University for Peace

PEACE EDUCATION: ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

CURRICULUM/TEACHING MODULE

Asia and the Pacific Programme

University for Peace

PEACE EDUCATION: ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

CURRICULUM/TEACHING MODULE

Programme Principal: Prof. Dr. Amr Abdalla Ph.D.
Vice Rector
University for Peace

Project Director: Mr. Narinder Kakar
Director
Asia and the Pacific Programme
University for Peace

Consultant & Module Editor: Ms. Sara Saeed Khan Niazi

Editorial Committee: Mr. Narinder Kakar
Ms. Sara Saeed Khan Niazi

Asia and the Pacific Programme

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Ph: +92-51-5125696
E-mail: galaxy_umair1@hotmail.com
: umair.pah@gmail.com

The mission of the University for Peace is to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace with the aim of promoting among all human beings a spirit of understanding, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence, to stimulate cooperation among peoples, and to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations.

Charter of the University for Peace,
Article 2, approved by the UN General Assembly
by Resolution A/RES/35/55

University for Peace

Asia and the Pacific Programme

CONTENTS

FOREWORD…….. ..... **VII**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **IX**

LECTURERS' GUIDE ..... **XI**

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW ..... **XIII**

INTRODUCTION…….. ..... **1**

CHAPTER I: METHODOLOGY **11**

CHAPTER II: BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PEACE AND CONFLICT **23**

CHAPTER III: ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: PEACE CONTENT AND PEACE POTENTIALS **53**

CHAPTER IV: PEACEFUL APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MUSLIM CONTEXTS **69**

CHAPTER V: IDENTITY & DIVERSITY IN ISLAM **86**

CHAPTER VI: HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM **114**

CHAPTER VII: WOMEN, GENDER, PEACE EDUCATION AND ISLAM **136**

CHAPTER VIII: DEVELOPMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND ISLAM **147**

CHAPTER IX: MEDIA AND PEACE EDUCATION: DECONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING MUSLIM AND ISLAM IN THE MEDIA **164**

CHAPTER X: ISLAM, POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE **182**

FURTHER READINGS **202**

WORKS CITED…….. ..... **211**

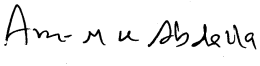
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE AUTHORS **217**

FOREWORD

The curriculum/teaching module "Peace Education: Islamic Perspectives" is one of several publications by the University for Peace (UPEACE) that aims to further its commitment to sharing knowledge in the pursuit of peacebuilding worldwide. It represents the collective effort of scholars, academics, and professionals with knowledge of Islam and experience in conducting peace education and peace and conflict studies with a view to making available as widely as possible a cutting-edge, user-friendly curriculum on peace education from Islamic perspectives. It is intended both for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and is applicable to both formal and nonformal systems of education. Following consultative missions launched by UPEACE to countries such as Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, among others, it became obvious that there was clear need for the development of peace education courses and materials based on Islamic perspectives. This need applies to both formal and nonformal education, and to the formulation of national policies and approaches at the community level. These consultative and curriculum development processes, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), culminated in the development of UPEACE's Programme on Education for Peace in Asia and the Pacific and its subsequent proposal for a program of action.

The goal of the overall project for the development and implementation of peace education curricula from Islamic perspectives was to provide peace education informed by Islamic sources to a variety of Muslim communities and related segments worldwide. Through this curriculum/teaching module, an attempt has been made to develop a framework for an "Islamically informed" peace education curriculum. In this process, UPEACE engaged experts in the areas of peace education and Islamic studies representing majority and minority Muslim communities, and formed a team of experts in Islamic peace education (Global Resource Team) to support the expansion of curriculum implementation. UPEACE's commitment to spreading knowledge about nonviolence and the peaceful resolution and transformation of conflict permeates all its academic and regional activities. These principles and values guided the development of this curriculum, while emphasizing UPEACE's commitment to mainstreaming gender, human rights, multiculturalism, and participatory/interactive education.

UPEACE hopes that this curriculum with its teaching modules will contribute to advancing and spreading peaceful approaches informed by Islamic perspectives in higher education and civil society settings.



Amr Abdalla, Ph.D.
Professor and Vice-Rector
University for Peace

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The compilation of the lessons was made possible through the contributions of participants of the two workshops held with the aim of developing the curriculum for a module course on Peace Education with Islamic Perspectives. We would like to acknowledge with appreciation their contributions.

We would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support provided by the Canadian authorities through the Toronto Centre of the University for Peace, and to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), which enabled UPEACE to conduct the workshops and to produce the curriculum/teaching module. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to Salam Institute for Peace and Justice, and its president Dr. Mohammed Abu Nimer, for the scholarly and educational support they provided to the development of this curriculum, especially their leadership with the design and implementation of the first workshop.

A number of UPEACE faculty and staff made valuable contributions. Prof. Dr. Amr Abdalla, Vice Rector guided the process of developing the framework for the workshop and the whole project. Mr. Narinder Kakar, Director of the Asia and the Pacific Programme guided the organization and conduct of the two workshops and also the process for the compilation and editing of the curriculum/teaching module. Dr. Fayen D'Evie, Director of the Toronto Centre provided support for the first workshop and Ms. Dinoo Mathew, Project Coordinator for the Asia and the Pacific Programme supported organization and conduct of the second workshop. Ms. Allison Antenello for her efforts to ensure all chapters and lesson plans were received in time from the authors. Ms. Sara Khan has been instrumental in compiling the curriculum/teaching module and in its editing.

LECTURERS' GUIDE*

ASSUMPTIONS:

Since this is a curriculum/teaching framework—rather than course material to be handed out to students—lecturers may want to reproduce some of the material presented. In doing so, please keep in mind the doctrine of fair use under copyright law for such distribution and norms of attribution. As with any teaching materials, this model reflects the knowledge, background, teaching antecedents, and convictions of those preparing it. Lecturers using this material are free to change the sequence, topics, references, or resources found here and may introduce their own sources. This framework assumes a 12-week term (one module per week) and is geared toward graduate level university students, teachers, madrassas and civil society participants. Although the lesson plan covers one module per week, it can be modified to fit other purposes. The activities, case studies, evaluation, and reflection stages are designed to promote an interactive learning process and help students become more engaged in reading, reflection, discussion, documentation, recording, and critical thought. If any of the suggestions conflict with the common practices or requirements of a university or department, lecturers should feel free to make creative adjustments.

RESOURCES:

Students' experiences of conflict, violence, and Islamic practices and theory (as well as those of lecturers) comprise valuable resources for this course. At the same time, such personal knowledge and common sense must be combined with other elements to be useful within the framework. The personal experiences of participants need to be analyzed, filtered through the readings, and integrated with the experiences of others in the class. A set of references accompanies each module: some can be reproduced and distributed directly to students, while others might need to be made available through reserved reading collections. The framework is designed so that lecturers can freely add resource material relevant to their own country. The books and articles reflect the exchanges of the group of academicians who attended the 2006 workshop and are not exhaustive.

TASKS:

The framework offers suggested tasks for each module. These tasks can be used as the basis for small group discussions or for assessment purposes. How one uses them, and which are chosen—choices that lecturers should feel free to make as they see fit—will depend on the requirements of the university or department concerned as well as on individual interests. In structuring tasks, it is worth considering that several appropriate interpretations can be adequately defended in response to a question; there is rarely a

* The Lecturers' Guide is adapted from *Nonviolent Transformation of Conflict - A Teaching Model* by Mary. E. King and Christopher A. Miller, published by the United Nations Affiliated University for Peace.

single correct answer, nor can one be found by leafing through references. Rather, students need to ponder the meaning of a question and collect relevant data (drawn from suggested readings, personal experience, and class discussion). Written work should be structured to answer a specific question.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Development of a curriculum/teaching module on "Peace Education: Islamic Perspectives" is aimed at exploring issues related to Islam and peace education, focusing specifically on the relationship between Islamic values and principles, and peace and conflict resolution. These issues have been addressed in both theoretical and practical terms, utilizing scholarship and case studies to illustrate ideas and concepts. Our hope is that this curriculum can be applied to a wide audience of Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The curriculum is divided into ten chapters and twelve modules, with each chapter addressing one issue related to the current debate on Islam, peace, and conflict. It begins with an introduction to the objectives, process, and basic concepts behind the development of the curriculum/teaching module. Chapter I introduces the methodology used to develop the curriculum, and introduces students to different methodological approaches-both Western and Islamic. This chapter also examines in detail the differences and similarities between Islamic and Western approaches.

Chapter II introduces the theories and concepts underlying peace and conflict studies. It focuses on how conflict emerges, how people engage in or behave in conflict situations, and various types of conflict interventions. A conflict analysis model is also introduced, along with special emphasis on negotiation and mediation. This section does not focus specifically on Islamic values of peace and conflict; rather, it is a critical piece of the curriculum because it provides the theoretical framework that is used in most other chapters of the module.

Chapter III examines the many ways in which principles of peace are embedded within the religion of Islam. It identifies the inherent principles and values of Islam that promote peace and harmony and provide a basis for peace building: it also highlights the Qur'anic verses that support these principles. Finally, it elaborates on peace-oriented obligations and nonviolent guiding principles in Islam.

Chapter IV explores several approaches within the framework of Islam that facilitate conflict resolution, transformation and peace building in society. It explores the points of intersection and harmony between Islamic and Western approaches to peaceful conflict resolution and explains with examples how these approaches have been employed to resolve conflict and promote a peaceful coexistence in Islamic history and the contemporary Muslim world.

Chapter V provides a basic framework to discuss identity and diversity within an Islamic context in relation to peace and conflict. This chapter defines concepts such as identity, diversity, and stereotypes, and examines both the Islamic and Western worldview on identity and associated concepts and issues. It also elaborates on the concepts of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Islam and provides theological and historical backing for such concepts, e.g., during the life of the Prophet (*pbuh*) in Medina. It concludes by addressing some of the misconceptions and modern challenges to principles of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Islam.

Chapter VI explores the relationship between Islam and human rights. It discusses the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, and the Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. In addition it discusses in detail the principle of human rights in Islam in relation to Qur'anic verses and examples from the *Hadith* (practical examples set by the Prophet (*pbuh*)) in connection with contemporary practices, thus demonstrating how human rights are defined and protected in Islam.

Chapter VII looks at gender and Islam, and the need to explore gender, conflict, and Islam from a peace education perspective. Taking a comparative approach, it defines basic concepts of gender from a secular as well as Islamic perspective. The issue of gender and conflict is discussed through the prism of Islamic history, enabling students to critically explore gender, women, and conflict and peace education issues in the future.

Chapter VIII takes into account the relationship between Islam, the environment, and peaceful development. It focuses on the relationship between Islam as a religion and the environment, against the backdrop of Qur'anic teachings. Individual behaviours that might or might not affect our environment are discussed, alongside the Prophet's (*pbuh*) examples, to find guidance and appropriate responses to individual as well as institutional behaviour. It also discusses contemporary narratives on how peace building and peace can be achieved through environmental initiatives.

Chapter IX elaborates on the importance of critical media literacy skills as a tool for developing peace. It outlines skills and methodologies to empower students, both young and old, to critique what they encounter via the media. The chapter begins with a definition of media literacy and connects the ethics of journalism with contemporary media practices, comparing the secular ethics of journalism with its counterparts in Islam to enable students to critically deconstruct information transmitted through different media.

Chapter X examines the issue of religion and politics, as well as the governance of the two realms in Islamic societies. Specifically, it examines the nature of human beings vis-à-vis the Islamic view of the relationship between religion and politics. Using case studies, it discusses the Islamic perspective on relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, both in terms of state-society relations (within the boundaries of a state) and in terms of global politics.

INTRODUCTION

By Amr Abdalla

INTRODUCTION

This section discusses the overall rationale for a curriculum on "Peace Education: Islamic Perspectives". Before using this curriculum, it is necessary to understand the assumptions and intentions of those who have contributed to its development. In order to do this, the introduction will explain and define the key concepts that appear throughout this teaching module. These terms will be addressed in a simple question/answer format. This introduction lays the foundation for later chapters in which issues of peace education within Islamic contexts are analyzed and critiqued in detail.

SEVEN STAGES OF CURRICULUM DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION:

The University for Peace has developed a seven-stage curriculum design and implementation framework, which it uses to design and distribute teaching materials throughout the world. These stages are described below and apply to the "Peace Education: Islamic Perspectives" curriculum/ teaching module.

The seven stages are defined as follows:

IDENTIFY ISSUES:

Stage I involves identifying issues that are relevant to one's own professional/political context. It is important to involve a diverse group of people when trying to identify these issues so that a range of perspectives and ideas is represented.

CREATE A COURSE OUTLINE (WORKSHOP #1):

Stage II takes place in a formal workshop setting, during which a group of academicians, professionals, and civil society representatives collectively discuss the issue identified in Stage I. During this workshop, participants discuss the important elements of the issue and begin outlining a curriculum design. The focus is threefold: 1) to identify important elements related to a chosen issue; 2) to understand how the elements of the issue intersect with peace and conflict studies, and 3) to consider how the topics might best reflect the needs of the group (e.g., profession, community). This workshop generally requires 3-5 days and is a heavily participatory process. All participants should review the final curriculum outline and have time to deliberate on its contents.

DEVELOP CURRICULUM CONTENT:

Stage III involves developing the curriculum content using the outline from Stage II. The objective is to research and organize information into a curriculum format in a way that covers the academic and practical aspects of the topic. We recommend involving workshop participants from Stage II, who have the necessary expertise in content development.

DESIGN LESSON PLANS AND CONDUCT TRAINING (WORKSHOP #2):

Stage IV also takes place in a formal workshop setting. Unlike workshop #1 (Stage II) where there is a mixed group of people reflecting different areas of interest and knowledge, the second workshop brings together people who will actually use the curriculum in teaching or training. During this workshop, participants will review the curriculum content developed in Stage III and use it to write detailed, context-specific lesson plans to teach in a university setting, or train in a civil society or professional education context. Lesson plans should be interactive and must reflect the pedagogical principles of the peace and conflict studies field. A significant amount of workshop time is dedicated to teaching participants how to understand these principles and utilize them in their lesson plans.

RECEIVE, REVISE AND APPROVE ALL PROJECT MATERIALS:

Stage V is the point at which all curriculum materials are reviewed and lesson plans are finalized by workshop participants, a project coordinator, and a project supervisor.

DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

Stage VI can be realized in many ways. UPEACE has had considerable success in disseminating its curriculum via its online website. Specifically, UPEACE compiles all the curriculum information –outlines, session content, recommended readings, lesson plans, and appendices – and uploads everything on the project website in an organized manner. UPEACE communicates with workshop participants who are committed to teaching and training on how to access the curriculum on the internet. This has proved to be the most effective with regard to cost and communication because it allows trainers and teachers to find documents online. Those who are able to access electronic versions can use them directly with their students or trainees. Others, who cannot access it directly from the internet either download information and make copies or, via UPEACE, contact the person on the ground to ask for copies of the documents they need for their course. After all materials have been disseminated, trainers and teachers begin to teach the course.

