007 illustrated the government's intention to combat the use of torture. However, Cambodia is yet to fulfill its obligations under this Convention, especially as it relates to the establishment of an effective and independent mechanism to investigate alleged acts of torture. Ratification requires the establishment of an independent Committee on the Prevention of Torture, with the power and ability to effectively scrutinize and combat all kinds of torture and other cruel or unusual acts.

## Women's and Children's Rights

Human rights violations against women and children still remain a troubling issue. Despite the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Protection of Victims in 2005, the situation has deteriorated, firstly because of less reasonable motives of violence, and secondly because more perpetrators are well-off and more educated than in the last couple of years. For example, a son killed his father because the latter could not afford to provide him with a motorbike. A husband killed his wife because he suspected that she had stolen his 50,000 Riel. A grandson killed his grandmother who refused to sign inheritance documents. Whereas another country would have been shocked by these scandalous cases, no reaction has been observed in Cambodian society and no effective measures have been taken by Cambodian authorities in dealing with this matter. The biggest concern is that the public might already be accustomed to such domestic violence and perceive it as normal, which would somehow lead perpetrators to commit more savage crimes in the future. The lack of ability to separate the perpetrators from the victims, combined with the common practice of reconciliation between the perpetrators and the victims forces victims to live close to their perpetrators and exposes victims to a risk of prolonged violence.

## Rape

Due to the decline of social morality, the use of drugs, lack of control of access to pornographic materials by underage children and the culture of impunity, rapes of women and children have shown no sign of shrinking in 2009. A greater number of underage victims were raped in 2009 as compared to the previous year: 78 % of rape victims were under 18 years of age in 2009, against 67% in 2008. Out of 460 cases received by the ADHOC, 66 were mediated at local police stations and concluded with the payment of compensation, without criminal charges being brought.

## Human Trafficking in Cambodia

Sexual exploitation and human trafficking remains one of the greatest problems facing Cambodian society. A lack of effective action on the part of local authorities has resulted in the United States classifying Cambodia as a Tier 2 Watch List country in 2009. Cambodia was not on the list in 2008.

## Land and Housing Rights

The forced eviction of civilian populations without adequate compensation remained one of the most pressing issues in 2009. That year, 29 cases of forced eviction affected 5,497 families, with an additional 71 communities notified of impending eviction. An additional 410 out of 569 other communities living in slum areas have already been recorded on the development plan of the Phnom Penh Municipality, are likely to face eviction and relocation over the next few years. According to information gathered by ADHOC, 70% of forced eviction victims have either abandoned or sub-let their relocation houses

outside the city in order to return to Phnom Penh where they can look for work and access schools for their children.

Despite fewer reported cases of land seizures than in 2008, a greater number of civilians were arrested and prosecuted in 2009. Discordantly, no prosecutions have been instigated against the corporations or private entities responsible for violent land seizures and the destruction of property. Citizens have lost confidence in conflict resolution mechanisms at the local level as authorities often act as both the defender of private interests and the dispute mediator. As a result, a greater number of aggrieved citizens have started seeking justice at the national level. Regrettably, national authorities lack the attention and willingness to provide justifiable solutions to these conflicts, leaving these citizens with no further avenue for redress.

A widespread atmosphere of impunity has further enflamed tensions between civilians and government entities, with government officials often escaping sanction or punishment for criminal offences. High-ranking police and military officials are often implicated in the concealment and suppression of crimes allegedly committed by colleagues and subordinates. Questions regarding the impartiality and competency of the Cambodian Judiciary have significantly compromised the availability of due process of law and access to a fair trial, resulting in an increased number of unsatisfactory out-of-court settlements negotiated between parties of unequal standing.

## Roles of Philosophy to Promote Human Dignity

The development of globalization and technology inspire human beings' vigorous intent towards materialism. People forget the word "question" from their mind; they just try to satisfy the material need.

Currently, there are a lot of people who mainly forget moral education in their minds. They live with ability, capability and desire, which can be satisfied by whatever means. Thus living provides many bad consequences to a society if social members increase more and more.

A good target for people to live peacefully together is through education and peace culture, which is not exclusively local, but all around the world. To achieve this target, ethical education, which is a part of philosophy, is very important.

Ethical education is education through characterizing the mind by a person and by others. If not, that person will collapse into a very unworthy condition, even if they are wealthy, with honour and power.

Philosophy deals with fundamental questions about the meaning of our existence. Most of us at some time in our lives ask ourselves basic philosophical questions. Most people believe that it is important that each of us examines such questions. Some even argue that an unexamined life is not worth living.

But now most people have forgotten the questions. They wiped these reasons from their mind. And they just act as they desire. They do whatever can satisfy their needs, no matter how those actions violate others.

Though there are good laws, they cannot make society pleasurable. If human beings are not good, as human beings can be, then the law follows. Ethics education can be done by various methods, including selfeducation. It is the self-awareness of individuals of their own acts. All acts do not happen automatically or instinctively without self-awareness. We have to uphold the questions of cause and reason to act within the suitability and responsibility. The educational system is divided into school, family and society, not just for human resource education, but also for ethics education.

## Tolerance

Tolerance is a kind of ethic which all of us should have in order to promote the society to be a peaceful place. It is to say that tolerance is the acceptance of attitude, suggestion, and respect to others. Tolerance is the favour of each other in whole society by trying to accept others' style of living including physical, mental choices and speech without discrimination due to tradition, belief, religion, politics, nation, gender, etc.



## Conclusion

It is true that law alone is impossible to protect human dignity. Human dignity is the concept relating to ethics. It is abstract; human beings themselves know in their minds and they decide to respect others or not. As we see, though it has been taken into law, the state of it seems more and more decadent.

As human beings, who are worthy of respect, should be those who have the attributes of fear and shame, who are kind, compassionate and sympathetic to others, who are afraid to cause harm to others, but are ever prepared to lend a helping hand when needed. These are ordinary human values, which we should all cherish and uphold. We should develop our human qualities and not violate them. By being of service to others, we develop greater virtues, which are inherent in all of us. By being in service to others, we show a spirit of understanding, humility, compassion, honesty, simplicity, and gentleness. These are worthy human values, which we should be proud to acquire.



## Commentary

*Annika Schulz, Germany*

In his paper “The State of Human Dignity in Cambodia”, Piseth Thuncchay has informed us of a situation that unfortunately seems to be similar to the state of human dignity in many other Asian and Arab countries, and in fact in many other countries all over the world. National laws and international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as ethical education, are indeed very important to secure peace and to promote the dignity of human beings. But how is it, then, that in a society where an increasing number of people are able to access education<sup>277</sup> and more laws related to human rights and human dignity are being passed, abuses of human rights and human dignity are still an everyday occurrence?

As Piseth has already illustrated to us, it seems that the state of human dignity has not improved in the past few years, but due to the major consequences of Cambodian history, and the impact of lack of education, human dignity remains a critical topic in Cambodia.

I would like to take a closer look at sexual exploitation and human trafficking, which remains one of the greatest problems facing Cambodian society. Human trafficking can be regarded as a modern form of slavery, and is in my opinion, one of the greatest possible violations of human dignity, because it contains many different abuses of human dignity and human rights rolled into one.

Over the past years an important step has been made. A few different laws have been passed in order to attempt to end human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Cambodia. These laws include the Law on Immigration, the Law on Nationality, the Law on Criminal Procedure and the Labor Law. The 2007 Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, is an amended, more powerful version of the 1996 Law on Suppression of the Kidnapping and Trafficking of Human Persons and the Exploitation of Human Persons.<sup>278</sup>

The government plays a very important role in this context and through passing legislation, it is trying to improve the situation, but due to corruption and weak law enforcement, these laws still do not seem to be very effective.<sup>279</sup> It shows that despite all these laws that exist on paper, the state of human dignity does not seem to have improved much. Laws are very important, but laws can be broken. Peace needs to be in the minds of people.

277 Lee, W. O. 2002. *Equity and Access to Education: Themes, Tensions and Policies*. Manila, Asian Development Bank.

278 UNIAP. 1996. Law on Suppression of the Kidnapping and Trafficking of Human Persons and the Exploitation of Human Persons. *National Laws and Agreements: Cambodia*. Translated by Phat Mau in 2000. [http://www.no-trafficking.org/resources\\_laws\\_cambodia.html](http://www.no-trafficking.org/resources_laws_cambodia.html). Accessed on 8 May 2010.

279 ECPAT International (ed.) 2006: Global Monitoring. Report on the status of action against commercial exploitation of children. Phnom Penh, Cambodia. [http://endexploitation.org/resources/2006\\_ECPAT\\_Global\\_Monitoring\\_Report\\_cambodia.pdf](http://endexploitation.org/resources/2006_ECPAT_Global_Monitoring_Report_cambodia.pdf). Accessed on 8 May 2010.

To have a peaceful mind is to some extent a question of education. The draft of the Education Law states that nine years' basic education in public schools is provided free of charge.<sup>280</sup> But that law has not been passed yet, whereby many families cannot afford to send their children to school. These circumstances very often lead to the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. They are the ones who suffer most from the consequences.

Can there be anything more undignified for a 6 year-old girl than being sold by her parents to a human trafficker for 10 USD, who will then sell her to a brothel, where she has to satisfy about eight customers a night and never knows whether her whole life will simply be hell like that? I am seriously asking myself: What is wrong with our world? How can parents sell their child? How can human traffickers, or the owner of a brothel, carry out such work? And also, who are all these customers coming not only from Cambodia, but also from all over the world to have sex with these trafficked children? They seem to be from a different planet to those of us in the room today.

People always say that it is a lack of work, money and education. But are these factors reasonable enough to sell your own child? Shouldn't even uneducated people have a certain amount of morality? Is not every human being born with some kind of moral development and ethical behavior? Then where has all the moral judgment and responsibility, which we are supposed to innately possess, gone?

Even though thinking about my comment is probably quite depressing, we should not only think about all the present immorality and unethical behavior. We should think about what we can do about it. We need to think about the future and about concrete ways we can promote moral thinking and ethical behavior, not only in order to improve the situation of children in Cambodia, but also to create a society that is internalizing the culture of peace.

As I have already mentioned, ethics education is a fundamental tool to spread and nurture the culture of peace. But we have to keep in mind that the children are the ones who will form our future. Or as the American author and media theorist Neil Postman has put it: "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see." We can only be successful to promote a culture of peace, and empower people, if we care for the children. How can a child promote the culture of peace, if he himself never learned what a dignified life at peace is?