EVALUATION:

Stage VII involves evaluating the curriculum development workshops, the final product, and the implementation and impact. It is important to provide a confidential mechanism (e.g., evaluation forms) to solicit feedback from workshop participants and trainers.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The two main goals for the overall project of the development and implementation of peace education curricula in an Islamic context are as follows:

GOAL 1: *To provide peace education informed by Islamic sources to a variety of Muslim communities and related communities worldwide.*

OBJECTIVES:

1.1 To develop a framework for an "Islamically informed" peace education curriculum.

1.2 To engage experts in the areas of peace education and Islamic studies from a representative sample of majority and minority Muslim communities worldwide.

1.3 To ensure the development of curricula for both formal and informal education.

1.4 To ensure that the curriculum addresses Muslims and non Muslims.

1.5 To develop a team of experts in Islamic peace education (Global Resource Team)

1.6 To support the expansion of curriculum implementation worldwide.

GOAL 2: *To implement an Islam-informed peace education curriculum in a variety of Muslim communities and related communities worldwide.*

OBJECTIVES:

2.1 To select a representative sample of Muslim communities worldwide to pilot the curriculum.

2.2 To conduct training-of-trainers for educators within the formal and non formal education institutions in the pilot communities.

2.3 To implement the curriculum within the selected communities.

2.4 To conduct process, outcome, and impact evaluation to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the curriculum and lay the foundations for similar processes around the world.

PROJECT PROGRESS:

There is a clear need for the development of peace education courses and materials that are appropriate for an Islamic context. This need applies to formal and informal education, institutional policies, and community settings. This was one of the most important outcomes of UPEACE's consultative missions to the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. These were held in 2004 and 2005. The consultative process, supported by CIDA, resulted in the development of UPEACE's program on Education for Peace in Asia and the Pacific and its subsequent proposal for a Programme of Action.

After their unanimous expression of a need for and interest in such a curriculum, UPEACE planned to partner with universities and institutions in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Indonesia in the initial development and implementation of this activity. Similarly, efforts were underway to conduct a needs assessment and to forge partnerships with educational and community institutions in Muslim communities in North America.

As a first step towards addressing these issues, UPEACE, through its secretariat for the establishment of its center in Toronto, held a one-week curriculum development workshop: Peace Education in an Islamic Context from May 15-19, 2006. By bringing together a small, select group of representatives from South, Central and Southeast Asia (representing societies with large Muslim communities) and North America (representing societies with significant Muslim minorities), important groundwork was laid for the design of curricula that reflected the needs of Islamic communities in both settings.

The bringing together of experts from North America as well as South, Central and Southeast Asia allowed for the crucial cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences and facilitated important groundwork for the design of curricula that could be adapted to local needs. Representatives from Islamic communities in Canada participated in the discussions and highlighted current programs and initiatives taking place in Canada.

Case studies of similar programs in Canada and the United States were presented and participants visited Islamic educational institutions and schools with a high percentage of Islamic students in Toronto.

By the end of the workshop, participants had completed a detailed outline of a comprehensive curriculum on peace education in Islamic contexts, and plans were underway to complete the design of the curricula for North America and for South and Southeast Asia. However, as the UPEACE Toronto Center terminated its activities in 2006, and funding for this project became limited to the South and Southeast Asian component, the organizers continued with the development of the curriculum for South and Southeast Asia only.

In this regard, and as a follow-up to the Toronto curriculum development workshop, participants remained actively involved in the design of the curriculum. Over the past few months, UPEACE organizers contacted several of the Toronto workshop participants to

write the various chapters of the curriculum based on the outline that was completed collaboratively in Toronto. This document includes the final draft of the curriculum that was written by the first workshop participants. During the second workshop in Indonesia in November 2007, the participants (many of whom had participated in the Toronto workshop along with new participants who had committed to teaching this curriculum in their educational settings) will provide a final review of the curriculum, develop its lesson plans, and make concise plans to teach a course using this curriculum in their educational settings.

DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS:

WHAT IS PEACE IN ISLAM?

Peace in Islam pervades all its sources, metaphors, and aims. The name of the religion itself - Islam - has its root in the words "*Salam*" and "*Selm*". The first may be seen as referring to an end state of peace, while the latter refers to the process or temporary states. Further, "*Al-Salam*" is one of Allah's names. In terms of the dynamics of individual and group interaction, Islamic sources, especially the Holy Qur'an, refer to various situations where Muslims may engage in conflicts among themselves or with others. In all cases, as is explained in detail in this curriculum, the ultimate goal is not to remain in a state of hostility, but instead to reach a state of peace. Peace in Islam encompasses harmony and tranquility within individuals in their relation to their creator, their relation to others, and their relation to their environment; all these are interrelated and reinforce each other, as is explained later with the principle of universality in Islam. To use modern terms in the field of peace and conflict resolution, peace in Islam refers to positive peace. Negative peace is viewed as a stage that should lead to positive peace. Violence in all its forms is usually either prohibited or permitted under careful rules; in cases of retribution that make space for physical punishment, forgiveness is always preferred.

WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION?

Peace education is an academic field that seeks to understand the multiple ways in which education can be used to meet the demands posed by peacemaking and peacebuilding challenges. Specifically, peace education seeks to address issues such as protracted conflict, nuclear weapons, poverty, and discrimination. It aims to alleviate these problems by (i) developing educational policies and educator skills and tools that promote peace; and (ii) by designing culturally relevant peace education programs that can be implemented in various contexts. Peace education combines traditional pedagogy (research, lectures) with an interactive teaching methodology to engage students in the learning process and obtain critical feedback from audiences, which helps inform and shape lesson and program design and development. In this way, peace education takes an innovative approach to education – positioning the teacher as learner and the learner as teacher[*], as UNESCO describes.

[*] UNESCO, http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peace/frame2.htm Retrieved November 5, 2007

THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO PEACE EDUCATION:

In the development of the outline of this curriculum, participants in the Toronto workshop embraced the notion that peace education can be complete only if it encompasses the various fields that influence conflict and peace beyond the specific field of conflict resolution and peace studies. Further, the participants agreed that an Islamic perspective on peace education would benefit from the rich resources that exist within Islam in such fields. Therefore, the curriculum includes basic components of conflict resolution and peace studies in addition to components focusing on diversity, human rights, gender, governance, environment, and media. The contributors to this curriculum envision that these fields are crucial for understanding and implementing positive and sustainable peace education.

WHAT IS A MUSLIM CONTEXT?

This question is of great importance for understanding the rationale and assumptions within this curriculum. A Muslim context refers to the presence of Islam as a religion and as a cultural expression either in dominantly Muslim societies or in other societies where Muslims live or aspire to lead their lives according to Islamic principles or Islamic cultural expressions. Although the interrelation between Islam as a religion and as a cultural expression is usually complex, it is important from methodological and practical points of view to be cognizant of each one's parameters and influences. These concepts will be elaborated on throughout the curriculum.

WHY ISLAMIC PEACE EDUCATION?

First, it is important to dispel two incorrect assumptions: (i) that peace education in Islam is a specific field within peace education; and (ii) that peace education in Islam is distinct from peace education in secular or other religious settings. These assumptions are false and are not held by those who developed this curriculum. There is no specific field of peace education in Islam. Additionally, peace education in Islam is not distinct from peace education in secular or other religious settings, but instead is based on the same pedagogies and principles.

Why, then, does this curriculum focus specifically on *Islamic peace education*? What role does Islam play in peace education? As a religious and cultural expression, Islam provides a specific perspective and various tools, which reinforce and support the foundations and principles of peace education. While some of these tools and perspectives may overlap with those of other religions or secular education, focusing specifically on Islam allows us to consider the unique contributions Islam has to make toward peaceful approaches to conflict. This curriculum is intended to explore and operationalize these tools that exist in the Islamic context in order to effectively deliver to Muslim populations these fundamental and universal messages of peace education.

Further, efforts to develop Islamic peace education models should not be construed as evidence that Muslims need this type of education more than others. It is possible, given

the continuous negative reportage concerning Muslims, e.g., about how violent they are or how violent their religion is, to assume that the development of this curriculum is an effort to remedy such problems. In fact, this curriculum is a model of how peace education is embraced and developed into a curriculum suitable to people belonging to a specific religion and culture. People belonging to all other religions and cultures - secular and non-secular- also develop such curricula, or should be encouraged to do so.

IS PEACE EDUCATION UNIVERSAL?

It has been alluded to in the response to the question above that peace education has universal foundations and principles. Nonviolent approaches to conflict are among the most significant of these principles along with tolerance and peaceful coexistence. However, the expression of these foundations and principles, and the effectiveness of certain pedagogies in delivering a peace education curriculum can vary culturally. This curriculum stays faithful to the foundations and principles of peace education while developing effective pedagogical approaches derived from Islamic sources. Thus, while peace education has universal elements, it can and should be tailored to meet the needs of particular communities and contexts.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING AN ISLAMIC PEACE EDUCATION CURRICULUM?

One major benefit of an Islamic peace education curriculum is the bridging of secular and religious knowledge. The tendency to exclude religion from academic efforts to discuss peace, and the apprehension about the public role of religion, have hindered the exploration of religion's possible contribution to the field of peace education. This effort to build an Islamic peace education curriculum provides an example of how such barriers can be overcome.

Additionally, developing an Islamic peace education curriculum offers credible and alternative sources of information on Islam to those portrayed in mainstream discourse.

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPING AN ISLAMIC PEACE EDUCATION CURRICULUM?

One potentially problematic element that could result from developing a curriculum on this topic is the implication that Muslims and Islam, more than other groups or religions, need peace education; the implication is therefore that Muslims and Islam are inherently more violent or less peaceful than other religions.

Another potentially problematic element is the perception that the development of this curriculum is yet another effort to impose Western values and ways of life on Muslims. As will be explained later, this curriculum encourages the integration and learning between cultures, and in this regard makes the effort to combine advances in the field of peace education with contributions from Islamic sources that would make such education relevant to Muslim settings.

Although these potentially problematic elements offer real reasons to proceed with caution when developing a curriculum of this nature, they are not reasons to abstain from its development. In fact, each of these potentially problematic features offers curriculum developers the opportunity to engage in dialogue and clarify incorrect assumptions with skeptics and critics.

WHO ARE THE RECIPIENTS OF ISLAMIC PEACE EDUCATION?

At this stage, this curriculum is intended for graduate-level university students and teachers, madrassas, and civil society participants. It contains the knowledge and information needed to develop pedagogical approaches suitable to different audiences. At the November 2007 curriculum development workshop in Yogyakarta, Indonesia educators from madrassas and universities in South and Southeast Asia combined their efforts to produce relevant pedagogies and lesson plans that would be effective in their own settings with their audiences. We hope that, in future, more pedagogy will be developed to reach wider audiences through the media and other public forums.

WHAT STRATEGIES CAN BE USED TO OVERCOME RESISTANCE TO PEACE EDUCATION?

Despite its intention to promote and educate for peace, peace education is resisted and critiqued by some who are skeptical of its roots/intentions. The most significant argument against peace education is that it is a Western product intended to dilute Islam or to impose Western values. One strategy to address such resistance has been the involvement of primarily Muslim scholars of peace and conflict resolution in the development of this curriculum. Another has been the involvement of Muslim religious scholars with their academic counterparts. A third strategy is to engage those who will actually use the curriculum in their formal and informal educational settings to develop the pedagogies and lesson plans. Finally, and perhaps of most significance, is the reliance on Islamic sources and conventional interpretations to support foundations and principles of peace education.

WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION PEDAGOGY?

EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION AS KEY PRINCIPLES:

Peace education embraces the notion of empowerment via education. Empowerment refers to the individual and group growth as independent thinkers and actors informed by principles of peace. Such empowerment is possible if the concept of learning, especially in the field of peace education, is understood and applied to engage teachers and students, and to draw on their experiences and engage them in constructive pedagogies which challenge them to discover and use their potential to promote peace.

ADVANTAGES OF PARTICIPATORY, COLLECTIVE, INTERACTIVE APPROACHES:

Those who have been exposed to peace education processes of participation and interaction recognize the transformative effects they have on individuals and groups.

These approaches directly nurture the basic human need for recognition and build on individuals' potential to contribute and to be effective members of their communities. These approaches also ensure that relevant real-life experiences that matter to the learning community are explored and addressed. By doing this, the learning becomes relevant to learners' lives and provides them with a space to learn and share peaceful approaches. Of course, such interactive and participatory approaches do not exclude the use of other pedagogies that rely on the knowledge and experience of the educator, but they do provide the educator with creative approaches to deliver her/his knowledge and experiences in ways that can best inform and enrich the learning community.

ROOTS OF THESE APPROACHES IN ISLAMIC CULTURE:

Islamic culture carries a mixed bag of participatory and hierarchical learning approaches. Principles of "*Shura*" and examples from the early Islamic era where meritocracy dictated leadership and space was allowed for sharing experiences and learning are abundant and are included in this curriculum. However, it is also important to recognize that educational institutions especially those operating in the religious context of Muslim societies, have grown accustomed to top-down approaches with little space for interaction or participation.

USING THESE APPROACHES IN ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS ISSUES:

Islamic peace education combines religious issues with real life challenges to peace and provides peaceful approaches to these challenges. As mentioned earlier, where religious scholarship was needed to validate the religious elements of this curriculum, religious scholars were consulted and conventional interpretations of the sources were used. However, there will always be areas where disagreements exist on religious matters while working with a peace education curriculum. Such disagreements are seen as opportunities for educators to instill the principles of peaceful coexistence and respect for the other. Using interactive and participatory approaches to learn about religious matters can appear on the surface to be contradictory. That said several of those who contributed to the development of this curriculum have tested successfully the use of interactive participatory approaches to address religious matters and their relation to real-life situations, hence making religious peace education relevant to their own experiences. Several of these approaches will be suggested in the process of developing lesson plans and pedagogies.

I. METHODOLOGY

By Amr Abdalla

CHAPTER I: METHODOLOGY

Methodology holds a central position in any discipline. However within the context of Islam and Qur'an it becomes immensely important to explore and interpret with a sound methodology, having its roots in Islamic principles and values. Therefore this session is designed to provide a basic framework of methodology employed within the context of Islamic peace and conflict resolution. It defines methodology, introduces the foundation of Islamic methodology in peace and conflict resolution. Various activities are introduced for students to make the learning process interactive. This session also focuses on the western developed models and explains the principles and mechanisms involved in them. In the end the session elaborates on the methodology principles that guided the development of "Peace Education: Islamic Perspectives" curriculum and were integrated in both research and curriculum.

SESSION I: EXPLORING METHODOLOGY AND ITS VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand the meaning and need for methodology
- To recognize the need for peace education from an Islamic perspective
- To understand basic principles of human existence in Islam; equality, justice, and freedom

KEY CONCEPTS

- Methodology: the meaning and need
- Methodology in relation to peace education from an Islamic perspective
- Parameters: *Fiqh* and cultural and traditional aspects
- Islamic culture and Islamic theory

TEACHING AIDS: Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials

TIMEFRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE: Understanding the need for methodology

TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: The resource person should be a credible individual with a strong knowledge base of Islamic *Sharia*

METHOD:

- Split the class into smaller groups of 5-8

- Share the following Qur'anic verse (either by copying it on the board or by photocopying and distributing it)

"They ask you about the spoils, say: The spoils belong to God and to the messenger. So fear God and settle your differences" from Chapter Eight of the Qur'an, entitled 'The *Spoils'*.

Initiate the discussion by asking students what these "spoils" are. Ask the students to brainstorm if they are able to understand the verse as it is shared with them.

This activity will highlight the importance of understanding different Qur'anic texts in context. The verse above seems opaque if not read in context. Commentators inform us that this is a reference to war spoils gained after the Battle of Badr (624 AD), the first and highly successful confrontation between the Muslims and their opponents. Without knowing this, one cannot understand the meaning and purpose of this verse. Similarly, the discussion will also familiarize students with the importance of and need to understand the methodology and different sources behind the verse.

ACTIVITY 1: EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY METHODOLOGY

Share the following scenario with the students and encourage them to share their opinions and views on this contemporary situation. Ensure that students listen attentively, and never negate what is shared in this activity. Create an open and welcoming space. Consider the following scenario:[*]

Aliya is an old Muslim woman. Her age is 85 years and she lives in a small house in Jakarta. She lives alone, her husband died ten years ago. Aliya has always wished to go for a holy pilgrimage to Mecca. All her life she has been saving her money for Hajj, however now that she has saved the money, she has been told by the authorities managing Hajj program in Indonesia that she cannot go for Hajj alone. She needs to have a Mehram accompanying her according to Islamic laws, which prohibits a woman to travel alone. The authorities shared with her rules and regulations of hajj and narrated Islamic traditions that assert the impermissibility of a woman travelling without a Mehram. Aliya argues that women in Jakarta and all over the Islamic world today travel alone without a Mehram, due to the advancement in transport and communication technologies but of no use.

Discuss the following questions:

- Can we apply traditional methodology to this contemporary situation?
- In this situation, what sort of a contemporary methodology is needed to provide a solution for Aliya?
- Encourage students to share similar situations that might need a contemporary methodology, and elicit discussion.

ACTIVITY 2: CLASS DISCUSSION

Before initiating formal presentations, discuss with students how peace and conflict resolution within the Islamic setting moves the focus toward an interdisciplinary realm of research. The focus of peace and conflict research is rather broad, encompassing culture, history, sociology, and psychology. All these areas are complex and manifest interplay of

[*] In Islam Mehram for a woman is any man, with whom she has a blood relationship that precludes marriage, is considered a Mahram to her.

values, beliefs, customs, and traditions which eventually have an impact on the methodology. To elicit students' views on how they view methodology and its different functions, ask the following questions. It is a guided discussion where a set of questions is developed by the teacher to start the discussion.

- What do you do when you face a problem?
- Can you reach a solution/conclusion without a methodology?
- Can you have value-free methodology?

PRESENTATION

In general, **methodology** refers to a systematized set of principles and practices that are employed in a certain discipline or field of research. Islamic methodology follows this definition, but it refers specifically to the methodology that is employed to: understand the Qur'an; understand the *sunnah;* authenticate the *sunnah*; understand the role of *itjihad* (independent, informed reasoning); understanding the role of *qiyas* (analogy); understand the role of *'ijma* (consensus); understand the role of accepted practices; understand the context, and understand the relationship between all of the different sources of knowledge.

Islamic methodology has a rich and long history that stretches back to the time and practices of the Prophet (*pbuh*). There are disagreements over some aspects of methodology, and this has contributed to the development of different legal schools, *mathahib*.

FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAMIC METHODOLOGY IN THE FIELD OF PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION[*]:

In developing models for peace and conflict resolution within the Islamic setting, it is important to recognize two methodological parameters with regard to peace and conflict research.

First, the discussion of peace and conflict resolution within the Islamic setting removes the focus of the research from the realm of jurisprudence to the realm of interdisciplinary research. The focus of peace and conflict research is no longer to make legal interpretations and set precedents, as was traditionally done. Legal interpretation and precedent setting, known in Islamic heritage as *fiqh*, have been practiced by legal scholars for centuries. However, *fiqh* (legal interpretation and precedent setting) becomes part of broader research, which encompasses culture, history, sociology, and psychology.

[*] The main concepts in this subsection were adapted from: Abdalla, Amr. "Principles of Islamic Interpersonal Conflict Intervention: A Search within Islam and Western Literature." *Journal of Law and Religion*. V. 15. Fall 2000.

EXAMPLE:

The Qur'an provides several rules related to divorce situations and conditions. Usually these Qur'anic verses include four elements: 1) A description of a divorce situation; 2) A rule related to a certain aspect of the divorce (i.e., financial arrangements as a result of the divorce, custody or nursing children); 3) A description of the civility and mannerism which parties should maintain during the process of divorce; 4) and, a reminder to the parties that they are accountable to their Creator for their actions.

Fiqh usually focuses on the first two elements: the situation and the rule: together they make an Islamic law. Research in peace and conflict resolution, on the other hand, attempts to maximize the benefit to the parties of applying not only the first two elements, but also the third and fourth elements, which relate to morality, justice, and accountability. Research on peace and conflict resolution, thus, attempts to *operate within the larger Islamic worldview*, not just within its traditional legal system. The second methodological parameter emphasizes the *social justice and social change* functions of peace and conflict resolution in relation to Islamic theory and Islamic culture. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between *Islamic theory* consisting of the main sources of Islam: *the Qur'an and Sunnah*, and *Islamic culture*, which has developed over centuries of integrating Islamic theory with cultural and traditional practices in different parts of the world. In interpreting several of the Qur'anic verses and Hadith related to women, it is fundamentally important to recognize the Qur'anic emphasis on the equality of gender in terms of creation, action and accountability[*]. This foundation sets the stage for a proper understanding of several matters that have been misinterpreted for centuries.

Consider the following example:

Several Islamic scholars tended to emphasize certain segments of Qur'anic verses while almost ignoring others, resulting in subjugating women and reinforcing male domination. Interpretations which loosely licensed polygamy, and which excluded women from public life, are abundant in Fiqh books.

The example above shows that this distinction is vital because Islamic culture does not necessarily follow its sources in Islamic theory. The mixing of Islamic theory with elements of existing cultures has often deprived Islam of its egalitarian, democratic drive. Abuses of power by Islamic rulers, and abuses against women and minorities were, at times, triggered by tribal and traditional norms, which overshadowed the pure Islamic message or forced extreme interpretations of the sources in order to justify these

[*] Amina Wadud-Muhsin, Qur'an and Women. Malaysia, p.34-36. Penerbit Fajar Bakti Sdn. Bhd. 1992.

practices. If dispute resolution as a social movement is considered an agent for social change,[*] it will be the responsibility of Islamic peace and conflict resolution professionals to restore the Islamic principles of equality, justice and freedom through their practice. Therefore, it is necessary to adhere only to Islamic sources, using interpretations that are consistent with the spirit of Islam.

USING WESTERN DEVELOPED MODELS:

If the challenge for peace and conflict resolution professionals in the West is against persistent racism, discrimination, and capitalist injustice[†], for Muslims the challenge is to restore justice and equality by liberating Islam from the doctrine and cultural elements that have subjugated its followers politically and socially. Cross-cultural analysis of models of conflict analysis and resolution requires an understanding of the prevalent cultural values and norms in a given society. Lederach provides an example of how his attempts to implement a North American[‡] inter-personal conflict model in South America revealed to him the numerous cultural assumptions embedded in every aspect of the model[§]. From defining issues, to the concept of neutrality, from the proper entry of a third party, to the procedures, from communicating to generating options, the North American model for interpersonal conflicts seemed too 'Yankee' for the indigenous South American. More profoundly, Lederach recognized the underlying North American cultural emphasis upon the individual and upon independence:

> We assume a large degree of autonomy and individualism. This may be the most important assumption. We expect people to be responsible for resolving their own conflicts. That is an empowering thing, but it assumes a strong emphasis on the "I" and a weak emphasis on the "We". There are many people in the world that have a strong emphasis on the "We". They are not autonomous decision makers but are closely integrated with the wider social network. It is within that network that decisions are made.[**]

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[*] Jim Laue and Gerald Cormick. *The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes*. In The Ethics of Social Intervention. Bermant, G. et al (eds). Halsted Press. 1978. D.C., p.219

[†]. Jim Laue and Gerald Cormick. *The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes*. In The Ethics of Social Intervention. Bermant, G. et al (eds). Halsted Press. 1978. D.C., p.219-225.

[‡] . What is labeled the North American Model of Conflict resolution reflects the initial efforts in the field dating back to ten years ago. Many of the concepts in that model which emphasized a strong sense of individual autonomy and a heavy focus on self interest have undergone serious modifications in the past decade. Advances in the studies of communication, relationships, community, and effects of culture and gender differences caused most authors to develop models that are less "individualistic", and which take into account relationships, community interest, and cultural differences. The new editions of "The Mediation Process" by Chris Moore (1996), and "Interpersonal Conflict" by Hocker and Wilmot (1996) illustrate these changes, especially when compared to the earlier editions that were written in the 1980's or early 1990's.

[§] John Paul Lederach, *Cultural Assumptions of the North American Model of Mediation: From a Latin American Perspective*, 4 Conflict Resolution Notes, n3, January 1987, p.24.

[**] Ibid

In the case Lederach related, it becomes obvious that models for conflict analysis and resolution that were developed to reflect social values of individualism and autonomy in one society were not applicable to societies that did not share the same values and foundational norms. The implications for cross-cultural transfer of social models such as the conflict resolution model are both explicit and implicit. One explicit implication is that transferring an institutional model based on specific norms and values in a certain society may not prove to be effective in another society. Such transfer also has implicit implications:1) It may force a change (desired or not) into the "import" society, by requiring that society adjust to the model and; It may deprive the import society of the opportunity to design models based on its own unique norms and values.

DESIGNING CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH MODELS:

The discussion above highlights the significance of cultural norms and values to the building of conflict resolution institutions. It also emphasizes the need to acknowledge, preserve, and improve on existing indigenous models that have proven effective conflict resolution mechanisms. These assumptions raise questions about "how?" following which one can design research models to explore and explain conflict patterns in different cultures. Does one "reinvent the wheel" every time one researches one society or another? Or is it possible to draw upon existing research models? A review of the literature on these matters shows that theorists on all sides seem to agree on the usefulness of adapting already developed models to new situations.[*] The usefulness stems from the adaptation process itself. In that process, researchers attempt to adjust the existing model to fit the research needs of another setting. In doing so, cultural and methodological shortcomings become apparent, thus highlighting the differences that a researcher must take into consideration when applying the model. Ultimately, through the adaptation process, a new model emerges that contains elements of the original model and new elements developed in order to account for the unique conditions in the setting to be researched. Augsburger[†] distinguished between two approaches to cross cultural analysis:

- ***The Emic Approach***: "The 'emic' approach describes a cultural phenomenon in terms of its own units.

- ***The Etic Approach***: The 'etic' approach imposes categories that are external to the phenomenon."

The tendency in this research is to move toward an "emic" approach. However, with the lack of developed "emic" tools to analyze conflicts in Islamic settings, it seems proper to start the process using etic models, while continuing throughout the research process to refine and enhance the models in order to capture any aspects of conflicts that are not accounted for using an external model. In fact, using an "etic" model developed in the

[*] In this case, the models are developed in the West, and are being adapted for use in an Arabic/Islamic setting.

[†] David Augsburger, Conflict Mediation Across Cultures. Westminster/John Knox. 1992. KY, p.35.

United States, and refining it through the research process, may prove to be more helpful than attempting to develop an all-new Islamic model. One advantage is that such a model will help in contrasting conflict models across the two societies. It could also help in developing more encompassing tools that account for differences across several cultures. Berry recognized the usefulness of such an approach:

> Modification of our external categories must...be made in the direction of the system under study, until we eventually achieve a truly emic description of behavior within that culture. That is, an emic description can be made progressively altering the imposed etic until it matches a purely emic point of view; if this can be done without entirely destroying or losing all of the etic character of the entry categories, then we can proceed to the next step. If some of the etic is left, we can now note the categories or concepts which are shared by the behavior system we knew previously and the one we have just come to understand emically. We can now set up a derived etic which is valid for making comparisons between behavior settings and we have essentially resolved the problem of obtaining a descriptive framework valid for comparing behavior across behavioral settings.[*]

On the Islamic side, social researchers have raised two issues related to conducting social research in an Islamic context using tools developed in the West.

The first issue relates to whether tools developed in the West can be used in non-Western Islamic contexts. The response to this issue is quite similar to the statements discussed earlier from Augsburger and Berry. Similarly, Muslim social researchers recognize the usefulness of applying Western-developed tools to research in the Islamic context. However, they also realize that in the process of adapting the tools to the Islamic reality, modifications will be necessary until a new more conducive tool is finally developed, which will contain elements of the original tool, and the emerging ones. Elmissery[†], for example, stated:

[*] [*] James Berry, *On Cross-Cultural Comparability*, 1 International Journal of Psychology, 1966, p.124.
[†] Abdel-Wahab Elmissery, *Doctrine of Bias*. In The Question of Bias. Elmissery (eds). The International Institute of Islamic Thought. 1997. VA. (in Arabic), p.10

We (Arab Islamic social researchers) recommend that a research design be as follows:

1. Provide a theoretical introduction to the issue of research bias [from a cultural standpoint], first in general, then in the specific field of study;
2. Utilize the "biased" model to illustrate the extent of its limitations because of its over-emphasis on certain elements, or its under-estimation of elements that are rather important [in the Islamic context];
3. Define a refined research tool and apply it, explaining the reason for selecting it;
4. Provide the findings of the research, comparing the explanation and prediction effectiveness of each research tool.