To close my comment, I would like to share another quote by probably one of the greatest peacemakers in the world, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi. In a speech he gave, when he visited a Montessori training college in London in October 1931, he said: "If we are to reach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with children and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have the struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of the world are covered with that peace and love for which, consciously or unconsciously, the whole world is hungering."<sup>281</sup>

280 *Ibid.*

281 Gandhi, M. K. 1931. Yound India: Speech At Montessori Training College, from <http://www.peace.ca/montessoriandgandhi.htm>. Accessed on 7 may 2010.

# Human Dignity as an Ethical Process

*Arthur Wolf, Netherlands*

Human dignity is a concept that feels natural, but if asked to identify the defining characteristics or criteria of human dignity, one will find this exceptionally difficult. This difficulty can lead to vagueness in description and improper usage of the term dignity. In this essay I will start by looking at a negative view of the concept of dignity by Steven Pinker, followed by the more positive view from Jeremy Waldron, including a brief account of Kant, and conclude with several suggestions based on the views presented.

Pinker argues that dignity “is a squishy, subjective notion, hardly up to the heavyweight moral demands assigned to it.”<sup>282</sup> Pinker mentions three reasons why he thinks dignity is such a confusing concept. His first point is that dignity is relative. He explains that what it means to do something undignified is highly variable. In 16<sup>th</sup> century Japan, after losing a battle a samurai was supposed to take his own life by ritual disembowelment. In Japan this would save his dignity however in other parts of the world this kind of act would lower one’s dignity. The second point is that dignity is fungible. Although dignity is supposed to be sacred, we often seem to forget that during our daily lives. On the one hand for example the Church says that dignity is regarded with great respect while on the other hand, during our daily lives we often forego the sacred status of dignity by fantasising about a sexy neighbour or undergoing invasive surgical procedures to stay healthy. Pinker’s third point and final point is that dignity is harmful. Dictatorial regimes or religious repression is often based on a rationalised “defense of the dignity of a state, leader or creed”. It has to be said that Pinker is mainly arguing against the recent Catholic agenda in bioethics and the call for “conformity to more rigorous moral standards, ones that could be applied to our behavior by an authority larger than ourselves”.

Can we then legitimize the concept of dignity? One way of doing that might be by first looking at what we would consider instances of the concept instead of trying to define it and seeing what fits the definition.<sup>283</sup> Waldron made the useful distinction between dignity as a principle of morality and dignity as a principle of law. I will use the principles of law as instances of the concept. Waldron says that dignity was connected to rank and status. The dignity of a knight was of a different level compared to the dignity of the king. I agree with Waldron that this concept of dignity has evolved and now “expresses the idea of the high and equal rank of every human person.”<sup>284</sup> Waldron continues by looking at bodies of law to see how status and rank relate to each other taking the juridical idea of rights and seeing how it functions in a normative environment, i.e. looking at the jurisprudence of dignity. He uses the human rights charters to point out some of the confusion regarding the term dignity. The charters say that dignity is inherent to every human being but also that we should try very hard to achieve acceptance of everyone’s dignity. This seems paradoxical but Waldron explains that this tells us something about the rank and/or status of human beings and that we should be aware of and respect this rank and/or status.

Another distinction Waldron highlights is that between dignity as the ground of rights and dignity as the content of rights. We all have human rights because of our apparent inherent dignity but we also have these rights to protect our dignity, i.e., to protect us from actions that can harm our dignity. What is interesting here is that there are clear cases where human rights related to dignity are violated but we cannot establish all the criteria for what constitutes a violation. It seems “that a lot of this moralizing

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282 Pinker, S. 28 May 2008. The Stupidity of Dignity: Conservative Bioethics’ Latest, Most Dangerous Ploy. *The New Republic*. Available at <http://www.tnr.com/>

283 A similar distinction is made in epistemology between the methodist approach to knowledge wherein one starts with reflecting on a concept and through this reflection is able to identify criteria and the particularist approach wherein one tries to identify particular occurrences of the concept and based on those formulate the criteria. More information can be found in D. Pritchard, 2006. *What Is This Thing Called Knowledge*. London, Routledge, pp. 22-24.

284 Waldron, J. 2009. *Dignity, Rank, and Rights: The 2009 Tanner Lectures at UC Berkeley*. New York, New York University School of Law, Part of the Public Law & Legal Theory Research Paper Series, Working Paper No. 09-50.

involves *immanent critique*, rather than bringing standards to bear that are independent of those the law itself embodies.<sup>285</sup>

Kant's account of dignity, leaving aside the translation problems Waldron mentions, is related to morality and rationality. Kant says that "morality is the condition under which alone a rational being can be an end in itself... Hence morality, and humanity insofar as it is capable of morality, is that which alone has dignity."<sup>286</sup> For Kant it is this ability for morality through rationality that exemplifies dignity. Kant believes that it is in this manner that the human being "possesses an inalienable dignity."<sup>287</sup> This kind of absolute worth is problematic because it implies that we value something inside a person rather than the human being. Kant says that a person, through introspection, can come to realize his or her inner worth and dignity. It is dependent on a cognitive feature, which would mean for example that severely handicapped people do not have dignity. Another type of absolute worth perspective on dignity worth mentioning here can be found in Roman Catholic teaching concerning "the almost divine dignity of every human being" (Griffin, 2008, p.31). Although this is an apparent positive view on humanity, it does not say anything about what dignity means.

In the end I think Waldron tries to show that although dignity has been there before there were rights, the emergence of human rights has extended the reach of dignity. It has, so to speak, pulled up the lower ranks of society and put everybody on the same shelf of dignitary status.

In the end the view put forward by Waldron is a useful ethical concept. It is a positive one and does justice to the historical use of the concept of dignity and provides ample opportunities for pursuing it from a legal and moral perspective. It is like we are eating from a big dignity apple where every chunk is something we should not do and turn it into a human right symbolizing a rank or status of human beings. The core of this apple we may never see. In this sense dignity is perhaps more of an ethical process than a fixed value inherent to human beings. It is an emergent property if we are in genuine dialogue with each other.

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285 *Ibid*, p. 66.

286 Kant, I. 2002. *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, p. 4 (adapted from Waldron, 2009, p. 13)

287 *Ibid.*, pp. 435-436.

# Dignity and Peace of Mind of the Elderly

*Balambal Ramaswamy, India*

Islam and Hinduism are religions of compassion and justice. These teach wonderful morals, forbid bad conduct and grant individuals dignity, if they adhere to the laws of the Quran and Hindu scriptures, respectively. There is no doubt that Islam and Hinduism have given the elderly a special status, as there are texts that urge every one to respect and honour them. Mothers are particularly honoured. When parents reach old age, they are to be treated mercifully, with kindness, respect and selflessness. Those who toiled for many years should live a life of peace and dignity. They should not be abused physically, emotionally, financially or sexually either.

Due to various reasons, the Joint Family System, which had kept the Hindu family as one unit, has disintegrated. The Nuclear Family System followed by Hindus in modern times and with the establishment of old age homes has caused damage to the status of the elderly.

This paper deals with some aspects of Quran and Hindu scriptures dealing with the status of the elderly in society and the condition of the elders in an Indian context all through the ages and steps taken to safeguard their dignity. Case studies include the Quran, Hindu Scriptures, government regulations and some published materials. An in-depth study of the sacred Quran and Hindu scriptures, like the Ramayana and Mahabharatha, clearly show the great reverence and privileges given to the elders in the society. Islam and Hinduism treat the senior citizens with respect and dignity. Ageing cannot be avoided, but it should be graceful and dignified.

## Values

Values take priority over monetary concerns. The care for the weak, old and helpless is a value itself for which people are willing to sacrifice time, effort and money. And this starts, naturally, with one's own parents. Parents have shown unconditional love to their children and it is the duty of the latter to return it during the old age of the former. They should not face any abuse—physical, psychological, emotional or financial. Patience and endurance are highly regarded and highly rewarded values in Islam (Quran 39:10).

A case study has revealed that elder abuse is common in all strata of society and that their dignity is given less importance. Their children need them for their financial support and service. Caring is a virtue ordained and rewarded by God in this world and the believers take it as an investment, not as a cost. In a materialistic money-centric community this logic may be meaningless, but not so in the value-oriented God-heeding community of the faithful. The decline in values harms the society at large and elders in particular.

## Hindu Ethics

Questions of right and wrong are well considered in Hinduism. Hindu ethics are taught by guidance from leaders and teachers, wandering *sanyasis* (holy men) and sages (*rishis*). Some teachers (*gurus*) are venerated. Sacred scriptures also give guidance. Morality is taught through Hindu scriptures like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The scriptures prohibit murder, theft, adultery, consuming alcohol, and promote kindness and respect for all, especially elders. It also promotes vegetarianism. The Joint Family System was a boon. Grandparents read the scriptures and instructed their grandchildren, while parents performed the daily rites of worship. They provided support for the family, especially children, giving all respect and care for the elders. Children must respect their elders, study, act without selfishness, and avoid disgracing their family.

## Islam and Elderly

In Islam, serving one's parents is a duty second to prayer. It is their right to expect it. The Prophet Mohammed considered respecting the elderly as a way to show reverence to the Almighty. He linked reverence for the Creator and His creatures with veneration of the All-Powerful and the weak elderly. It should be obvious that our parents deserve our utmost respect and devotion - second only to God. Speaking in the Quran, God says: "Show gratitude to me and to thy parents" (31:14).

The Prophet said: "Part of glorifying Allah is honouring the grey-haired Muslim."<sup>288</sup> The Quran says: "Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and be kind to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, do not show contempt to them or chide them, but speak to them in terms of honour and kindness. Treat them with humility, and say, 'My Lord! Have mercy on them, for they did care for me when I was little'" (17:23-4).

Islam wants everyone to show mercy to the needy. Narrator Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-'As wrote that the Prophet said: "Those who do not show mercy to our young ones and do not realize the right of our elders are not from us." In Hinduism, Emperor Sibi showed mercy to a dove by giving his own flesh to the eagle. Respecting the elderly and honouring them are characteristics of the Muslim society. An old man came wanting to see the Prophet and the people did not make way for him. The Prophet said: "He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young ones and respect our old ones."<sup>289</sup> The elderly person has a high status before Allah if he adheres to the laws of Allah.