Elmissery then used the theory of modernization to illustrate his points. He argued that using Western-developed tools to assess the modernity of a certain society will likely result in "tunnel vision" with respect to economic and technological aspects such as number of highways, work hours, etc. But such tools might neglect to assess the existence of family unity or the positive role of religion in ensuring a certain level of civility and humanity. Consequently, he concluded that a researcher of modernity in an Islamic context would have to reassess the concepts of modernity specific to the Western experience, and search for concepts that do not judge the Islamic reality "through Western lenses, but attempt to understand that reality based on its own components."[*]

The second issue that Islamic researchers have discussed in this context is the existence of two conditions in Western-developed research models: universal conditions and specific conditions. The universal conditions are those that are found in all societies; while the specific conditions are the ways in which the universal conditions present themselves in each culture or society. Hussein addressed this issue in discussing the relationship between the universal and the specific and states "We (Muslim social researchers) can accept concepts and analytical units such as: class, elite, social stratification, nation, social equilibrium, social preferences, planning, etc., [although] they belong to different Western schools of thought. These concepts or units are universal in nature, but [when applied to the Islamic setting] will include contents that are specific to our independent theoretical model which is influenced by our social reality.[†]

Islamic methodology demands an in-depth knowledge of the sources, including Qur'an, *hadith, 'ijma, qiyas* and *ijtihad.* Such knowledge includes extensive understanding of the

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[*] Ibid p.10-11

[†] Ahmad Hussein, *Bias in Western Social Schools of Thought: Our Heritage is the Point of Departure for Development*. In The Question of Bias. Elmissery (eds). The International Institute of Islamic Thought. 1997. VA. (in Arabic), p.108.

intricacies and nuances of classical Arabic. In addition, knowledge of the sources involves: knowledge of the context and nature of the revelation of the Qur'an; knowledge of the nature, context and authenticity of the *sunnah*; and knowledge of the nature and qualifications of other sources.

RELATIONSHIP OF SOURCES:

Another key aspect of Islamic methodology is the understanding of the relationship of the sources. Relationship here refers to the degree of primacy and authenticity of each source in relation to the others. It also refers to which sources are held to be more authoritative than others, and therefore serve as the final source in cases of contradiction. All Muslims agree that the Qur'an is the primary, constitutive and most authentic source; the Qur'an is protected by Allah. The majority agrees that the *ahadith* are a secondary, explanatory source. The *ahadith* are not completely authentic, and therefore they are subjected to methodological scrutiny, including comparison and reference to the Qur'an in cases of contradiction or inconsistency. It must be acknowledged that various groups have different opinions regarding the relationship of the secondary sources, including the *ahadith*, *qiyas, 'ijma* and *itjihad***.**

CONTEXT:

Context refers to the specific situation in which a part of the Qur'an was revealed. It also refers to the specific situation in which the Prophet (*pbuh*) took action, made a statement or gave tacit approval. In addition to the specific situation, context also has to do with the larger picture of the environment, culture/tradition, knowledge base and experience of people during a specific era or in a geographical area. Context is a necessary component of methodology because it facilitates understanding, interpretation and distinction between universals and specifics. This is important in regard to the revelation of the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet (*pbuh*), and it is also important in relation to the different scholars and *mathahib*.

ISLAMIC VALUES/WORLDVIEW:

As will be explained in chapter five on identity and diversity, a sound grounding in and understanding of the worldview and its values is vital to methodology because it provides an interpretative guide, as well as a guide to which to negate and dismiss fabrications that contradict basic principles. This helps illustrate the larger picture.

SIMPLISTIC DUALISM OF HALAL AND HARAM:

An understanding of Islamic methodology can help one avoid the simplistic dualism of permitted, *halal* and forbidden, *haram*. This dualism negates the complexities of legal and non-legal rulings and guidance, all of which are determined against a spectrum that includes not only *halal* and *haram*, but other gradations such as encouraged and discouraged. Oversimplifications can be risky in thought and in practice, and they also neglect the rich tradition and purpose of Islamic methodology.

OVEREMPHASIS ON LEGALISM:

Frequently, there is overemphasis on the legal aspects of sources and the legal rulings of various scholars. While these are important aspects of the Islamic tradition, one should be careful not to neglect other guidance provided by primary sources and scholars.

TRADITION/CULTURE:

Tradition refers to inherited ways of thinking and acting. Traditions can be thought of as the norms of society. Everyone has traditions, and religion is frequently one component of tradition. A problem arises when these traditions are confused with Islam. Many people are inclined to follow traditions, which are sometimes given equal or greater weight than Islam. Those who come from cultures where Islam is deeply embedded in their traditions are often unaware of the distinction between Islam and tradition; they may believe that many traditional practices are part of Islam, while in fact those practices may even violate Islamic principles. From an Islamic perspective, this is a very serious and problematic issue. Failing to differentiate between tradition and Islam can lead to transgressions and unnecessary hardships. It is essential to distinguish between Islam and other traditions because failing to do so can cause a perversion of Islam. Islam allows for and promotes the maintenance and practice of diverse cultural traditions and norms, so long as they do not violate the tenets of Islam and are not given a role equal to or greater than Islam. People should give tradition its rightful place in their lives and recognize and respect its value, but they must also maintain an awareness of the line between Islam and tradition.

ACTIVITY 3: CLASS DISCUSSION

After the presentation of an Islamic worldview and Islamic principles related to methodology by the teacher, students should now practice applying these concepts and lessons learned to critically analyze contemporary Islamic practices. Consider the following activity:

Method:

Step One

- Introduce and lead the activity
- Divide the students into small groups and give each group a copy of articles from the local newspapers/magazines related to contemporary Islamic practices
- Instruct the students to analyze the articles keeping in view the concepts and lessons learned during the presentation
- Students should be able to critically analyze whether or not current Islamic practices follow Islamic principles and an Islamic worldview
- Invite each group to present their analyses in a bigger group

Step Two

- Lead a discussion
- Discuss the analysis presented by students especially where there are differences in response among the groups, or if they find discrepancies between Islamic principles and current Islamic practices

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes, have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: what did you learn over the course of the methodology session? Did the presentation on different worldviews help you in connecting learning across different world views? Do you find yourself using inventive methodology inspired by Islamic principles in your daily life conflicts? What were the strongest lessons learned? After 10-15 minutes, lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts that participants might wish to share.

EVALUATION

Have the students write an essay on how in their context Islamic theory is influenced by traditional and cultural practices instead of Islamic sources. (*It can be a situation concerning popular beliefs about Islamic theory)*

REQUIRED READINGS

- Abdalla, Amr. Principles of Islamic Interpersonal Conflict Intervention: A Search within Islam and Western Literature. Journal of Law and Religion. V. 15. Fall 2000.
- Augsburger, David. *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures*. Westminster/John Knox, 1992. KY.
- Berry, James. *On Cross-Cultural Comparability*, 1 International Journal of Psychology, 1966.
- Brown, Daniel. *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

II. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PEACE AND CONFLICT

By Amr Abdalla

CHAPTER II: BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PEACE AND CONFLICT

Inevitability of conflict is a much discussed issue. Conflicts occur on daily basis, in various settings and on several levels. Better understanding of any conflict can lead towards a harmonious solution. This chapter introduces the basic concepts of peace and conflict studies and demonstrates how to understand, analyze and intervene in various conflict situations. The chapter is divided in two sessions. A variety of examples and activities will be used to illustrate these points, including examples from different disciplines and regions. Session I has a broad application, focusing on how human beings in general experience, analyze and manage conflict. Session II with the help of class activities and formal presentation provides the theoretical background, skills and knowledge to help understand and analyze conflicts, and also offers conflict management tools for people who are subject to or engaged in conflict. This session is designed to introduce students to the field of peace and conflict studies, and both traditional and new social science paradigms that build foundations for theories, models and praxis of approaches to contemporary social conflict, which envision peaceful social change. It will consider major assumptions about the nature of peace and conflict, as well as causes and levels of conflict. Thus, session I and II are intrinsically linked – together providing the general foundation and necessary case studies to apply and analyze peace and conflict issues.

SESSION I: DEFINING PEACE AND CONFLICT

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Understand the basic definitions of peace and conflict
- Understand the meaning of key concepts relating to conflict theory
- Understand the difference between various conflict levels
- Lay the foundation for conflict analysis and conflict resolution/transformation strategies
- Introduce and popularize peace and conflict studies among students
- Understand the basic concepts of peace and conflict
- Analyze conflict situations
- Contribute to the creation of peaceful societies
- Creatively address/handle conflict situations

KEY CONCEPTS

- Conflict is a normal way of human behavior and bears specific functions (e.g., indicates that changes are required, initiates discussions and action)
- Peace is a framework within which conflict develops nonviolently
- Types of conflict (e.g., personal, family, gender, class, ethnic, religious)
- Geographical typology of conflict (localized, regional, national, international)
- Causes of conflict (e.g., prevailing patriarchal values, structural inequality)
- CR SIPABIO model of conflict analysis

TEACHING AIDS: DVD of a presentation of CR SIPABIO (available from UPEACE), handouts of specific conflict cases (make sure the handouts include sufficient data to allow for substantive analysis by students), Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Before beginning the formal presentation on defining peace and conflict, let the students participate in reflecting on their perceptions of peace and conflict.

OBJECTIVE: To explore different perceptions of peace and conflict

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words, organize words by their relevance to various elements of CR SIPABIO (below) so that you can refer to them later during your presentation on CR SIPABIO

METHOD: Ask the students to share what comes to mind when they think of peace and of conflict. Based on the size of class, choose one of the following activities:

- Ask students to visualize with a drawing what comes to mind when they think of peace and of conflict
- Ask students to share words that come to mind when they think of peace and of conflict

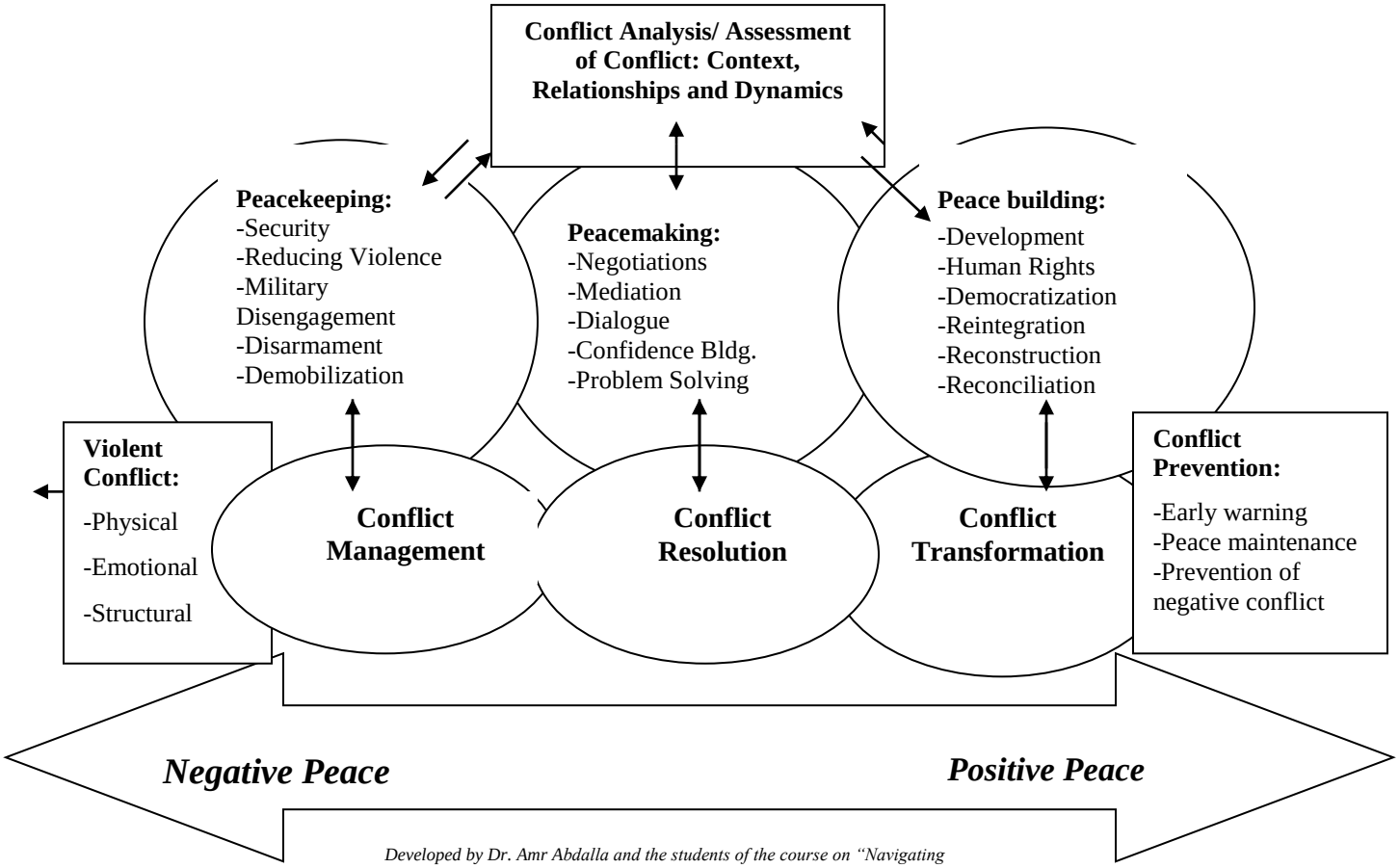
Once the activity is done, lead a group discussion using their different answers to the questions as a basis for understanding peace and conflict and the different perceptions of them. The discussion will explore how different cultural and geographical background and religious beliefs have an effect on how individuals perceive peace and conflict. Finish the warm up activity with sharing the drawings, words, songs, proverbs or sayings that students offered as examples of peace and conflict within their own culture.

PRESENTATION

Once students have reflected on how they perceive peace and conflict, and have developed an understanding of the various perspectives of what peace and conflict might entail we will proceed towards formal definition of peace, conflict and associated concepts. However before this we need to have an overview of peace and conflict, illustrated through the diagram below. The terms and concepts displayed in the "Overview of Peace & Conflict Studies" diagram will be explained and discussed in detail within session II. This diagram will serve as a framework throughout the curriculum and pieces will appear in color to indicate the section being analyzed.

The diagram is constructed as a spectrum with violent conflict positioned on the far left and conflict prevention on the far right. Negative and positive peace coincide with violent conflict and conflict prevention, thus serving as a guideline to locate what type of peace is being achieved during a particular stage of conflict or in a post-conflict period. Peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace building each have their distinct characteristics; however these processes intersect with one another and together shape and inform peace processes. Likewise, conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation are linked to the various peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building stages, and they too intersect. As one reads through the definitions, explanations and examples provided for these concepts it is important to consider this diagram and recognize the ways in which peace and conflict processes are not independent entities, but rather the ways in which they link to one another as steps in a larger process.

OVERVIEW OF PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES



Developed by Dr. Amr Abdalla and the students of the course on "Navigating Cultures for Peace building." Eastern Mennonite University, Summer 2005.

WHAT IS PEACE?