It is believed that the best way for a son to honour his parents is to keep in touch with his father's friends even after the death of his parents. This is one of the forms of elder care. It helps the elderly to free themselves from loneliness and monotony.

The elders are considered with sympathy and lesser or lenient punishment is given to them. When an elderly guilty person was unable to free a slave as a punishment, he was allowed to fast for two months. Even when that was also not possible because of old age, he was asked to feed sixty poor people with dates. When his cousin appealed that the guilty person was not rich enough to buy the needed dates, the Prophet himself supplied him the dates (Al-Mujadilah 58:3-4).

## Obligations and Concessions

The elderly who cannot pray standing up are allowed to pray sitting down. If they cannot pray sitting down, they are allowed to pray lying on a side. Islam exempts the elderly from fasting during the month of Ramadan, but requires them to feed a poor person for each day that they miss. When the prayer time was extended, the Prophet told the Mu'adh not to trouble the aged and weak. These exemptions show the concern for the elders in Islam.

Islam allows the elderly who cannot perform Hajj to delegate another person to perform it on their behalf. Al-Fadl narrated that a woman from the tribe of Khath'am came to the Prophet and reported about the inability of her father to undertake the pilgrimage and requested whether she could perform for him. The Prophet allowed her to do so.

The Prophet advised the youth of Muslim society, who will be tomorrow's elderly, to honour seniors. Continuous application of this Prophetic advice helps bridge the gap between generations and spreads an atmosphere of love and understanding between the young and the old. One should be kind and generous to parents and elders.

The command to honour one's parents is accompanied with the command to believe in Allah alone and the prohibition on associating others with Him in many verses. The fact that God has mentioned parents in the same verse as Himself shows the extent to which we should strive in our efforts to serve the mothers and fathers who have sacrificed so much for us. Doing so will help us to become better people.

288 Narrated by Abu Dawood, 4843; classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, 4053.

289 Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 1919; classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi, 1565.

Children show love and respect to parents who are next to God. "Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If one of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them a word of disrespect, or scold them, but say a generous word to them. And act humbly to them in mercy, and say, 'My Lord, have mercy on them, since they cared for me when I was small'" (Quran 17:23-24).

In the cycle of life, youth and old age are only a matter of time, for one who is young, must surely grow old one day. Islam reminds the youth of this basic truth of the human condition, through a narration of the Prophet in which he stated: "If a young man honors an elderly on account of his age, Allah appoints someone to honour him in his old age" (At-Tirmidhi; ranked hasan by Al-Albani). The Prophet disavows those who do not venerate the elderly and considers them alien to Muslim society. The Prophet declared that parents have the right to be obeyed by their children. In one of his narrations, the Prophet stated that the major sins are to disobey one's parents, commit murder and bear false witness (Bukhari, Muslim). Importance and priority should be given to elders. The Prophet said that everything, even serving a drink or leading a prayer, should be started by the elders (Abu Ya`la; authenticated by Al-Albani).

Ibn Kathir tells the following in his biography of the Prophet. When the Prophet arrived in Makkah in Ramadan A.H. 8 (January 630) and entered the Sacred Mosque, Abu Bakr brought his father, Abu Quhafah, to the Prophet to embrace Islam. When the Prophet saw him, he said to Abu Bakr: "Why didn't you leave the old man at his house and I would've gone to him there?" Abu Bakr said: "You are more deserving of him coming to you than he is of you going to him." The Prophet seated Abu Quhafah in front of him and honoured him. Then he passed his hand on Abu Quhafah's chest and asked him to embrace Islam and Abu Quhafah did.

The Prophet places paradise at the foot of the mother. A man once asked the Prophet to whom he should show the most kindness. The Prophet replied: "Your mother, next your mother, next your mother, and then your father" (Sunan of Abu-Dawood). In other words, we must treat our mothers in a manner befitting their exalted position and revere the wombs that bore us. In other words, the debt we owe to our mothers is magnified due to the difficult nature of pregnancy - not to mention the nurturing and attention paid to us in infancy.

The Arabic word for womb is "*rahem*." *Rahem* is derived from the word for mercy. In Islamic tradition, one of God's 99 names is *Al-Raheem*, or "the Most Merciful". There exists, therefore, a unique connection between God and the womb. Through the womb, we get a glimpse of the Almighty's qualities and attributes. It nurtures, feeds and shelters us in the early stages of life. The womb can be viewed as one manifestation of divinity in the world. The Quran states: "Revere the wombs that bore you, for God is ever watchful over you" (4:1).

One cannot help but make the parallel between a loving God and a compassionate mother. Interestingly, the Quran does not portray God as exclusively male or female. As a matter of fact, by revering our mothers, we are paying respect to God. Each of us should appreciate what we have in our mothers. They are our teachers and our role models. Every day with them is an opportunity to grow as a person. Every day away from them is a missed opportunity.

Hindus have raised the status of mother to the level of goddess. The first value that a child learns from his or her family is respect for the mother. In Hindu families it is a common custom to bow down to touch the feet of elders and parents. This traditional custom emphasizes the value of elders. The concept of mother worship is deeply ingrained in the Hindu way of life and the mother is considered as the first teacher of the child. Mothers enjoy a great status in Hindu culture. All rivers and the country (Bharathmatha) are worshipped as mother.

## Honour for Parents and Teachers

According to Hindu scriptures, God loves, nourishes and cares for any one through their parents. He provides knowledge through teachers. He sends blessings through elders. In Hindu culture, the elders will always bless anyone when approached. Worshipping God without first revering one's parents, teachers and elders is impossible. The Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11 thus declares:

"*Matri devo bhava.*" ("Let your mother be God.")

"*Pitri devo bhava.*" ("Let your father be God.")

"*Āchārya devo bhava.*" ("Let your teacher be God.")

The order in which one offers worship is mother, father and teacher; then only comes God. The first three are elder to any person concerned. "There is no better temple than mother herself" is a proverb. Father's words are more sanctified. The *Gurukulavasa* type of education (staying with the teacher and learning and doing all service to the teacher) type of education promotes not only learning but great respect for teachers and parents.

Kabir, a mystic poet of India, once remarked: "When God and guru are both standing at the same place, to whom should I pay my respect first? To the guru, who introduced me to God." The story of Eklavya shows his sincere reverence for his teacher Drona (Mahabharata).

Hindus believe that bringing up children is a religious act - the *Dharma* of every parent. For children, the parents are therefore divine. Hindus consider the service of one's parents to be a pious and divine duty and preventing any one from carrying that duty is considered to be a sinful act. They believe in life after death and hence they perform the rituals to their ancestors regularly to get their blessings.

Respect for elders is a major component in Indian culture. Elders are the driving force for any family and hence the love and respect for elders comes from within and is not artificial. An individual takes blessings from his elders by touching his feet.

Respect for elders is a keystone of Hindu culture. This genuine acknowledgment of seniority is demonstrated through endearing customs, such as sitting to the left of elders, bringing gifts on special occasions, not sitting while they are standing, not speaking excessively, not yawning or stretching, not putting one's opinions forward strongly, not contradicting or arguing, seeking their advice and blessings, giving them first choice in all matters, even serving them food first.

The Story of Shrivankumar is an outstanding example for the love and respect shown by the son to his aged and blind parents. He literally carried them from shrine to shrine in two baskets, which hung from a sling. While on their pilgrimage, the three had come to the banks of river Sarayu for a short rest. Shriavan's parents felt thirsty and asked him to fetch some water. King Dasaratha mistook him for an animal and shot his arrow. Saravankumar was fatally injured and before dying he asked Dasaratha to give water to his parents. When the blind parents came to know of the death of their son, they cursed Dasaratha, that he would face a similar situation in the future. Later Dasaratha was forced to send his son Rama to forest and died without having even one son around him though he had four sons. His only fault was that he had unintentionally prevented a son from serving his parents. Mutual love and concern between son and parents and respect for parents are known from this scripture (Ramayana).

In the case of Rama in Ramayana, he always obeyed the orders of his father. When he was asked to follow sage Viswamitra to protect his rituals in the forest, he accompanied the sage. Later when he was asked to leave for 14 years to the forest, without a question, he left the palace for the forest.

When his Guru Drona wanted Eklavya to cut his right thumb as a *gurudakshina* (fee to teacher for learning), the latter cut it showing his respect for his guru (Mahabharata).

There are many cases in the Ramayana and Mahabharata and other scripture to show the importance given to elders in Hindu society.



## Current Situation

Over the course of time, the Joint Family System broke down and old age homes came in to practice. The plight of some elders has become pathetic. There are more than 100 old-age homes in the city of Chennai itself where elders live according to their economic condition.

There are reports to show that the elderly people have been subjected to physical and mental abuse at the hands of their relatives and family members. The problems may vary according to the economic status, but one common thing in all strata is a lack of love, concern, respect and dignity for these elders. Some middle class older women are treated as cooks and maids with no dignity. In the lower strata, some elders are disrespected and uncared for some. In rich families, elders may have money, but there is lack of security and care.

There was an old paralyzed woman who died of starvation in her apartment because her son had cut off her water, electricity and gas, until the neighbours found out what was happening, but after it was too late. An elderly man died in his flat; he had five children but not one of them knew of his death until six months later. In one of the upper-class areas, an elderly man was discovered in his apartment one and a half years after he died. An old lady was found dead of starvation in her apartment.

Even stranger than that is the elderly man who was over ninety years old, and no one knew that he had died for five days. In the lower strata the abuse is believed to be more common. As they are physically, psychologically and financially weaker, many elders face numerous problems and lose their dignity.

Estimates show that India's old age population will increase from 113 million to 2016, to 179 million by 2026, and 218 million by 2030. Life expectancy, currently at 77 years could increase to around 80 years by 2020. With the increasing old age population and life expectancy, Reverse Mortgages (RM) introduced in the 2007 Budget, seems to have a potential market in India. This concept, although new in India, is very popular in countries like United States, Canada and Australia, while it is in infancy in Europe and Singapore

When children do not take care of their parents in their old age, the property owned by the parents is of great use to them. They can mortgage it in the bank through the RM system and lead a comfortable life.

A RM is a loan given to senior citizens by converting the equity in a house property into an income stream. The scheme involves the borrowers (senior citizens) pledging their house property to a lender (e.g. scheduled bank) in return for a lump sum or periodic payments spread over the borrower's lifetime. The house owner is not obliged to repay the loan during his lifetime. On his death or leaving the house permanently, the loan is repaid along with accumulated interest, through sale of the house property. Any excess amount will be remitted to the borrower or his heirs. The lump sum or periodic payments can be utilized by the borrower as per his needs but not for speculative purposes.

A RM is aptly named because the payment stream is "reversed." Instead of making monthly payments to a lender, as with a regular mortgage, a lender makes payments to the borrower. Unlike a regular mortgage, the borrower can continue to stay in his mortgaged home during his entire life span without any fear of eviction even after the tenure expires.

The National Housing Bank (NHB), a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), announced its final operational guidelines on reverse mortgage recently. A RM is definitely a financial helpline for senior citizens enabling them to maintain their lifestyle and meet their consumption needs without being dependent on anyone. It is the social security scheme for the benefit of senior citizens. With very few universal old age social security schemes, RM's might have a potential market. The loan is given without any income criteria at an age where normal loans are not available. Perhaps, the most important advantage being that the borrower retains the ownership title of the house making it all the more popular among Indians who have a natural instinct for home ownership.

Islamic and Hindu culture recognizes the status of the parents as that of God. So it is the moral duty or obligation of children to maintain their parents with respect and care until the last. The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (1956) provides maintenance to the elderly. Maintenance of parents is included in Section 125 of Criminal Procedure Code of 1973. Under these sections and acts parents can claim

maintenance from their children. But in actual practice, some aged parents are deserted by their children who feel the elders to be a burden. Most of the parents do not go to the court. To safeguard suffering parents, a speedy, inexpensive process was needed. Hence the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen Act of 2007 was enacted in India. It provides for:

a) an appropriate mechanism to be set-up to provide need-based maintenance to the parents and senior citizens; b) better medical facilities to them; c) institutionalization of a suitable, mechanism for protection of life and property of older persons; d) establishment of old age homes in every district.

This Act is very important as it ensures speedy, inexpensive proceedings. This will be a great relief to parents and senior citizens. Also the precious time of court can be saved as tribunals are established to look into the cases of seniors. As there is no hiring of advocates, the cost of proceedings is reduced. But the Act has not been implemented in many states. Unless the seniors benefit from this act, there is no use of passing the regulation.

## Conclusion

All should fulfill their duties towards the elderly by loving and respecting them as they ought to be loved and respected, and setting a good example for their own children. Parents also expect and anticipate that their children will respect, honour and show concern. Most of them are heart-broken when placed in an old age home. The concept of old age homes was unknown to Indians until recent times. Many children are unwilling or unable to give their parents their due. Most modern children are indeed selfish and cannot even sacrifice spending a few dollars so that their parents and elderly relatives can enjoy the last of their days at home being cared for by their loving children or relatives. People try to justify placing aged relatives in a facility where they can get the adequate care that they require. Perhaps in some cases this may be true, but in most cases it is not.

It is not enough that we pray for our parents. But we should act with boundless love and concern, keeping in mind always that when we were helpless children, we were totally dependent on our parents for everything. This includes food, shelter, love and our parents sacrificed and selflessly preferred our needs to theirs.

Mothers are embodiment of love and sacrifice. It is a pity that most inmates of old age homes are women who have outlived their husbands. When parents reach old age, they should be treated mercifully, with kindness, selflessness and utmost respect. Every year millions of Indians are victims of physical, psychological, or other forms of abuse and neglect. According to HelpAge India, most elders are ill-treated by their own children. The strain of caring for one's parents in the most difficult time of their lives is considered an honour and blessing, and an opportunity for great spiritual growth.

Islam and Hinduism make it mandatory for children to be responsible for the maintenance of their parents once the children have become independent. Traditionally Indians have accorded their elders this lofty status, but in recent times there is decline in this practice. The abuse and neglect of the elders in present day society is a negative sign. The elderly are to be protected. The old age homes have come to stay permanently in India and the life of the elders must be good and peaceful. The government should see to the proper enactment of laws passed for the benefit of the elders. The elders also should plan their retired life so that they do not face any abuse. It will be beneficial if Muslims and Hindus follow the basic ethical values proclaimed in the Holy Quran and Hindu scriptures to give a peaceful life to elders in the last lap of their life so that they will live with grace and dignity.



### *Anniken Celina Grinvoll, Thailand*

Thank you Dr. Bala for explaining to us the situation today for the elderly in India, and also for attempting to define human dignity of the elderly and people's behavior towards them through religious views. In my opinion, it is not adequate to try and base definitions merely on religious views.

I believe people are influenced by other world views which are non-religious as well, whether they are fully devoted to their religion or not. Undoubtedly, our world has changed with time and so have values and beliefs. There are two perspectives of old age in today's society. That the elderly are giants of the forest, full of experience and that old age is equivalent to greater wisdom. Also that age is beautiful and demands dignity and honor, which is the view held by the Bible. Another one is the view that elderly people are useless, burdens to their families, and most often cast-offs and without any worth.

Values and belief in, and respect for religion are certainly different and seem much stronger in this part of the world than in other parts? Is this really so?

If we consider another religion, i.e, Protestant Christianity, we find that this religion also teaches respect for one's parents and elderly in society. The Bible says: "Children are commanded by the Lord to obey their parents" (Ephesians 6:1, see also Colossians 3:20; 2 Timothy 3:1,2). "One who refuses to obey his parents is worthy of death, and so are those who approve of such conduct" ("Romans 1:30,32), (cf. Deuteronomy 21:18-21). We can also quote from the Bible: "When children are unwilling to care for their elderly parents, they lack appreciation for what their parents did for them, and they also deny the faith" (1 Timothy 5:4,8,16), (Cf. Matthews 15:4-6; Ruth 4:13-15; John 19:25-27). We see here the strong notions of expected devotion to the care-taking of parents also in Christianity.

Dignity is shown to people by treating them as being of worth, that they are respected, which makes people feel that they are a valued individual. This definition applies to all, including the elderly. If dignity is absent people may feel devalued, unconfident and ashamed which again may lead to personal problems and conflicts. Suicide and misery are prevalent in today's society. Now, if the reasons for this has to do with low self-esteem, then feelings of personal failure and not being able to live up to others' expectations will occur. Many individuals suffer from not being able to pursue their personal goals and dreams. Hence, freedom to choose should not be neglected. Therefore, the dignity of the individual "responsible" of the aged parent needs also to be taken into account so that this persons needs and interests are not ignored.

Many people are strongly influenced by the humanistic approach to thinking about life, as "everything in life has a determinate nature, but man's privilege is to be able to choose his own nature". Humanism focuses on personal growth, therefore being free and able to choose one's own behavior are important aspects to attain that. One way of trying to understand how people behave is through Carl Rogers's concept of "self". With his theory of self, he invented his own unique approach to understand different personalities as reasons to how we act and to our human relationships with others. Rogers sees people as basically good, but also with an innate drive to attain an optimal sense of one's self and satisfaction in our lives. With his concept of self, he emphasizes the importance of positive regard, (unconditional) love from parents to become a fully functioning or self-actualizing person. With this people will trust their own instincts, and feel confident in their behavior and will not let social conventions hold them back.

Norwegian society is a highly individualistic one, where people's own needs come before others. That also includes the decision by many people to want to live and end their life in a nursing home for the elderly. This is often simply because they do not want their children and relatives to see them aging, fall sick or ask their families to take care of them, when they have become unable to do that by themselves. Some simply want to make their family remember them by how beautiful they once looked. This is a view of one's own human dignity when getting old, which I think should be respected.

I understand people's worry for the elderly in their society, as well as what seems like a descending value in belief in religion. I think the emphasis on gratitude to, and respect for, the older generation is very positive, and is something, which has faded away where I am from where elders are often neglected.

Personally, I have given a lot of care for elderly persons, and have several years of work experience in a nursing home for elderly persons who suffer from Alzheimer's disease. I am very grateful for the experiences I gained through that job because it made me realize that I knew nothing about how it is to become old, have the feeling of helplessness and loneliness and of being without a caring family.

During my years of working with the elderly I was continuously challenged by the term "human dignity", because I wanted to treat them correctly using ethical work principles, etc. These were principles we workers had to consider all the time, even though due to patients suffering from sickness I experienced unfair treatment from them, both orally and physically. I therefore know it may not be easy for some people to handle the emotional aspects of having to take care of their parents, especially to witness their conditions in their old age. It can be very depressing. For some, it may also become a full-time job in itself to take care of their parents.

You mentioned that people should take care of their parents with unconditional love and care.<sup>290</sup> By definition that would mean that people are to care for their parents regardless of actions and beliefs their parents have put them under. I want to ask you whether you have ever considered that this could be difficult to hold on to for some people, simply because there are those who are not capable of doing so only because it is socially expected.

People are all different and we have our own needs and abilities we need to consider in our choices of action and behavior. We all apply different reasons due to personal realizations. People might also place their "personal space" barriers differently. Learning of our own self and what we need, some find it preferable to be living on their own. Does this mean they do not love their parents? Also, all of us have our own history that got us to this point. The other cannot understand what people have been through in their personal lives, how personal relations to each family member are, or how strong the bond of love is. Personal thoughts aren't always shared with others, and thus we may not know of others lives and aren't entitled to make judgments.

Lastly, I would like to say that I think it is indisputable that we can not base our decisions of what is the right behavior and care of us towards our parents merely on the religious teachings but that there are so many more aspects to consider, such as how the relationship with our parents has evolved over the years. For our own well-being, as fully self-realizing people in order to follow our individual hopes and dreams we first need to follow our own personal instincts in what is right for ourselves, because through the freedom to choose is how we become the people we are.

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290 Ramaswamy, B. 2010. *Dignity and Peace of Mind of the Elderly*. In this volume.

# Making Mount Merapi a Friend

*Samsul Ma'arif Mujiharto, Indonesia*

## Background

"Rosa!"<sup>291</sup> says a fresh-faced old man with a glass of energy drink, at the end of an energy drink commercial on television. The similar visual messages are also clearly written on the printed ads. The message of an old man holding a glass of energy drink is clear: "strong". He is Mbah Marijan, a caretaker of Mount Merapi, located between Yogyakarta Special Province and Central Java Province. As the caretaker of Mount Merapi, the tasks of Mbah Marijan are not easy. Mbah Marijan's main task is to deliver the offerings of Merapi held every year on 30th of Rajab (or around September according to the 12 month calendar). After officially being appointed with duties as the caretaker, Mbah Marijan earned the distinguished title of Mas Ngabehi Suraksohargo. In 1995 Mbah Marijan got a new title of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta Hadiningrat. To keep Mount Merapi, Mbah Marijan always performs the act or ritual that was taught by his late grandfather and father. Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, the King of Yogyakarta Royal Palace, also taught what behavior he should have as a caretaker of Merapi.