Peace is defined as a political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal institutions, practices, and norms. Several conditions must be met for peace to be reached and maintained:

- A balance of political power among various groups within a society, region, or, most ambitiously, the globe;
- Legitimacy for decision makers and implementers of decisions in the eyes of their respective group as well as those of external parties duly supported through transparency and accountability;
- Recognized and valued interdependent relationships among groups fostering long term
- Cooperation during periods of agreement, disagreement, normality, and crisis;
- Reliable and trusted institutions for resolving conflict;
- A sense of equality and respect, in sentiment and in practice, within and without groups and in accordance with international standards;

- Mutual understanding of rights, interests, and intents, and flexibility despite incompatibilities.

Notoriously elusive, peace connotes more than a mere absence of war or hostilities; an absence of conflict is impossible. In addition, the state of peace should be distinguished from techniques that simply avoid conflicts or employ violent or coercive approaches to engage in, manage, or resolve them.

Deriving from the Latin *pax*, peace in the Western world is generally considered a contractual relationship that implies mutual recognition and agreement. Understandings of peace throughout the world, however, evidence a much deeper comprehension of peace in relation to the human condition, which also includes inner peace. The comprehensive understanding of peace outlined above extends beyond what are referred to as positive conceptions of peace but acts in accordance with them as well. This is in contrast to negative conceptions of peace, which are described most commonly as the mere absence of war or violent conflict.

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

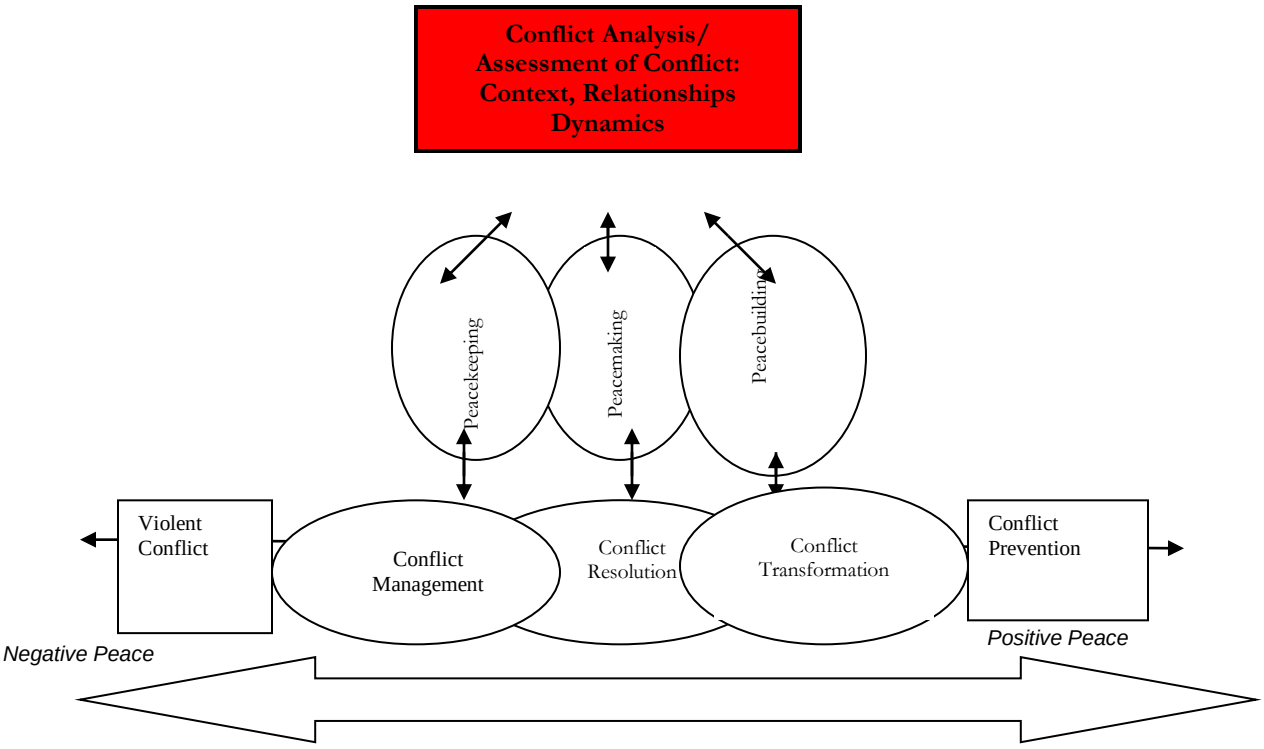
Following are three main definitions of conflict:

- Conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two independent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources and interference from the other parties in achieving their goals.[*]
- Conflict means perceived divergence of interests, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously.[†]
- Conflict is any situation in which two or more social entities or parties perceive that they possess mutually incompatible goals.[‡]

Some major premises in the study of conflict are:

1. Conflict is a natural part of life.
2. It occurs on various levels, from interpersonal, to family, to organizational, to community, to nation, and globally.
3. It is not always negative; if dealt with constructively conflict can lead to positive transformations.

[*] William Wilmot and Joyce Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hills, 1998), 34.
[†] Rubin, Jeffrey, Dean Pruitt, and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 5.
[‡] Christopher Mitchell, "The Process and Stages of Mediation." In *Making War and Waging Peace: Foreign Intervention in Africa,* ed. David Smock (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993), 17.



Conflict analysis and conflict components will now be discussed illustrated by the red highlighted section of the diagram above.

THE C.R. SIPABIO MODEL OF CONFLICT ANALYSIS:

Each of these definitions includes important elements for understanding conflicts. When thinking of conflict analysis, it is important to recognize three factors:

1. Conflicts do not exist in a vacuum - they are influenced by various contextual factors, such as culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.
2. Often conflicts occur within a relationship - the relationship usually dictates certain dynamics of conflict such as power, bond patterns of behaviour.
3. All conflicts are made of specific elements: sources, issues, parties, attitudes/feelings/perceptions, behaviour, intervention and outcomes.

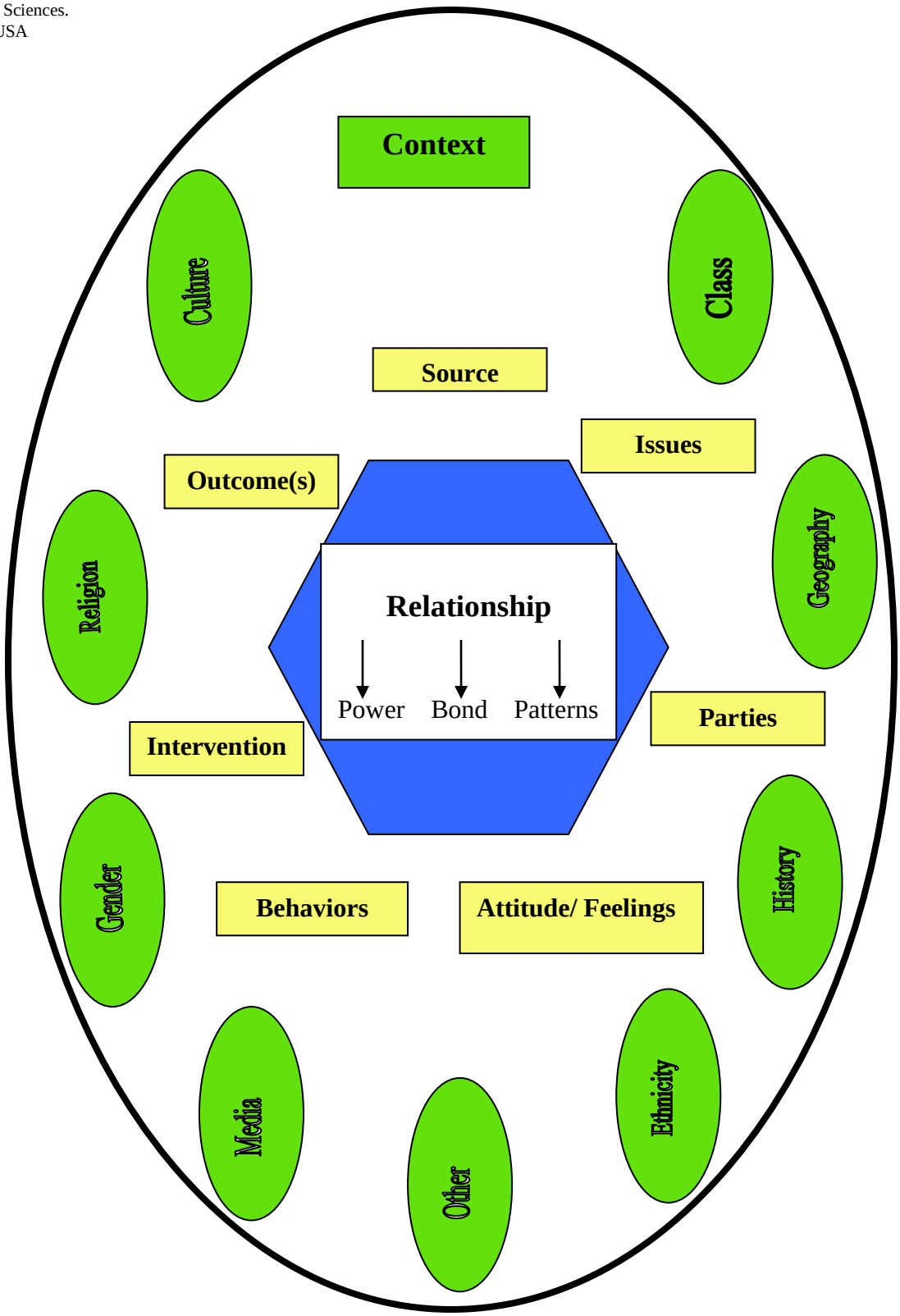
Here, these factors were captured in a model called C.R.SIPABIO - C (for context), R (for relationship), SIPABIO (for sources, issues, parties, attitudes/feelings/perceptions, behavior, intervention, and outcome). This model has been developed to ease analyzing the different stages of the process of resolving a conflict.

See the diagram on the following page for a visual representation of C.R. SIPABIO.

C	**Context**
R	**Relationship**
S	**Sources**
I	**Issues**
P	**Parties**
A	**Attitudes**
B	**Behavior**
I	**Intervention**
O	**Outcome**

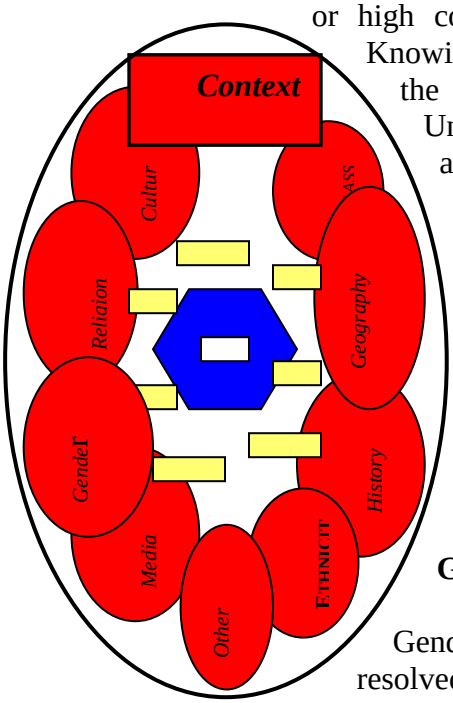
C.R. SIPABIO
A CONFLICT ANALYSIS MODEL

Say Peace: Conflict Resolution Training Manual for Muslim Communities. Amr Abdalla, et al. The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences. Virginia, USA



CONTEXT:

Context is the sociological, economical and political setting in which a conflict takes place. Cultural perspectives, such as one's access to power and whether the culture is low or high context in its structure, also affect perspectives on conflict. Knowing the context enables an intervener to understand and predict the attitudes, behaviors, and the direction of a conflict. Understanding the context prevents an intervener from applying an unsuitable resolution technique that may complicate a conflict rather than resolve it. Examples of contextual factors that may influence conflicts are: history, geography, ethnicity, religion, gender, and media In order to illustrate how context factors operate in conflict situations, following factors will be discussed: gender, ethnicity, religion, and geography, as they emerged within conflicts in the Balkans and Bangladesh. These brief case studies exemplify the intersections between conflict and context factors that shape the nature and expression of conflict**.**



Gender & Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia:[*]

Gender is contextual factor that impacts how conflict is enacted and resolved. Sex and gender are intrinsically linked, and distinctions between the two are often confused. Sex is generally defined as the biological categories of male and female. Gender refers to socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity. For example, a woman's ability to produce eggs and conceive is a biological function related to her sex, while the concept of woman as nurturing, emotional and a caretaker is a socially constructed gender role. Likewise, a man's ability to produce sperm and impregnate a woman is a biological function related to his sex, while the notion of man as strong, logical and a provider is a socially constructed gender role. In other words, gender is the socially constructed expression of sex.

Significantly, gender shapes the ways people think, behave, and construct their identities. Gender also influences interactions between people. Notions of masculinity and femininity are not static, but rather vary depending upon the time, geographical region, religion, ethnicity, etc. in which these constructions emerge. Significantly, regardless of the factors that shape gender, notions of gender are policed and reinforced by a set of social penalties and rewards in all societies. Although these penalties and rewards vary contextually, it is important to recognize that men and women who challenge gender proscriptions face negative consequences in all societies.

Gender is also a key factor in many different types of conflict. Gender can influence how and why violence is enacted against a group of people and it can serve to unify and/or

[*] This section on "Gender & Conflict: Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia" was written for this curriculum by Allison Antenello.

divide groups. The conflict in the Balkans[*] during the early 1990s provides an interesting case study of how gender and conflict intersect. Specifically, government forces on all sides used gendered propaganda as a tool to achieve military objectives and overpower the opposition.

Prior to and under the leadership of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian government tightly controlled the media. It became a main source of Serbian propaganda during the conflict and women were often placed at the centre of this propaganda. Specifically, women were used as symbols to represent *population growth* and *national vulnerability* in the Serbian state. In the first instance, the Serbian government articulated that women had a national responsibility to act as producers of the Serbian population and Serbian army. State-generated images connecting motherhood and nationalism bombarded Serbians during the conflict period. Women were thus reduced to their reproductive functions and told literally to bear soldiers for the nation as a demonstration of national commitment. In the second instance, crimes committed against women were used to represent crimes committed against the Serbian state. Throughout the conflict, images of raped women and girls appeared on television. These images served to symbolize the invasion of Serbia by opposition forces, thus justifying counterattacks made by Serbia. Images of raped women/nation effectively fuelled hatred amongst ethnic groups and perpetuated the conflict. Importantly, the propaganda used by the Serbian government was utilized similarly by opposing forces in the Balkans.