At first glance it seems difficult to find anything that directly connects with why the figure of Mbah Marijan advertised the product. He is neither a celebrity in the entertainment world, nor a public figure that has broad authority and influence. Advertising in the media usually involves celebrities, because these people have the power of persuasion to persuade the viewers and readers.

For Mbah Marijan, the only understandable reason why he was chosen to star in that advertisement is a track record of his courage to "tame" Mount Merapi. In the year 2006 Mbah Marijan was trying to interpret the eruption of Merapi in different way. Uniquely, his interpretation was far different from a more general interpretation based on empirical knowledge. As a result of these differences, Mbah Marijan was labeled as an eccentric old man, who was bravely trying to tame the Merapi. The reason is reinforced by the appearance of other characters who are also considered to have great courage, of course, from different fields. There are athletes and artists who criticize the government, which does not have pro-people policies.

The story of courage of Mbah Marijan can be listened to in 2006 when one of the most active mountains in the world was showing increased activity. At that time he was reluctant to follow the government recommendation to evacuate, despite the "volcanologist's calculation" stating zones in the region of Mount Merapi has been declared dangerous to society. Rather than flee, Mbah Marijan actually stayed in the village and performed a special ritual to invoke the safety of its citizens (Sudiarno, 2006).

According to Pasaribu (2006, p. 2), his refusal to evacuate is solely the manifestation of tradition, no more than that. The lores of tradition are formed from the accumulation of experiences, observations, and understandings in the very long history of their existence in the area. This tradition then is inherent in a society and is reproduced continuously. As a result, they can adapt, develop ecological wisdom, and merge with the natural environment of Merapi without "offending" Merapi because, for them, Merapi never was a disaster or threat to people around it. They also believe that the mountain will not do evil to humans. What Merapi issued certainly is something useful for local residents. Lava, for example, is not limited to liquid, which means burning stone, licking, with ferocious heat and devouring anyone, but is also a group of "spirits" who are conducting a hunger procession under the leadership of Kartadimeja. The delegation of the procession cannot possibly to affect the local population, but already has its own route. Mbah Marijan minds if people bothered Merapi by giving it some negative attributes. At this point, epistemological and ethical reflections become relevant. On an epistemological level, Mbah Marijan steps as if to confirm that there is knowledge in addition to empirical knowledge, such as intuition. Similarly, in the ethics of science classes, as if about to shout at Mbah Marijan, is to merge science with nature, but not to exploit it. Science is not to be manipulated and exploited, but is actually orientated towards the welfare of society.

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291 *Rosa* (Javanese term) means strong.

## Human-Nature Relations in Philosophical Cosmology

Human and nature relations have become one of the central issues in philosophical cosmology. Arguably, human beings are a biological species that consist of chemicals such as hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, iron, and so forth, in a very complex composition (Premadi, 2009). Yet, people are humans as natural beings, who cannot live outside of nature and without its interventions. Humans breathe oxygen and drink water to survive. Humans, as other beings, also evolve from simple to more complex. Humans also have DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) and live in a social environment, which cannot be separated from other beings (Crosby, 2002: 89-92). Another argument is that all aspects of earth always include and affect human and nature altogether. Thus the relationship between them deserves serious attention because it affects the other entities in the world. Searching into human relationships and nature can also be used as a foothold to help find how humans treat nature.

Still on the human and nature relationship, from several millions of years ago, humans have always been fascinated by all the organized and physical uniqueness of other humans as compared with other entities, including animals and plants. The admiration was also triggered by the "breadth" of nature beyond the ability of human's experimental observations. Experimental observation of humans to know the ontological status of the universe is always stopped at the exposure of the story of "some", not the "whole" of nature (the wholeness of anything). Instead of giving the precise size and motion of the universe, the law of "order" is not measurable. The conclusion is always reductive (and the conclusion is a reduction), because there are always "blind spots" that are untouched by the empirical observation of humans and will always be a mystery of empirical science. The universe, therefore, is a huge community, or in the language of Anton Bakker (1995: 41), a "giant anonymous", where all things in it affect each other, but where no relation is really regular. In a note of spontaneous experience, nature also appears in "multiform", not "uniform", in various forms and shapes, and creates confusion when viewed from only one perspective. Therefore, what is "touched" by humans is only a fragment, while the overall universe is still out of grasp.

Starting from the admiration of nature, the various expressions of admiration began to emerge. The worship rites and offering of gifts over nature, again, confirm the recognition that human beings are small in the presence of nature. A human is just one small unit of a major union called nature. Furthermore, various views of the cosmos have arisen, starting from Greek philosophy, scholastic philosophy, to scriptural cosmology that generally was shaped by a variety of cultures.

Every traditional culture has always its own cosmology, namely the view of how the nature began and lasted, how humans exist, and what is God's expectation to mankind. This cosmological view underlies all activities within the community. Traditional societies also accept the duty to keep the cosmos in a ritual, for example, by continuing to tell the story of creation to the next generation so that future generations will not be expected to lose the grip in the natural world.

Let us see some cosmological concepts in some traditional societies. In ancient Egyptian society, for example, nature is seen as a living entity or a living unity. It is not something dead. Despite the fact that inherent natural elements do not live like water, stone, air, fire and so on, to a certain degree, these things are not completely dead (Plumley, 1975:24). Sumerian society also viewed nature as the disc-shaped flat plate where the sun falls on the western horizon each night and rises at the eastern horizon the next morning (Lambert, 1975: 47-48). As with the sun, the moon also travels the same as the sun: sinking in the western horizon, rising in the eastern horizon. A similar expression ignited the emergence of animism as the most solid forms of making the natural "sacral", followed next by mythology. That story is more than just a narrative chronicle of events and specific figures, but simultaneously binds to a specific meaning, which applies to a community. Both animism and mythology can be understood as the furthest point of all human efforts in embracing nature.

The continuum of characters ranging from human's relation to nature seems harmonious. At first, people were very friendly to nature, then hostile and could be friends again. In a friendly situation, people tend not to be exploitative over nature. However, there are people trying to blend in with nature and become an inseparable part of nature. Even the destruction of nature can be interpreted as the destruction of self, or at least the destruction of nature will have an impact - directly or indirectly - against that person.

However, the modernity shifted from harmony to disharmony. Nature is no longer fully seen as a friend but as something that must be conquered. Auguste Comte, a central figure of Positivism, described the stages of human history by looking at the human and nature relationship. The first phase of the so-called mythic stage put people as an entity within the confines of the nature with no meaningful strengths. At this stage humans were dominated by the natural and they could not escape from the hegemony of nature. The second phase is called the ontological stage - namely, humans have started to distance themselves from nature and begin to be able to distinguish the forces acting in nature and upon themselves. At this stage the confines of nature was reduced. Finally in the third stage described by humans is seen by Comte as a positive step, when people start to be able to take advantage of nature and even to drive or control it, because humans are the only real natural subjects.

The Cartesian paradigm of modern science that separates the dualistic "*res cogitan*" (mind) from "*res extanza*" (matter) also played a role in separating humans from nature. Nature in temporary and natural theology and cosmology was not fully seen as "sacral". Because it was considered incompatible with empirical evidence, its role was thus dwarfed into something that was "not possible" (Brockelman, 1999: 45). This paradigm, in turn, also contributes in raising the exploitative attitude. It is also recognized that modern science has succeeded brilliantly in providing knowledge about the world and was never matched by the efforts of the past. The power of experimental observation managed to tear down what was in the past considered a myth and "not possible". At this point science has a major contribution in facilitating human curiosity to reveal the ultimate reality of the universe.

Unfortunately, further development of science centered only on one aspect of the universe, namely the desire for the fulfillment of materials devoted to "fun" (Tjahyadi, 2002: 75). Science also paved the way for secularization that explicitly recognizes only scientific truth and no truth outside of scientific truth. However, there are many concerns: for example, the usage of sunscreen lotion with a high SPF factor can heighten the potential for skin cancer (Baker, 2002:15), whereas sunscreen was initially produced to prevent dark skin caused by the sun. The use of fossil-fueled transportation, as another example, in addition to facilitating the mobility of people, also has an effect on the reduction of air quality that can also harm your health. Science then becomes "misguided" because of misleading scientific findings. These negative effects of modernity, based on materialism, have five dilemmas: 1) abstractions (of human life to serve bureaucracy and technology); 2) the future as in the main orientation of activities and imagination as life is determined); 3) individualization (as individual separation of sense as a collective entity, and therefore produces alienation); 4) liberation (as dominated by the choice of life and not fate); and 5) secularization (as in the marginalization of an area of life: science, politics, economics) (Adian, 2001: 90). Therefore it is necessary to restore the nature of epistemic "matter", because, the view of the matter affects the views of the universe.

In the Eastern world, people see themselves in a balanced structural unity with nature. Humans are seen as an integral part of nature, as having responsible behavior, full of respect and caring about the survival of all life in the universe. And they acquired a way of behavior in traditional communities. Even in some ways, technology has split the West from balanced unity of nature and of nature as a commodity that makes a human being in a relationship claim an aesthetic, even mystical existence in nature.

## The Organic Unit Of Human-Nature Relation: Mbah Marijan's Views

Mbah Marijan offered prayers soon after knowing Merapi would "cough". With a total surrender to the Almighty, Mbah Marijan believes that Merapi will not harm humans. Even in the long term what happens to the Merapi will contribute positively to the local population. Contributions can be of natural fertility, sand and rocks and the abundant natural beauty that can also be enjoyed by the residents.

At the time, most people were running to save themselves from the lava and considered that Merapi was "angry" and "acting up", but Mbah Marijan actually stayed at his house in Kinahrejo. With some people assisting he did rituals around the village. Having finished reading some chapters, Mbah Marijan immediately walked around the village again. He was wearing a *beskap*, a red Javanese dress with a dark blue head cloth. Mbah Marijan has also seen carrying a *keris* (a Javanese dagger) wrapped in white

cloth. Behind him are followers were walking and carrying spears wrapped in a red and white flag (*detik news*). He said that they were made to beg the Almighty to always be given to all the grace and salvation, because man must pray in any condition<sup>292</sup>.