Symbolism and propaganda were also directly linked to Serbian policies of ethnic cleansing, which targeted Kosovar Albanians, Croats and Bosnians throughout the early 1990s. Ethnic cleansing policies specifically targeted women and girls in the Balkans. In addition to killing, ethnic cleansing involved the systematic rape and impregnation of women and girls. Rape was used as a tool of war with two objectives: 1) to increase the desired population, and 2) to humiliate the opposition. Significantly, these objectives are directly tied to the use of women as symbols of population growth and national vulnerability. As symbols of population growth and national vulnerability, women and girls are viewed as the means by which military forces can achieve their objectives. In the first instance, systematic rape and forced impregnation serve to increase the population of the aggressor and control the growth of targeted populations.[†] In the second instance, because women and girls were used to represent national vulnerability, rape serves as a tool to exploit weakness and demonstrate power over a nation. Thus, women and girls

[*] After World War II, Yugoslavia was comprised of six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia, and two provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo. A variety of ethnicities and religions existed within each of these republics. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the political climate in Yugoslavia changed dramatically. Croatia and Slovenia, wanting self-determination, declared independence from Yugoslavia. Following suit, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina sought secession. Croatian and Slovenian secession lead to war with Serbian rebels, who opposed independence movements. This pattern of secession and war repeated itself in Bosnia in 1992. Nationalism and ethnic divisions increased during this period in the Balkans, fueling ethnic cleansing initiatives taken by all sides, predominantly Serbian forces.

[†] In the context of the Balkan conflict, children resulting from rape were socially recognized as having the ethnic identity of the male perpetrator, rather than the mother. In this way, rape was used to diminish Albanian Kosovar, Croatian and Bosnian populations and increase Serbian populations. Albanian Kosovar, Bosnian and Croatian actors who raped Serbian women applied the same thinking.

were raped to represent a symbolic attack against the opposition. Ultimately, the gender-based violence, which occurred in the Balkans, can be tied directly to gender-based propaganda and symbolism that was used by warring parties. In this way it is clear that gender can be a key factor shaping how conflict evolves.

ETHNICITY, RELIGION AND GEOGRAPHY: THE CASE OF BANGLADESH (1947-1971):

Most conflicts are influenced by more than one contextual factor, and it is this combination that can contribute to the complexity of conflict situations. The case of Bangladesh represents a multiplicity of such factors.

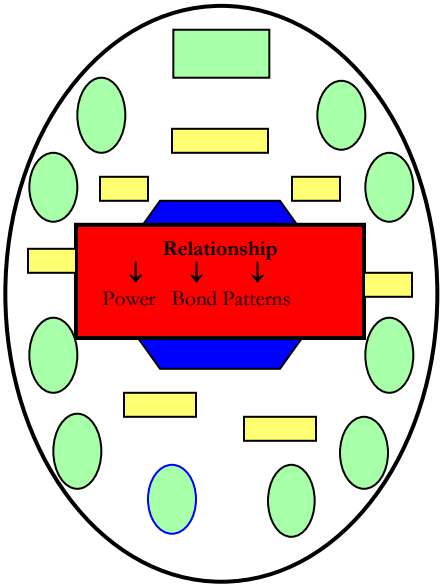
Briefly, as India was gaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, tensions escalated between Muslims and Hindus regarding their ability to co-exist in one nation-state with a majority of Hindus. These tensions led the British to partition India into two states: a Hindu majority India and a Muslim majority Pakistan, which consisted of two wings, East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The territories that had the majority of Muslims were located to the east of India in Bengal dominated by the Muslim Bengali ethnic group, and to the west of India in what is now known as Pakistan and which is dominated by several ethnic groups, but primarily the Punjabis. The Muslims decided to form one nation-state with two geographical areas called East Pakistan (what is now called Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (what is now known as Pakistan) separated by the Indian subcontinent.

The relations between the citizens of the Pakistan reached several boiling points from 1947 to 1971, mainly because of ethnic differences, perceptions of threat to identity and language, feelings of unfairness in resource distribution and governance among Bengalis. Bengalis perceived that their co-nationalists of West Pakistan controlled the government and most resources. When general elections were held in 1970, a Bangladeshi political party – the Awami League - won an absolute majority, which should have allowed it to form the government. However, disagreements with leaders in West Pakistan resulted in a devastating nine-month war. The war ended with the military intervention of India on the side of the Bangladeshis who declared independence from the Pakistan state and declared the birth of their nation, Bangladesh, in 1971.

This conflict demonstrates how contextual factors such as ethnicity, religion, nationalism and geography all play major roles in shaping conflict and its dynamics. In 1947, sharing the same religion was considered to be a strong enough factor to build one nation-state on two territories, separated geographically by an entire subcontinent. Later, however, culture, language and ethnicity proved to be divisive factors, particularly when there was a perception of injustice because of Bengali ethnicity. It is interesting that while geographical distance may have contributed to the development of the conflict between Bengalis and others in West Pakistan, it also contributed to the rapid de-escalation of the violent conflict of 1971. Arguably, the huge distance between the two nations - Pakistan and Bangladesh - prevented any continuation of violent military actions.

RELATIONSHIP:

There are different levels of conflicts: inter-personal and inter-group. *The bond*, attachment or connection within which a conflict exists is vital in determining the type of intervention that needs to be taken. The significance of the relationship bond lies in its cultural meaning. Often, specific relationships in given cultures require that parties play certain roles, and abide by specific rules. The meaning of a bond therefore may influence how people behave in given conflict situations. For example, a son or a daughter's bond to a mother or a father within a traditional collective society will be defined by specific cultural norms, and will provide to parties guidelines and expectations regarding behaviour. The same may be said in terms of the bonds established between leaders of groups and their followers.



Within long relationships, certain dynamics exist that manifest themselves during conflict situations. *Power* is a significant dynamic in many conflict situations. People derive their power in conflict situations usually from contextual factors. For example, disparities in socio-economic class status may determine how parties would relate to each other during a conflict. The same is true regarding gender, certain ethnicities and religious affiliations.

In addition to power, often in conflict situations parties engage in *patterns* of behaviour that are intended to advance their positions. Patterns are certain behaviours that parties resort to frequently during conflict situations.

For example, especially in family conflicts one party may pretend to fall sick when a conflict situation becomes complicated, thus diverting attention to him or herself, and generating guilt among other parties for their role in the conflict. Other patterns may include use of violence or vulgar language to force other parties to succumb to demands. As parties resort to such behaviours frequently they become relationship patterns.

SOURCES:

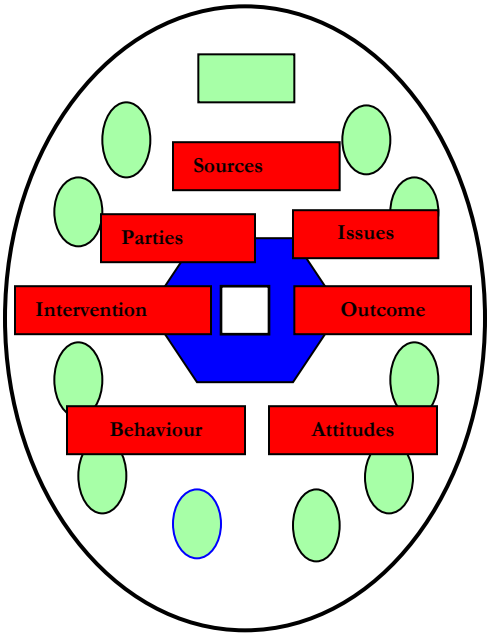
Some sources and causes of conflict according to Moore:[*]

Relationship conflicts are caused by:

- Strong emotions
- Misperceptions or stereotypes

[*] Christopher W. Moore, *The Mediation Process* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 54.

- Poor communication or miscommunication
- Repetitive negative behaviour



Value conflicts are caused by:

- Different criteria for evaluating ideas or behaviour
- Exclusive intrinsically valuable goals
- Different ways of life, ideology, or religion

Structural conflicts are caused by:

- Destructive patterns of behaviour or interaction
- Unequal control, ownership, or distribution of resources
- Unequal power and authority
- Geographical, physical or environmental factors that hinder cooperation
- Time constraints

Interest conflicts are caused by:

- Perceived or actual competition over substantive interests
- Procedural interests
- Physiological interests

Data conflicts are caused by:

- Lack of information
- Misinformation
- Different views on what is relevant
- Different interpretation of data
- Different assessment procedures

ISSUES:

Issues refer to the inter-related interest incompatibilities of adversaries. Issues can be specific tangible interests or aspirations. In many cases incompatible goals lead to issue-related conflicts. For example, with insufficient income, a husband wants to spend money on a new car, while a wife wants to paint the house. In this case the conflict source is the scarcity of resources, while the issues are to buy a car or to paint the house.

Types of issues:

- Issues that arise out of limited resources
- Issues that arise out of the need for continued existence (survival conflict)
- Issues that arise over relationship dynamics (negative dynamics, power issues)
- Issues that arise out of values (belief systems, religious values)

PARTIES:

Those who participate in a conflict are identified as parties. "Parties can be individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or nations".[*]

Parties to a conflict situation may be divided into three categories:

- Primary: Those who have a direct vested interest in the conflict (e.g., husband and wife in a dispute over spending money)
- Secondary: Those who have an indirect interest in the conflict (e.g., the children who are impacted by the parents' conflict behaviour and financial decisions)
- Tertiary: Those who have a distant interest in the conflict (e.g., family relatives and friends who are impacted by conflicts between the husband and wife)

ATTITUDES:

Attitudes refer to the emotions and perceptions influencing parties' behaviour in conflict.

Attitudes include:

- "Positive or negative feeling toward a person or object".[†]
- "Common patterns of expectation, emotional orientation, and perception which accompany involvement in a conflict situation".[‡]
- Perceptions about conflicts, whether it is an activity to be avoided or sought out and whether it is a negative or positive activity, develop over one's lifetime. In this process, refined images or metaphors develop in one's imagination and language that give shape and meaning to conflict episodes.

BEHAVIOUR:

Behaviour refers to parties' actions in conflict situation. Behaviour includes: "Actions undertaken by one party in any situation of conflict aimed at the opposing party with the intention of making that opponent abandon or modify its goals".[§]

INTERVENTION:

Intervention refers to party actions taken with the purpose of reaching a resolution or satisfactory outcome. Conflict intervention can involve an outside third party, not affiliated with either party in the conflict, who become involved with the purpose of helping the parties reach a resolution. The intervening party is distinguished from other participants in the conflict because they get involved for the sole purpose of resolution and do not engage in behaviour that would put them in the camp of either party. This usually will involve neutrality and separation from a personal interest in the outcome of

[*] Rubin, Pruitt, and Kim, 257
[†] ibid., 252
[‡] Mitchell, 28
[§] ibid., 29

the resolution going either way. Intervention usually takes one of the following approaches:

e.g., establish a ceasefire between warring parties

1: Conflict Management: The purpose here is to help conflict parties develop approaches or behaviours that will prevent hostile or violent behaviour. In this case, the intervention does not address the sources of conflict, but focuses on adjusting conflict behaviour and addressing some conflict issues to the extent needed to ensure that parties will avoid hostile or violent behaviour. Such an approach is usually used to reduce contentious behaviour until the situation is ripe for addressing conflict sources and issues.

2: Conflict Resolution: The purpose here is to help parties understand each other's needs, issues and conflict sources, and to assist them in finding solutions that address them. This approach usually follows conflict management activities, and is intended to find lasting arrangements to conflicts. An example is to help the warring factions to discuss their grievances and needs (such as need to acknowledge ethnic identity or access to resources). Resolutions may include giving political autonomy to the ethnic group, or increasing health, education and employment opportunities to an underprivileged group.

e.g., discuss grievances and needs and address issues of autonomy

3: Conflict Transformation: This approach attempts to positively change parties' relationship, conflict attitudes and behaviours. Here the purpose is to help parties to transform their relationship from a conflicted one to an amicable one, by addressing deep-rooted conflict sources and issues. Another purpose is to help parties internalize healthy conflict behaviours that enable them to deal with conflicts on their own. An example is to convene conflict parties in series of problem solving workshops, utilize Truth and Reconciliation Committees, and educate and train parties on conflict transformation techniques.

e.g., Truth & Reconciliation Committees

OUTCOME:

Outcome is the effect of conflict behaviour and/or intervention on the state of conflict. These effects are not always positive. Thus, we need to be aware that an outcome of a conflict is not always a happy one. Outcome depends very much on the capability and seriousness of the parties to resolve a conflict, and the ability of third parties to narrow the gaps between the disputing parties. An outcome is not always an ultimate or final resolution of a conflict; instead it may take the form of a temporary resolution that needs to be worked on.

e.g., Peace Accords

ACTIVITY 1: SMALL GROUP CONFLICT ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE: To enable students to understand the causes, issues, dynamics and impact of the conflict

TIME: 1.5 hours

TEACHING AIDS: Handouts of specific conflict cases make sure the handouts include sufficient data to allow for substantive analysis by students

METHOD:

- Split the class into smaller groups of 5
- Each group would be given a conflict case (usually from newspapers or internet) and map it out
- Mapping means that students try to understand the causes, issues, dynamics and impact of the conflict. Secondly, to understand the roles of parties vis-à-vis each other. Third, to identify specific needs and fears of the parties involved

Using poster paper and utensils, students will conceptually analyze a conflict case study, diagramming actors, primary issues, secondary issues, and attitudes underscoring party positions, behaviors of the parties, contextual conditions, and potential outcomes.

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: what did you learn over the course about peace and conflict? Did CR CIPABIO facilitate you in understanding different elements of conflict? Did the basics of peace and conflict studies help you in understanding the dynamics of peace and conflict? Do you find yourself using conflict analysis tools in your daily conflicts? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Have students keep a reflective journal throughout this session, contemplating and writing on their personal approaches to conflict and the resolution of problems. On the final day of the session, give students the choice to share a reflection with their classmates.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Azar, E. *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Cases.* USA: Dartmouth, 1998.pp. 1-28.
- Burton, J. *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*. London, England: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1990. pp.36-45. 52.
- Coser, L. *The Functions of Social Conflict.* New York, NY: Free Press, 1956.
- Galtung, J. *Peace by Peaceful Means*. London, England: Sage Publications Ltd. 103-113, 1996.

- Lederach, J.P. *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. PA: Good Books, 2003.
- Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and H. Miall. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005. pp 132-184 and 215-230.

SESSION II: CONFLICT LIFE CYCLE, ESCALATION, INTENSITY & APPROACHES TO PEACE

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Discuss how negative attitudes/perceptions escalate conflict
- Understand how various conflict behaviors operate in different conflict settings
- Identify various conflict strategies
- Understand different approaches to peace
- Recognize distinctions between related terms
- Analyze when to use particular approaches to achieve peace
- Explore conflict prevention

KEY CONCEPTS

- Negative attitudes/perceptions
- Conflict escalation
- Conflict behaviors and styles (e.g. accommodating, avoidance, compromising)
- Relationship and distinction between peacekeeping/peacemaking/peace building
- Negative peace and positive peace
- Conflict prevention

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Previously we explored different elements of conflict, by providing the CR SIPABIO model of analysis, now we will be focusing on various levels that a conflict goes through in its life cycle and how they have an impact on the outcome of the conflict. Before formally presenting conflict life cycle, teacher should have the following role play to introduce basic concepts**.**

OBJECTIVE: To explore conflict life cycle, escalation and intensity

TIME: 1 hour

METHOD:

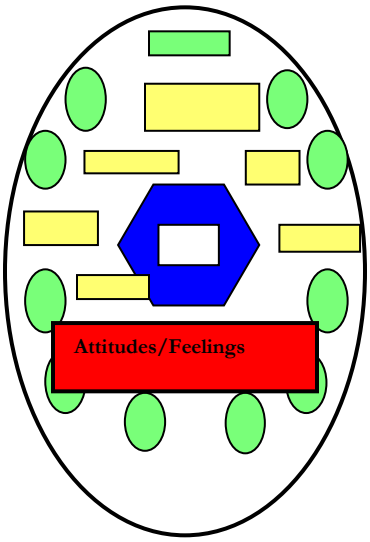
- Role play to include 2-4 students in each group
- Select a conflict situation- likely an inter-personal one

- Develop a scenario or script for the role play. (*It can be something as simple as a fight between brother and sister over using the computer that they both share; teacher can also make use of the scenario described below*).
- Identify roles for some students, and prepare it in a way that shows how a conflict over a specific issue can escalate because of negative emotions, negative attitudes, relationship patterns or power dynamics.
- Ensure that the role play reflects the different types of escalation such as increase in intensity of violent behavior, increase in issues, increase in parties, etc.
- Have students share reflections on what contributed to conflict escalation and de-escalation during the role plays.

PRESENTATION

Once the activity is done, lead a group discussion on how understanding various conflict stages and conflict dynamics is crucial for designing appropriate conflict intervention strategies. Numerous attempts have been undertaken to create a framework for comprehensive conflict analysis including risk assessment schemes, early warning mechanisms, monitoring systems, multiple indicators techniques, structural variables, etc. Then further discuss the following stages of conflict development, focusing on the party - dynamics and behaviours that emerge within these stages.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS IN CONFLICT*



An attitude is a positive or negative feeling toward some person or object. A perception is a belief about, or a way of viewing a person or object (Rubin and Pruitt, 1994). In a conflict situation, this is characterized by the use of aggressive behaviour, parties tend to take actions that inflict harm upon their opponents, and that might maximize their victory. Very often this requires the development of negative attitudes and perceptions that would justify the use of "heavy tactics." Rubin and Pruitt (1994) noted that these negative attitudes and perceptions encourage conflict escalation and discourage the settlement of conflict in seven ways:

- ***Blame*** Negative perceptions and attitudes make it easier to blame opponents for causing unpleasant experiences. Since blame often leads to the adoption of harsh, escalating tactics, this implies that negative attitudes tend to encourage escalation.
- ***Threatening actions*** The opponent is distrusted and his/her ambiguous actions are seen as threatening. This encourages fear and defensive escalation, because the opponent is given little benefit of the doubt or credit for good intentions.

* Note the scenarios presented as example in this chapter are adapted from Library Professionals Curriculum Manual developed by Amr Abdalla, Allison Antenello, and Dr. Samer Sehata

- ***Retaliation*** A party to a conflict is likely to retaliate and aggress against an opponent who is perceived in a negative sense than in a positive one.
- ***Interfering with communication*** People tend to avoid those towards whom they are hostile. This contributes to misunderstandings and hence to the proliferation of conflict issues. It also makes it difficult to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict.
- ***Reduce empathy*** Absence of empathy is like absence of communication in that it fosters misunderstandings. It also encourages escalation by blocking insight into the conflict's negative developments.
- ***Zero-sum thinking*** Zero-sum thinking tends to make problem solving seem like an unworkable alternative. Positions become rigid, and creativity tends to disappear. This makes conflicts hard to resolve and encourages a sense that contentious behaviour is the only way to succeed. Escalation is likely to be the result.
- ***Diabolical enemy*** When negative perceptions grow really severe, opponents come to be viewed as diabolical enemy, and the conflict is seen as a fight between light and darkness, good and evil. In such circumstances, one party to the conflict is ready to blame the other for all that goes wrong, communication often takes a nose dive, empathy is especially weak, and problem solving is extraordinarily hard to sustain. Heavily escalated tactics tend to become the rule and new controversies regularly develop, confirming one party's view of the other, and vice versa.

It is important also to understand that behaviour is a form of communication. Conflict behaviour is a form of bargaining and is designed to influence others behaviour to accept a position or make a decision that is favourable to the party**.** Consider the following scenario:

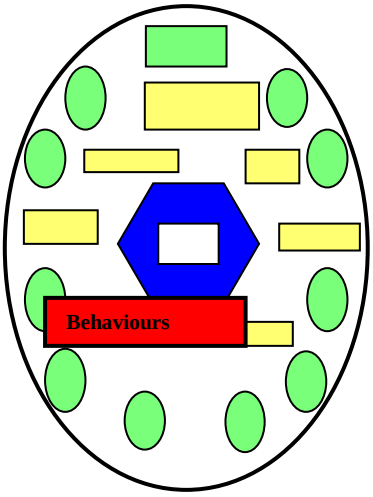
NEGATIVE ATTITUDES/PERCEPTIONS SCENARIO: *A conflict emerges between two university students who enter the computer lab at the same time and discover that there is only one computer available for use. Ali is a fourth-year university Arab-American student, a well known college athlete and an active member of the Muslim Student Association. Angela is a quiet third-year student, concerned about maintaining a high grade point average, which she needs in order to secure an academic scholarship for the following year. Angela is a white woman from a low-income family.*

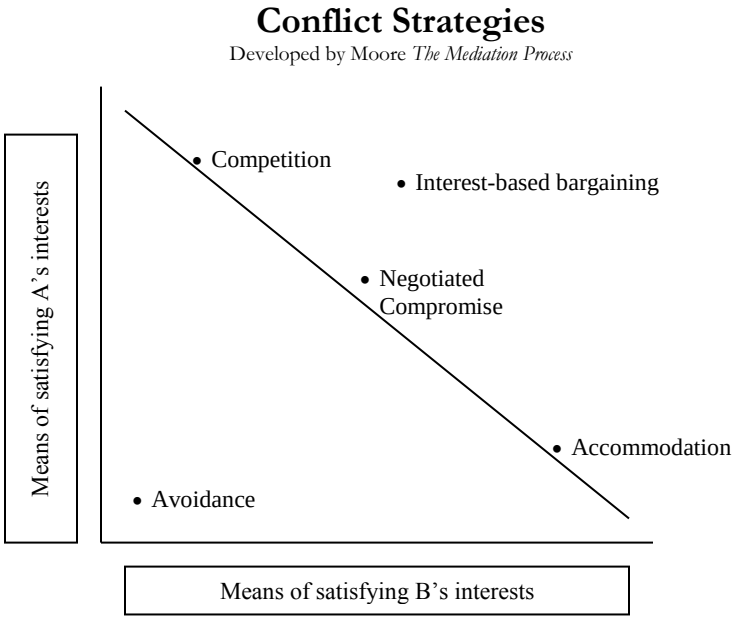
Although this is a ***resource-based conflict*** *the negative attitudes held by each student serve to escalate a conflict that may otherwise be solved by negotiation and compromise. Specifically, Ali and Angela immediately view one another as* ***opponents*** *who stand in the way of successfully completing their work. Both Ali and Angela have* ***negative perceptions*** *of one another, based entirely on prejudice. Ali views Angela as a white student attending a private university and thus concludes that she is economically privileged. He wrongly assumes that Angela's privileged background allows her to feel entitled to the last computer. At the same time, Angela recognizes Ali as a popular athlete and wrongly concludes that he must have been accepted to the university because of his athletic talents, rather than his academic eligibility. She incorrectly assumes that Ali is given special attention and less stringent requirements in order to focus predominantly on his athletic career. As a result, she feels Ali is less entitled to the last computer. Both Ali and Angela resent one another for what they perceive the other represents. For Ali, Angela represents the stereotype of a privileged white person who has always had access to resources. For Angela, Ali represents the talented immigrant athlete who is praised for athletic prowess and given financial resources he does not deserve.*

These negative perceptions and prejudices undoubtedly ***interfere with communication*** *between Ali and Angela. Neither student feels a sense of* ***empathy*** *toward the other and thus is discouraged from discussing the lack of resources and finding a suitable solution to their dilemma. Furthermore, these prejudices foster* ***zero-sum thinking****, in which Ali and Angela are thinking only of how to gain access to the computer themselves, rather than considering more creative compromises. Lastly, and perhaps most problematically, Ali and Angela are in danger of viewing one another as* ***diabolical enemies****. Specifically, Ali and Angela incorrectly see one another as members of a group that receives special privilege. To Ali, Angela represents a white privileged majority at the university – a group who has access to resources. To Angela, Ali represents an unqualified, yet favored group of people who receive resources for athletics, thus diverting funds away from low-income students. These negative attitudes will undeniably escalate the conflict between the two students and reduce the likelihood that the two will reach a compromise without third party intervention.*

RATIONAL CONFLICT BEHAVIOUR: CONFLICT STYLES:

One can think of conflict strategies, or styles, in terms of a spectrum. On one side of the spectrum a party might find that achieving his/her goals is infinitely important and they are willing to do anything to achieve them. On the other side of the spectrum, one party might acknowledge that achieving the other party's goals is more important, therefore one party gives up his/her goals for the sake of achieving the other party's goals. Between the two ends of the spectrum there are several other possible conflict styles. These conflict strategies are illustrated in the chart below:





ACTIVITY 1: ASSESSING CONFLICT STYLES

After introducing different conflict styles through presentation, involve students in the following conflict styles activity.

OBJECTIVE: To understand elements of conflict styles, and understand different styles within a group

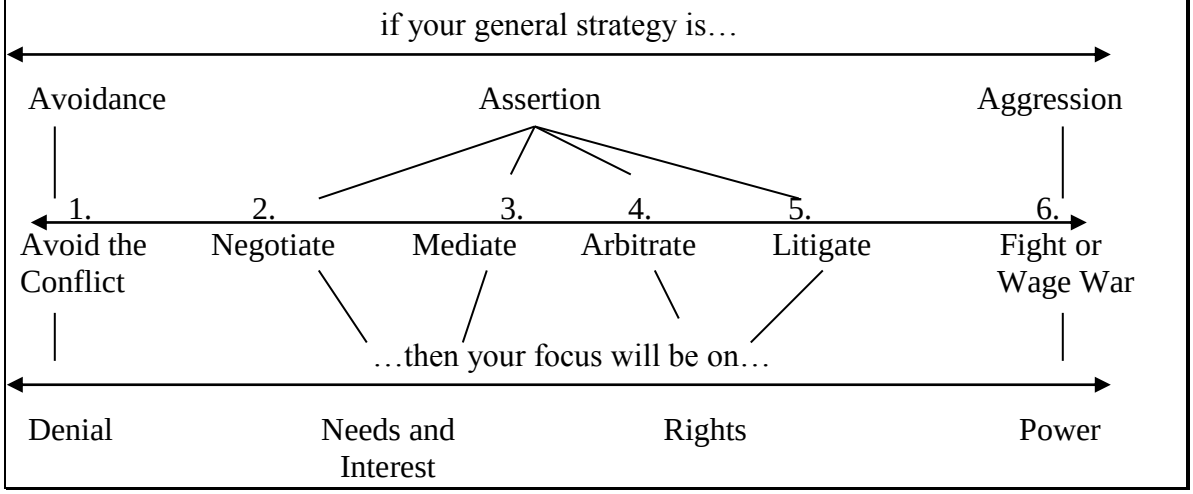
TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Coleman-Raider conflict resolution continuum, flip charts and marker

METHOD:[*]

Let students find a point on the Coleman-Raider continuum (below) where they feel they generally fall, and reflect on their conflict styles. Lead a discussion: What do you think about this categorization? Would you want to change it? Do you find the continuum accurate? If not why do you think so?

Coleman-Raider conflict resolution continuum. Raider, E., Coleman, S. & Gerson, J. (2000). Teaching Conflict resolution skills in a workshop. In M. Deutsch and P. T. Coleman (Eds), pp. 499-545. The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.



The test allows students to think of elements that enter into their conflict styles, and understand different styles that exist within the group. It also makes them aware of their own conflict styles and how they can manage and improve them. In addition the awareness of particular conflict styles leads to a more mature handling of conflict situations. Now let us further elaborate on the different characteristics of conflict styles.

COMPETITION:

In some situations, a party's interests are so narrow that they can be met by only a few solutions, none of which are acceptable to other parties. Such a party may choose a competitive approach and strive for a win-lose outcome, especially when it has more power that its opponent. Competitive approaches include litigation, arbitration, and extralegal activities such as tactical nonviolent direct action and violence.

[*] Activity adapted from Kevin Kester lesson plan on Peace education retrieved from www0.un.org/works/Lesson_Plans/Women/UNworks_HR_GenderUnit.doc,(accessed June 1, 2008).

COMPETITION SCENARIO: *Shortly after the September 11th attacks against the United States, the U.S. Congress approved the Patriot Act. This piece of legislation claims to increase security measures within the U.S. and guard against terrorism. Included in this legislation is a measure, which states that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) can attain access to library circulation records. This is a highly contentious issue because librarians recognize the importance of privacy and the need to allow library patrons access to reading materials without potentially subjecting them to interrogation by the FBI for reading about a subject that is considered threatening to the U.S. government. This issue has been the site of numerous* ***competitive conflict-style situations*** *in which librarians have challenged FBI requests for library circulation records. These disputes have generally been taken to court for resolution. In these situations, both the FBI and librarians have very* ***narrow interests*** *– the FBI seeking to gain access to circulation records, and librarians seeking to protect those records. There is little room for accommodation or negotiated compromise in these instances.*

AVOIDANCE OR STALEMATE:

Conflict avoidance can be either productive or unproductive in satisfying interests**.** People avoid conflict for a variety of reasons: fear, lack of knowledge of management processes, absence of interdependent interests, indifference to the issues in the dispute, or belief that agreement is not possible and conflict is not desirable.

Avoidance approaches have various levels. The first may be to claim a position of *neutrality*. Stating, "We have no position on this issue at this time" is a way to avoid being drawn into a dispute. At the second level of avoidance, *isolation*, disputants pursue their interests independently, with limited interaction. Groups are allowed to have their "spheres of interest" if they do not impinge on another's domain. This strategy is used frequently when a conflict of interest exists, but overt conflict is not desirable.