These two behaviors tell us quickly how most people behaved on the one hand and how Mbah Marijan addressed Merapi on the other hand. The former considers Merapi as a dangerous threat to their lives, while the latter considers the activity of Merapi as if there were nothing to worry about. He said: "Merapi resembles humans. Sometimes has a cough. So if he is coughing please do not be afraid, because coughing is something natural. If you've survived, coughing stopped by itself immediately."<sup>293</sup>

Instead of danger, nature is understood as a sacred fact. That spirituality will always be animating, coloring and marking every human activity is nothing more than a natural activity. It is not easy to understand the reason used by Mbah Marijan, if we keep wearing the "glasses" of empiricism. The reason represented by the empirical data collected by the agency of Volcanologists concluded that Merapi was in a dangerous condition and the residence of Mbah Marijan was in a hazard-prone area. The agency urged all the local residents to flee and save themselves.

Information on people's knowledge formation is useful in disaster mitigation efforts. Learning from the case of the Merapi eruption in 2007, a difference of opinion between volcanologists (which represents a modern scientific institution) with the local wisdom of Merapi community represented by Mbah Marijan, could be avoided if both parties realized the limitations of their own methods. Volcanologists cannot claim the sole authority over what really happened to Merapi. The Volcanology Agency also should not underestimate the epistemological stances that are considered minor.

From an epistemic stance, the empirical method is intercepted by various complications. Among other things, if there are some empirical choices, it is difficult to determine the empirical method, which is more appropriate to observe the universe. This is where Mbah Marijan's reason can be seen as beyond the empirical method, and is reluctant to get stuck in a particular view of nature. Nature is not only to be observed, but also to be lived within. Nature is not to be conquered, but to be digested and understood.

Unfortunately, what was done by Mbah Marijan to the Merapi often invited controversy and prejudice because of carelessness that could have had a lot of people sacrificing their lives. He was also often labeled as a "stubborn" because he did not follow the local government appeals to evacuate. But Mbah Marijan never blamed the government, because it was the government's duty to maintain and to ensure the safety of its people. Yet he admitted never feeling more capable than others. He humbly stated: "I was a fool. A fool is different to the *gedrik* (the people of the city). Foolish people when visited by someone will still have good manners and a sense of fear, while the city is usually more brave."<sup>294</sup>

What Mbah Maridjan did was not just self-expression or for himself, but for the values that are distributed to the public and a reflection of collective values. This fully recognizes the existence of "external cause" which covers the entire process of human selfhood. Belief in external cause can reinforce differences in either theistic or atheistic arguments as mentioned in the following excerpt: "If each being in an infinite series of contingent beings is caused by an earlier being in that series, does that fact constitute a causal explanation of why the infinite series of contingent beings exist? The theist may argue that there is an external cause of the infinite series of beings, namely, God, and the atheist may admit that even though each being in the series has a cause, the infinite series itself has no causal explanation" (Quentin, 1995, p. 284).

Belief in external causes also implies rejection of the principle of unity of a substantial universe - namely determinism of science to the law of causality, which is too regular. But the nature of the universe to exist is also a non-deterministic system (Melsen, 1954, pp. 248-249). A non-deterministic system which is the "untouched" area by science, is often interpreted as pejorative as the knowledge of "inferior". This is reasonably considered inferior to the adherents of empiricism, because the empiricists only use memory traces that have been recorded by observation. It does not occur to them about the differences

292 Interview with Mbah Marijan, 16 September 2009, at his house in Kinahrejo.

293 *Ibid.*

294 *Ibid.*



in thought and consciousness. It does not question who the real operator is behind all the empirical events. So the question is, who actually manipulates (read: reduces) this reality? Is the whole world a combination that includes definitive senses - seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and feeling? Is science really able to provide explanations about nature? And can science answer all the questions about nature?

The failure of people in explaining natural phenomena or society, according to empirical examples, is because of its metaphysical standpoints. Thus, the tendency of some to link the Javanese community with some natural phenomena are metaphysical, rather than the empirical and rational, is a symptom of "cosmologism", where something specific is linked to anything more macro. A symptom of cosmologism is usually approached with this valuation model.

It is clear that natural phenomena are still the source of much myth, because even though science has been and continues to evolve into an increasingly complex form, not all things are considered mysterious by humans. Limitations of modern science to explain some phenomena, as well as methodological weaknesses possessed by the explanation of cosmologism, actually puts together two things that are often disputed. This might interact in a mutually enriching relationship. In this enrichment, religion, science, and culture have room to huddle together. Cosmologism itself may be a form of state-of-the-art scholarship that stopped experiencing the enrichment process. Thus, people living with a cosmological outlook are not automatically anti-science. Perhaps they might never know the standard of knowledge in the complex modulus in the past, so that again melted into cosmologism. Thus, cosmologism actually is one link from a range of *kawruh* (*gnosis*).

The process of knowledge enrichment in treating selective accumulation of Merapi is obtained through a long process and in some cases has been tested. Not content to rely only on a certain perspective, the perspective of Mbah Marijan involves any attempt to reach a definitive sense of reality that not only has three dimensions, but four. Not all views of Mbah Marijan see his observations as experimental observations, but it is indisputable that he remains consistent with the cognitive structure that was built earlier - that is, the cognition devoted to and in the name of obedience to God and the Sultan (Javanese king). The proof, only with a salary of IDR 3.510 (US 40 cents per month), Mbah Marijan does not regard it as a big problem. The devotion of Mbah Marijan is something that must be admired in addition to understanding the task.

Human consciousness has complex interactions with soil, water, and air in real life. Some environmental conservation efforts have also been defeated by local rituals, traditions and taboos, which are expressed in a particular community. With the understanding of the rhythm of seasons, it helps in the planting, including, times for harvesting, landlying fallow, soil processing, and so on.

The belief that nature and human beings have a harmonious relationship is revealed through the Javanese expression: "the unity of big universe with little universe". Little universe is little man, and big universe is the universe as a whole. The humans and nature must be unified in the true sense - namely, in an organic union that is inseparable from each other. The culture that developed in traditional societies led to the birth of a harmonious relationship between man and nature, because of human willingness to adapt to nature and an awareness of themselves as part of nature. Conservation is also symbolized indirectly through religious ceremonies. Interaction with nature is also manifested by the offerings/float on a force that is believed to exist and maintain the Merapi. These interactions are not merely cultural events, but also can be seen as an effort to improve the community's friendship with the mountain, because Merapi was regarded as a page where people "play". As a result, Mbah Marijan becomes more understanding of natural phenomena and what might happen: for example, rain, landslides, lavaflows, the possibility of miscarriages, shrinking water reserves in the dry season, etc.

Ideally, in a practical way, various programs and environmental protection activities should contribute to include the value and local people. Mumfangati, et al. (2004, p. 1) mentions the existence of "environmental damage due to the use of technology and science that are less concerned with the conservation of nature." He also suggested the importance of "exploring the cultural wisdom and putting it in a framework for the creation of life and the next life [because] Indonesian traditional values were filled with wisdom" (Mumfangati, et al., 2004, p. 2).

## Conclusion

From the description above, some conclusions can be drawn. First, Mbah Marijan does not recognize the activity of Merapi as a threat, but as a laboratory. For that, he objected when people gave negative titles to Merapi. Second, Mbah Marijan viewed that humans and nature are in an organic unit. They cannot be separated from each other. Both are interdependent.



## Commentary

### *Chutatip Umavijani, Thailand*

Samsul Mujiharto had expressed the relationship between man (Mbah Marijan) and nature (Mt. Merapi) very well. The story brings about the importance of man and sacred rituals, man's belief and respect of nature, the limit of empirical knowledge, and why intuition is important. Mbah Marijan and his ancestors lived at the Merapi mountain for a long time, and performed certain rituals that were passed onto many generations in paying respect to the sacred Mt. Merapi. When the mountain started to spread its lava, Mbah Marijan and many believers were never afraid of danger in front of them, remained in their positions in their homes, even though the area had been declared a very dangerous place by the government. We can see that belief played a very important part for man and can overcome all. Even facing death in front of them, they managed to live.

In the history of mankind, belief can overcome reason. And reason also has its own limitations. How far can we use reason to explain phenomena around us? In quantum physics, Heisenberg finally came to a conclusion from his experiment that there is no explanation about his looking at atoms and not looking at how it can change the structure of movement of the atoms. He said the more science has progressed, the less we know. Knowing the natural phenomena is like a blind man trying to touch snow: the moment he touches, it starts to melt. We can see the limit of the empirical knowledge. And finally we have to believe in our intuition, as Mbah Marijan and his group did. The belief in rituals and the sacred mount gave them courage to live by. Their bravery gave us the sense of man belonging to nature. We are just a part of nature, and only a tiny spot of the whole universe. Man separates himself from the natural environment up to the point that we endanger the earth. If we only pay respect to natural phenomena, we will not facing the thread that we are having right now such as global warming, and the using up of natural resources.

There are many great thinkers that tried to tell us about man's relationship with nature, such as Spinoza's Pantheism, Buddha's ideas of nature, etc. The Pantheism of Spinoza reflected upon how one should respect all things as we do God, as God is all. The concept of respect is vital. We will not create anything that can harm the natural environment just to serve our own satisfaction. There are examples that if we do not respect nature or even take advantage of nature, nature will be destroyed and we cannot survive at the end, such as Easter Island and other islands of the South Sea and the Caribbean. All these places had thick forests and the people who lived there had no sense of protecting the natural environment, and in the end they could not survive without the knowledge of protecting the forest.

The Buddha stated that natural phenomena are very much like the Greek belief that the peoples' minds affect their surroundings. King Oedipus of Greece had the same understanding, by searching for what was the cause of the famine in his reign. The Buddha had forbidden monks to cut down trees and forests. At present, we are using up the natural environment for our own greediness; the motto of this capitalist society is "the bigger the better". We created more goods and used up more natural resources.

A sentence that may strike one's conscience is "touching the earth with humbleness, meaning that we should pay respect to the earth. How can we live without respecting one another? Dr. Darryl Macer put in a very short sentence: "Bioethics is the love of life," which means that we love life, and also that we have

to learn how to love ourselves and how to exist with others and the natural phenomena. Without these qualities we can only ruin ourselves and everything else. It also means that peace and harmony can take place from ourselves to others as we are part of the whole. Human dignity can only take place when we show respect to all, yet we cannot respect others unless we respect ourselves first. How can we have the dignity of oneself and be able to respect others? This is an important question for education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That leads us to the ideas of studying humanities as the whole, whereas the education at present time only aims at jobs and making money rather than knowing the self.

### The Action Plan

It is my proposal from reading Mr. Samsul Mujiharto's paper that our action plans for education must be to promote one to respect oneself and others and the natural phenomena. In order to have self-respect, the process of knowing the self is crucial. For any thinkers in any part of the world the understanding of the self or self-knowledge is the most important. Buddha, Socrates, Montaigne, and some Existentialist thinkers tried to discover the answer. To answer the question is to be able to bring light into bioethics and the environmental problems that we are now facing.

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# Reflections on the Asian-Arab Philosophical Dialogues

*Zosimo Lee, Philippines*

The UNESCO-sponsored dialogue among Asian and Arab philosophers and academics in Port Dickson, Malaysia held this May was a very rich encounter. The range of topics were gathered around themes: Philosophy and Culture of Peace, Ethos and the Philosophy of War, Philosophy and Educating a Culture of Peace, Identity and Human Dignity, Environment and Peace, and Defining Human Dignity. The themes though give only a hint of the varied topics that were covered.

Each presentation while attached to a particular point of view, was also actually addressing a question that had been raised by other philosophers. A French-Algerian philosopher tackled the question why Islamic philosophers were attracted to Aristotle when Plato was closer to the Muslim sense of spirituality: Why would they need Aristotle? This led to the discussion of whether the Muslim scholars who had kept the Greek manuscripts had only transmitted the philosophers to the Europeans or whether they also commented on them, and even enriched or enhanced them. There is a very rich scholarship on this interaction between the Greek philosophers and the Muslim scholars and philosophers as well who worked on those texts. Actually, European scholars have a big debt of gratitude to Muslim scholars for having kept and preserved the Greek texts that later on brought about the Renaissance.

As would be expected, the Arab philosophers brought to awareness how rich indeed the Islamic philosophical traditions are, and they deservedly need to be given attention and acknowledgement. Contemporary Arab philosophers are also undertaking a philosophical conversation that allows them to appropriate what is important from the past, and deal with contemporary questions with the philosophical tradition of their culture, and arrive at a better and more relevant view. For example, it is part of human society to consider decency as an important component, especially in dealing with the vulnerable sectors of society. This is not just a civil society but also a compassionate one. And this quality of a human society can be a universal aspiration.

One cannot reflect on this interaction between the past traditions and present challenges, without acknowledging in many ways, the issue of hybridity. Given world history and global trade, and the exchanges among peoples, we humans are necessarily hybrids. We are each repositories of various narratives and discourses, we carry different cultural traditions within each one, and this hybridity as a process actually leads to better adaptations, or higher evolution. Hence hybridity, and not purity, may be a more significant process.

What made the philosophy dialogue enriching was that while on one hand the philosophy professors were familiar with the main currents of philosophical discussions, they were also engaged in specific or particular philosophical issues that rooted their presentations in particular problematics. It was like there was a link with the philosophical traditions, perspectives, and attention focused on particular concerns. It was thus possible to appreciate the engagement of each and at the same acknowledge a universal component to the reflection.

Each one has a schema and ways of thinking shaped by training and culture, and yet there is the possibility of interacting and engaging other schema and perspectives, through a universal understanding constructed precisely by that interaction and dialogue.

While each is located within a particular history and culture, there is also the possibility of accepting plurality through gender sensitivity and cultural awareness, for example, thus respecting other traditions and cultures, in what John Rawls calls “comprehensive doctrines” (beliefs and world-making that are given meaning and purpose to individuals and communities).

There are ways of “othering” that seek to define the other as different, or separate, from oneself. Part of the skills that would be needed in conflict-transformation would be to transcend the tendency to consider the Other as strange and different, hence becoming the repository of all the traits that would be placed on what is not germane or comfortable to my being.

There is the need of being in touch with what is truly human. Hence not just the rationality of the mind, but also the sentiments of the heart, or what the Japanese call *kokoro* (heart-mind). When one is embedded in identities (that, of course, provide meaning and purpose), do these identities not also differentiate and separate? Can one be both rooted in particular identities and yet also be able to appreciate what is universally human?

Can there be a universalism that is objective, because it is the meta-narrative of all narratives?

Given colonial histories and politics of identity-formation, can we also already go beyond the effects of colonization even in our definition of the Other and ourselves? The important first step is reflection on one's own mind and understanding of how it works based on an awareness of how categories (of identities, for example) may have imprisoned or captured our own definitions of ourselves. And perhaps it is in a new and different, critical and creative, manner of thinking of ourselves, as well as a new way of generating new understandings of categories and identities, that can liberate colonial identities from the grips of tradition and history.

This can be illustrated in the politics of friend/enemy. Must we always look at the world from this dichotomy? Even as we can change whom we define as an enemy or a friend, are we not imprisoned by the dichotomy insofar as we perceive others mainly through this lens? Transcending the dichotomy means going beyond these labels, hence quarrels and wars would lose their justification and meaning, and what we might seek instead would be reconciliation and dialogue. What can be done, though, when others persist in seeing us as enemies?

Can there be just wars? When others oppress us, or deny us our humanity, or treat us unfairly? Who are the insurgents and the counter-insurgents? Can a warrior be at peace when doing battle?

We construct our worlds, and we also reconstruct our worlds. We bring the world into our homes, or we make the world our home. We incorporate the familiar and the strange, as part of our home. If the mind is our home, and we accommodate much in our minds, can we be at home in the minds that accommodate much that is strange together with the familiar? Ultimately we are the ones who make our home our own. Can this home be the world?

There are distinctions to be made too about change, progress and development. Change does not necessarily mean progress, just as progress does not necessarily bring about development. While there is material progress, does this mean true human development - that persons become better human beings?

Finally, if the planet is to continue to provide life for succeeding generations, how must human civilization be so that we do not discount the possibility of a sustainable planet? Perhaps when cultural capital is not brought into development plans, some damage is inevitably done on nature. Our view of what nature is for humans has wrought this kind of damage. Our world-view makes us look at nature primarily as a resource for humans, when indigenous knowledge for thousands of years has not always separated humans from nature.

For me, all these ideas, realizations, objectivities are "in us." While we are the source of the schema that allows us to demarcate and discriminate, the unity and integration is also "in us", not "out there." When our horizons are sufficiently enlarged, we can enclose and enfold all that we can conceive, imagine, be purposive about, as well as our dreams and plans and future endeavors.

And that awareness itself is what must confront us.

# The Necessity of an Interregional Dialogue between Asia and the Arab World

*Souria Saad-Zoy, UNESCO Rabat*

## A continuous dialogue which has evolved since its creation

The Interregional Philosophical Dialogue was included in the philosophy programme of UNESCO, within the Sector of Social and Human Sciences, since 2004. Through this innovative project, UNESCO aimed to be a meeting point where dynamic networks between the Arab world and Asia are created and developed.

The UNESCO office in Rabat started to be involved in this project in 2006 when World Philosophy Day was hosted by Morocco, gathering about 100 philosophers, 1500 participants and students. Three issues were then considered crucial in both regions: globalization challenges facing philosophy; philosophy facing the challenges of modern technology; the roles of philosophy in war and peace. The working groups also insisted on the necessity of discussing the convergent and divergent themes between regional and cultural areas and sharing together the possibility of drawing up common programmes and concrete exchanges.

Following the 2006 Dialogue in Rabat, several sessions of the Dialogue were organised in Hiroshima and Seoul in 2008 (the latter, during the World Congress of Philosophy) to further discuss the topics identified, from various perspectives. A Declaration on Enduring Peace and Justice was also drafted and adopted at this time. The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also provided a concrete theme for reflection and dialogue on the philosophical basis of human rights. Other themes were added, such as the ethics of nuclear energy technologies as well as bioethics and Asian culture.

In 2009, philosophy was highlighted by UNESCO in different ways. Each region of the world organised high-level meetings on the teaching of philosophy, following the study published by UNESCO entitled “Philosophy, a School of Freedom”, on the state of the art of teaching philosophy in the world. Based on the results of a worldwide survey, the publication examines draws up the state of the teaching of philosophy at all education levels, both formal and informal.

The meeting for the Arab region took place on 11-12 May 2009 in Tunis and brought together Ministers of Education, philosophy teachers, practitioners and experts. The main specific challenges facing the field of philosophy teaching were discussed, as well as ways in which this discipline can be introduced into curricula where it does not exist. During the meeting, sessions were dedicated to the experiences of the region in terms of learning to philosophize with children in primary schools, and philosophy teaching at secondary and tertiary levels. Recommendations on philosophy teaching in the Arab region were unanimously adopted and disseminated to all relevant partners.

The regional high-level meetings also encouraged the formulation of action plans and the compilation of teaching materials. The Dialogue organized in Bangkok (2009) on “Philosophy and the Crisis of Civilization” allowed participants to share the outcomes of the meetings held in the Arab and Asia Pacific regions and link them to the discussions of the several working groups.

Throughout the years, new themes have been naturally added to the discussions, focusing on the emergence of new contemporary issues: human dignity and philosophy, bioethics, environment ethics, the culture of peace, and so forth, enlarging the panel of philosophers with interdisciplinary backgrounds and experiences, and demonstrating the unique value of the Dialogue.

## The crucial role of the Dialogue and its impact on the construction of democracy

UNESCO is working to create the conditions for genuine dialogue based upon respect for shared values and the dignity of each civilization and culture. The world requires global visions of sustainable development based upon observance of human rights, mutual respect, and the alleviation of poverty, all of which lie at the heart of UNESCO's mission and activities. UNESCO has set itself a number of tasks that should help reduce the gap between what is and what should be.

Given the recent political developments in the Arab region, the Dialogue constitutes, more than ever, a strategic approach for UNESCO to reaffirm its full adherence to the appeal for freedom, justice and dignity and a way forward to support the region in building on gains achieved and reducing obstacles in the field of human rights and the culture of peace.

The experience shows that both Asian and Arab philosophers world have taken up these spaces for dialogue and exchange, where the various aspects of their respective philosophical traditions can be at the heart of the debate, both for philosophical study and analysis and for the understanding of contemporary issues. In this age of globalization, a critical response to contemporary problems and issues of active and responsible citizenship is needed. It is therefore even more important to look at the ways that the heritage of Asia and the Arab world has addressed democracy and social justice in the past, and how new and common solutions can be found to deepen the understanding between cultures and implement philosophy to promote justice.

The end objective of the project is to foster greater mutual understanding of the world traditions of philosophical thought, and to encourage intellectual partnerships in exploring the contemporary challenges to philosophical research and study. This includes exchange of students, research fellows, professors, and joint research and publications between these regions to create a culture of sharing, rather than a reliance on North American or European value systems, which are not always well-modelled to the cultures in these countries. In addition, the results contribute to enhancing diversity of philosophical thought that can be used by scholars and policy makers in all parts of the world.

UNESCO Rabat and Bangkok have always mobilized their regional research and policy networks to identify relevant participants from Asia and the Arab World, taking a deeply-reflected flexible attitude to the proposed themes and ensuring the follow-up of the previous meetings. The process is participative since it is conducted in close cooperation with national counterparts with the scientific assistance of partner scholars. Attention has always been given to gender parity and representation of both regions, with special encouragement of young scholars and women. Scholars should always play a key role by integrating youth concept into a rights-based analysis.

One of the main tangible results of the Asia-Arab Interregional Philosophical dialogue is the creation and the implementation of networks and intellectual partnerships between Asia and the Arab world, that are sustainable.

Besides the Dialogue conferences, the focus is on concrete actions, including the implementation of experiences of developing curriculum, teaching courses and giving lectures and holding conferences on philosophy, and how these include philosophies from different regions of the world. Philosophers in Asia and the Pacific who participate in the Dialogue, have always been encouraged to conduct pilot experiences of teaching courses and/or giving lectures and conferences on Arab philosophy, while their Arab counterparts, similarly, would teach and lecture on Asian philosophy. Some participants in both regions have already taken active roles in that direction, by including Arab/Asian philosophy in their respective courses. These are examples of good practices that should be disseminated in the region and worldwide. In the long view, participating university teachers should be encouraged to include, in an official way, materials from different regions in philosophy courses and curricula.

Besides that, best practices on developing joint pilot experiences should be collected and shared (electronically, etc.) by Asian and Arab participants. The acts of the Dialogue sessions should continue being published and disseminated through articles, books, and the websites of Asian and Arab institutions with the support of UNESCO and the active participation of all actors.



Following the Port Dickson Conference in Malaysia in 2010, on the culture of peace and dignity, the next Dialogue is scheduled to take place in the Arab region. At this strategic point in the Arab history, the themes of the Dialogue should be directly linked to the current social and political transitions.

UNESCO should seize an opportunity to address very relevant issues in the region, like youth, gender, mutual understanding, democracy and the culture of peace, and to facilitate a sustainable ownership of the results of the Dialogue by policy makers and civil society, since they align to new democratic challenges. Themes should be articulated around the re-thinking of key components of human rights frameworks (dignity, equality, justice, fairness, etc).

More crucially than ever, the key role of the dialogue has become vitally evident. UNESCO has a responsibility for ensuring the gains of the Dialogue during the last decade continue and are utilized, and for adapting its strategy to the evolution of our societies.

## List of Contributors

Mr. Makram Abbes is in the Ecole normale supérieure de Lyon, Tunisia. Email: makram.abbes@ens-lsh.fr

Ms. Naima Hadj Abderrahma is from Algeria, but teaching as Professor of Philosophy in Paris, France. Email: aletheia\_sein@yahoo.com

Dr. Ayoub Abu-Dayyeh is President of the E\_ case Society based in Amman, Jordan. Email: ayoub101@hotmail.com

Mr. Issa Abyad is based in Jordan. Email: consultant.jo@gmail.com

Mr. Alexander Abyad is Jordanian based in Norway.

Dr. Isham B. Pawan Ahmad is Professor at International Islamic University in Malaysia. Email: isham@iiu.edu.my

Dr. Ali Benmakhlouf is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Nice – Sophia Antipolis, France, originally from Morocco. Email: ali.benmakhlouf@wanadoo.fr

Dr. Azizan Baharuddin is Professor and Director of Centre for Civilisational Dialogue, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Email: azizanb@um.edu.my

Dr. Sadek Beloucif is originally from Algeria but works as a Doctor at Avicenne Hospital and Paris 13 University, Bobigny, France. Email: sadek.beloucif@avc.aphp.fr

Dr. Philip Cam is Senior Visiting Fellow, School of History and Philosophy, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. E-mail: p.cam@unsw.edu.au

Dr. In-Suk Cha is holder of the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy and Professor Emeritus at Seoul National University, Republic of Korea. E-mail: insukcha@snu.ac.kr

Ms. Napat Chaipraditkul from Thailand is a Research Fellow at Eubios Ethics Institute. Email: napat@eubios.info

Phinith Chantalangsy is from Laos and working as Assistant Programme Specialist, in the Human Security, Philosophy and Democracy Section, Division of Human Rights, Human Security and Philosophy, UNESCO Paris, France. Email: p.chantalangsy@unesco.org

Dr. Habib Chirzin is Professor at Center for Peace and Human Security Studies, HAMKA University, Jakarta, Indonesia. Email: habibpeace@yahoo.com

Amarbayasgalan Dorjderem is from Mongolia and currently working as the Programme Assistant of Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO Bangkok in Thailand. Email: a.dorjderem@unesco.org

Dr. Hideki Fuchinoue is an Associate Professor of Asia Pacific Studies at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, and affiliated Researcher of Institute of Peace Science at Hiroshima University in Japan. Email: wave@apu.ac.jp

Dr. John Giordano is from USA and is currently teaching philosophy and religion at Assumption University in Bangkok, Thailand. E-mail: jgiordano@au.edu

Ms. Anniken Celina Grinvoll is from Norway and Managing Director of Eubios Ethics Institute, Thailand. Email: anniken@eubios.info

Dr. Johan Hattingh is Professor at the Unit for Environmental Ethics and Department of Philosophy, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He is currently a member of COMEST. E-mail: jph2@sun.ac.za

Dr. Rosnani Hashim is a Professor of Education and Associate Director of the Centre for Philosophical Inquiry in Education, Institute of Education, International Islamic University, Malaysia. Email: rosnani@iiu.edu.my

Mr. Johnny Ho is a Canadian and working in a private agriculture company in South East Asia.

Dr. Rainier A. Ibane is Professor of Philosophy at Ateneo de Manila University. He is currently a member of COMEST. Email: ribana@ateneo.edu

Dr. Sawa Kato is from Japan and is a philosopher now based in Thailand, working as a consultant at UNESCO Bangkok. E-mail: sawakato@gmail.com

Dr. Eun-Jeong Kim is Professor at the Department of Ethics Education at Gyoungsang National University, Jinju, Republic of Korea. Email: eunkim@gnu.ac.kr

Mr. Jonathan Kougl is a conflict photographer and former soldier based in Bangkok, from the United Kingdom. Email: jhkougl@hotmail.com

Mrs. Lena Issa Le Blanc is from Iraq and has a M.A. in International Relations from Webster University, and teaches Arabic at UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand. Email: lenaadnanesa@yahoo.com

Dr. Zosimo Lee is a Professor of Philosophy at University of Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines. Email: zosimolee@gmail.com

Mr. Leonard Henry Le Blanc III from USA is currently completing a Ph.D in management at Shinawatra University in Bangkok, Thailand. Email: leblanleonard@gmail.com

Dr. Darryl R. J. Macer is Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University, Yokohama, Japan; and Regional Adviser in Social and Human Sciences for Asia and the Pacific, Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO Bangkok, Thailand. Email: d.macer@unesco.org

Dr. Soumaya Mestiri is in the Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales de Tunis, Tunisia. Email: mestirisoumaya@yahoo.fr

Dr. Ravichandran Moorthy is Senior Lecturer in the Programme of Strategic and International Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities, University Kebangsaan Malaysia. Email: drravi5774@gmail.com

Dr. Samsul Ma'arif Mujiharto is Philosophy Professor at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. E-mail: samsulmaarifm@gmail.com

Dr. Tuyen Thi Ngo is Deputy Director of Centre for Educational Technology, Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences, Hanoi, Viet Nam. E-mail: ngothituyen@fpt.vn, ngothotuyen@yahoo.com

Mr. Robert Aori Nyambati is from Kenya and currently a student at Michigan State University, USA. Email: nyambati@umich.edu

Dr. Jinwhan Park is Professor at the Department of Ethics Education at Gyoungsang National University, Jinju, Republic of Korea. E-mail: jinwhan2003@yahoo.com

Dr. Gyunyul Park is Professor at the Department of Ethics Education at Gyoungsang National University, Jinju, Republic of Korea. E-mail: pgy556@gnu.kr

Mr. Tim Rackett was teaching at Khon Kaen University in Thailand.

Mr. Jasdev Rai is from UK and is the founder of the Sikh Human Rights Group. Email: jasdevrai@yahoo.com

Dr. Balambal Ramaswamy is a retired Professor from the Department of History, University of Madras in Chennai, India. Email: drbala50@hotmail.com

Ms. Souria Saad-Zoy is from Afghanistan and is a Program Specialist at UNESCO Rabat. Email: s.saad-zoy@unesco.org

Dr. Sivanandam Panneerselvam is a Philosophy Professor at University of Madras, Chennai, India. Email: sps@md4.vsnl.net.in

Dr. Syrine Snoussi is from Tunisia, currently completing her Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Nice, France. Email: syrine.snoussi@orange.fr

Dr. Jitendra Nath Sarker is a professor of Philosophy at University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. Email: jn\_sarker@yahoo.com

Ms. Annika Schulz from Germany is currently a student at University of Karlsruhe. Email: annika\_schulz@gmx.net

Ms. Anna Shimpo from Japan is currently a student at Sheffield University in the UK. Email: anna1209@hotmail.co.jp

Piseth Thunchhay is a member of the Cambodian Association of Philosophy Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Email: thunchhaypiseth@gmail.com

Dr. Chutatip Umavijani is Associate Professor at the Philosophy Department, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University, Thailand. Email: chujid@gmail.com

Ms. Laura Vittet-Adamson is from France and has just completed a MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies at Oxford University; she is currently working as an intern in UNESCO Bangkok's RUSHSAP unit. Email: laura.vittetadamson@googlemail.com

Mr. Arthur Wolf from Netherlands is currently completing his Ph.D. in Philosophy at Gyoungsang National University in Republic of Korea. Email: arthur.wolf@gmail.com



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