People or groups that have been repeatedly defeated frequently use *withdrawal* to ensure their continued existence and to avoid any conflict that might lead to another defeat**.** Withdrawal means total dissociation of disputants. This strategy does not encourage or promote mediated negotiations.

AVOIDANCE OR STALEMATE SCENARIO: *A professor is conducting a class and examining the issue of abortion rights – whether access to abortion should be sanctioned or not in a particular country. The professor provides a balanced presentation of information from groups in favor of and against the legal right to abortion. A student raises her hand and declares that by providing information about abortion, the professor is advocating in favor of this position. The student accuses the professor of unethically using a teaching position to promote abortion. The professor recognizes that engaging in this debate is futile, that the student's position is combative rather than constructive, and that engaging with the student will only further disrupt the class. The professor responds to the student saying,* ***"We will have to agree to disagree."*** *The professor then returns to the lecture.*

ACCOMMODATION:

Accommodation occurs when one party agrees to meet the interests of another at the expense of its own needs. An accommodation strategy is pursued when:

- Sacrificing some interests is required to maintain a positive relationship
- It is desirable to demonstrate or foster cooperation.
- Interests are extremely interdependent

A positive accommodation approach may be pursued when there is hope that a more collaborative process or benefit trading may occur later, on other issues. Accommodation may also be pursued for negative reasons.

ACCOMMODATION SCENARIO: *A husband and wife have decided to go to a restaurant for dinner. While discussing where to go it becomes clear that their preferences are misaligned. The husband wants to go to the local fishery, while the wife prefers to eat at an Italian restaurant. They share a* ***common interest****- to avoid cooking and eat at a restaurant. After much debate the husband decides to* ***accommodate*** *his wife and eat at the Italian restaurant. He recognizes that accommodating his wife in this way will help encourage a* ***positive interaction*** *between them during dinner and that most likely his wife will demonstrate the same type of accommodation toward him in the future.*

NEGOTIATED COMPROMISE:

Bargaining to reach a compromise is selected because:

- The parties do not perceive the possibility of a win-win situation that will meet their needs and have decided to divide and share what they see as a limited resource
- Interests are not seen as interdependent or compatible
- The parties do not trust each other enough to enter into joint problem solving for mutual gain
- Parties are sufficiently equal in power so that neither can force the issue in its favour
- Negotiation takes place between the primary parties

- Many out-of-court settlements are negotiated compromises.

NEGOTIATED COMPROMISE SCENARIO: *After seven years together, two business partners are closing their business. Tension between the two partners has increased during the past five years because of disagreements over business strategy, financial management and personality conflicts. The relationship between the two has disintegrated and there is* ***little trust*** *left between them. The partners must divide company assets. Silvia feels that she should receive 70% of company assets because she initially invested more resources into the company when the company first began. Maria feels that the assets should be divided equally because equal time and effort have been invested. After much* ***negotiation****, during which Silvia demonstrates that she invested more into the company financially, Maria suggests dividing company assets 60/40 in Silvia's favor. There is a continued debate between the two women about the appropriate percentages, but ultimately Silvia accepts Maria's proposal.*

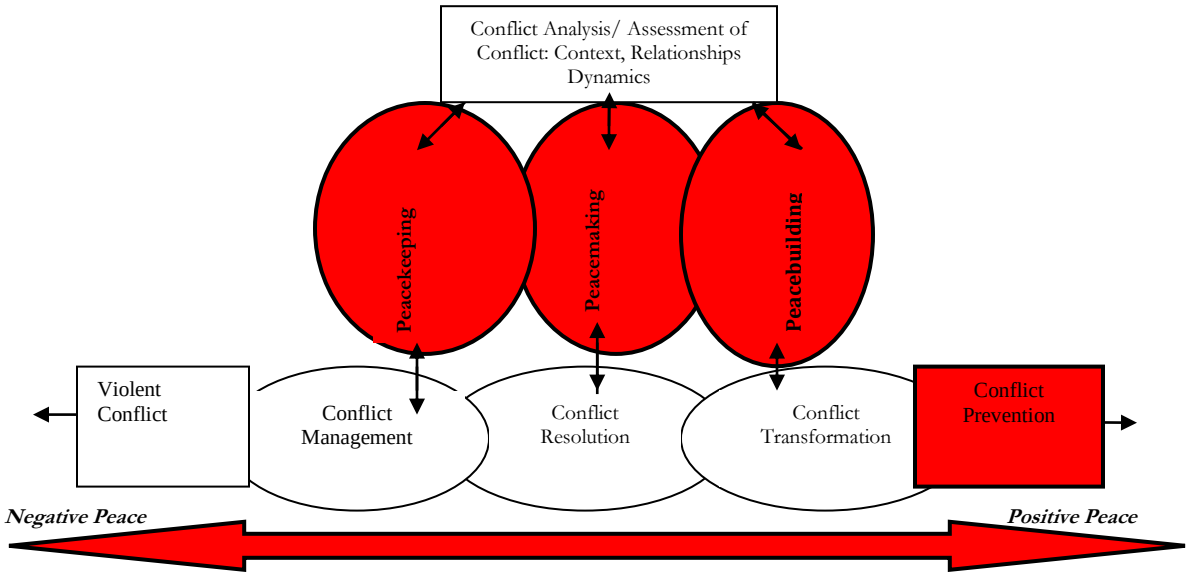
INTEREST-BASED NEGOTIATION:

Interest-based procedures seek to enlarge the range of alternatives so that the needs of all parties are addressed and met to the greatest extent possible.[*] More on this conflict strategy will be discussed in the following section under negotiations.

GENERAL APPROACHES TO PEACE:

Peace cannot be attained in every context using pre-prescribed methods and identical approaches. Instead approaches to peace must be conceptualized, developed and implemented in relation to the specific context in which conflicts exist. There are many different approaches to peace, which often overlap and complement one another at different stages. Each of these approaches relates to different intervention methods (as illustrated in the diagram below). Peace and intervention approaches correspond accordingly with more (positive) and less (negative) sustainable forms of peace. Now we will analyze various approaches to peace, providing an outline to basic concepts and examples of how these approaches have been applied in conflict contexts.

[*] Moore, 104-108



PEACEKEEPING/ PEACEMAKING/ PEACE BUILDING:

These three terms are intrinsically linked, complimenting one another as necessary steps involved in ending conflict and creating sustainable peace. These terms are often applied to conflicts that emerge at national or international levels; however they can also be used in relation to interventions that occur at interpersonal and community-level disputes.

Peacekeeping is generally defined as "keeping people from attacking each other by putting some kind of barrier between them."* With respect to international conflicts, peacekeeping involves coordinated efforts to ensure stability and relative normalcy in the aftermath of otherwise extremely volatile and chaotic situations and is often conducted by neutral soldiers, frequently from the United Nations. Peacekeeping also occurs at interpersonal levels.

Consider the scenario on the next page:

* Conflict Research Consortium, "Peacemaking," University of Colorado, http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/peacemkg.htm (accessed June 1, 2007).

Sohaila is an energetic six-year-old girl living with her parents, grandmother and brother. It is summer vacation and Sohaila wants to play outside with her older brother, Ehab. Ehab is nine-years-old and does not want his younger sister following him around while he plays with the neighborhood boys. Ehab will interact with his sister inside their home, but ignores her when he is with his friends. One afternoon when Ehab is outside with his friends, Sohaila goes outside to play with them. Ehab sends her away, but Sohaila is determined to be included; she will not leave. Ehab yells at his sister, insisting that she leave the boys alone, shouting, "This is no place for babies!" The boys begin to walk away from her when Sohaila picks up a handful of dirt and throws it at her brother, hitting him in the back. Furious, Ehab pushes his sister onto the ground. Sohaila begins to cry loudly. Hearing Sohaila's crying, the children's grandmother looks out the window and sees the two fighting She calls the children inside. The children are still yelling at one another when they reach their grandmother and Sohaila continues to cry. Ehab recounts the dispute to his grandmother stating, "I was playing with my friends when Sohaila came outside and started following us around. I asked her to please go away and she threw dirt at me!" At this, Sohaila cries out,"Liar! You pushed me!" The grandmother says she has heard enough and sends the children to separate rooms.

In this instance, the final action taken by the grandmother during which she separates the children is an act of peacekeeping. She temporary ends the conflict between Sohaila and Ehab and establishes a temporary peace between the children by distancing them from one another.

Peacemaking "is the process of forging a settlement between the disputing parties. While this can be done in direct negotiations with just the two disputants, it is often also done with a third-party mediator, who assists with process and communication problems, and helps the parties work effectively together to draft a workable peace accord. Usually the negotiators are official diplomats, although citizens are getting involved in the peacemaking process more and more. While they do not negotiate final accords, citizen diplomacy is becoming an increasingly common way to start the peacemaking process, which is then finalized with official diplomatic efforts."[*] Peacemaking involves negotiation, mediation and arbitration and also occurs within interpersonal disputes. Peacemaking occurs later in our scenario with Sohaila and Ehab.

[*] Conflict Research Consortium, "Peacemaking," University of Colorado, http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/peacemkg.htm (accessed June 1, 2007).

*After an hour in their rooms alone, the children are brought into the kitchen and seated in front of their grandmother. Acting as a **mediator**, the grandmother explains that each child will get a turn to speak and tell their side of the story. The children are told that they cannot interrupt one another. The children agree to their grandmother's **rules**. Each child explains what happened and how they ended up fighting. The grandmother asks each child why they are angry and discovers that Sohaila feels excluded and confused, and Ehab feels angry and embarrassed. Sohaila does not understand why Ehab will play with her inside the house, but not outside of the house. Ehab is angry and embarrassed to have his little sister following him when he plays with other boys. The grandmother asks each child to consider how they would feel in the others position: "Sohaila, how would you feel if you were playing with your friends and your three-year old cousin were following you around?" and "Ehab, how would you feel if your older cousin ignored you when you were outside of the house?" Little by little the children become less angry and the grandmother helps them work together to **create a plan** that will satisfy both of their interests. Ultimately, the children make an **agreement** that Sohaila will not follow her brother around when he is with his friends, but that Ehab will play with her in the backyard for a part of each day. In this way, Sohaila gets to play outside with her brother, and Ehab avoids the embarrassment of having his little sister intrude when he is with his friends.*

Peacebuilding involves restoring stability and the effectiveness of social, political, and economic institutions and structures in the wake of a war or some other debilitating or catastrophic event. Peacebuilding generally aims to create and ensure the conditions for both 'negative peace', the mere absence of violence conflict engagement, *and* for 'positive peace', a more comprehensive understanding related to the institutionalization of justice and freedom. In other words, peacebuilding is the stage during which reconstruction occurs. Reconstruction may refer to rebuilding social and economic programs or physical structures, and it may also refer to rebuilding relationships that have broken down or dissolved between conflicting parties.

Peacebuilding begins between Sohaila and Ehab the day after their fight occurred and their agreement was established.

*The next morning during breakfast with the two children, the grandmother reminds each of them of the agreement they established the day before. Ehab says that he will play with Sohaila during part of the morning, before lunch. Sohaila promises not to bother her brother after lunch and reminds him that they will play outside in the morning. The children spend two hours together and although they occasionally argue, as children are bound to do, each enjoys the time outside. After lunch, Ehab goes outside to meet hisfriends and Sohaila plays inside with her grandmother. The children follow this pattern throughout the summer weeks – enjoying one another's company according to the agreement established earlier in the summer. In this way the children are **rebuilding the relationship** that was weakened in the time leading up to and during the fight.*

NEGATIVE PEACE/ POSITIVE PEACE:

Within the field of peace and conflict studies a distinction is made between negative and positive peace. Negative peace refers to the absence of violent conflict engagement. It can be achieved in the initial stages of a peacekeeping operation when military peacekeeping missions are deployed to a country to restore stability in a conflict situation. It can also refer to the period when conflict has ended, but before peace has been institutionalized via substantial mechanisms such as peace accords, or reconstruction plans. These longer-term, more sustainable activities occur under the auspices of positive peace. Positive peace is a more comprehensive understanding related to the institutionalization of justice and freedom. Positive peace is often achieved during and after the peace building phase.

*In our scenario with Sohaila and Ehab, **negative peace** was established when the two children were sent to their separate rooms and the conflict was temporarily ended. At this point, only negative peace was established because the conflict issues remained to be resolved. Arguably, the peace between the children would last only as long as their enforced physical separation. Later however, **positive peace** was established first during the peacemaking stage when the children began to communicate with one another and establish an agreement, and later during the peace building stage when Sohaila and Ehab implemented and respected their agreement and began rebuilding their relationship.*

CONFLICT PREVENTION:

Another important approach to peace is conflict prevention. Conflict prevention involves anticipating the emergence of conflict and preventing its escalation. In order to anticipate conflict, one must employ conflict analysis skills – those that were discussed in the C.R. SIPABIO diagram illustrated above. Understanding the context, relationships, sources, issues, parties, attitudes, and behaviours involved in a particular situation helps one to form a more complete picture and anticipate whether a conflict is likely to emerge. Anticipating emerging conflicts helps ensure that early intervention methods are employed, thus preventing conflict escalation.

*How might the conflict between Sohaila and Ehab been avoided? One can speculate that **warning signs** between the two children existed before the day of their fight. It is possible that the two children previously complained to their grandmother about feeling excluded and/or feeling embarrassed. It is likely that Ehab dismissed Sohaila before and that she had either cried to her grandmother or moped after the dismissal. It is also possible that Ehab earlier expressed anger or lost his patience with his younger sister. If the grandmother had been observing these **behaviors** using a conflict analysis framework, she may have anticipated the upcoming conflict. Arguably, analyzing the **parties** and the **issues** at hand may also have provided insight into the impending conflict. Specifically, the six-year-old Sohaila was eager for attention and needed an outlet for her energy. Her older brother was enjoying himself outside with his friends and ignoring his little sister, unless he was inside the house. Sohaila unsurprisingly desired to play with her brother outside and did not understand why she was being rejected if Ehab allowed her to play with them inside the home. It is possible, though not guaranteed, that if the grandmother had observed these various warning signs and **intervened** in the tension early, the anger between the children would not have **escalated** to the point of **violent confrontation**. Perhaps the conflict could have been prevented.*

ACTIVITY 2: CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE: To explore approaches to peace in a conflict setting and their impact on conflict

TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Handouts of cases of intervention, with various intervention levels, there must be geographical and content diversity in case studies, flipcharts and/or overhead projector for small groups to use in their presentations

METHOD:

- Split the class into smaller groups of five
- Select case studies of different conflicts
- Assign each small group to one case study
- Ask groups to analyze conflicts using previous models of analysis/mapping
- Ask them to focus on the approaches to peace in the case study and to assess their effects, and to offer suggestions and reflections
- Ensure, and follow up on student discussions if needed, that the audiences understand that certain conditions must exist in order for a proper type of intervention to succeed
- Have students present their results

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: returning to personal approaches to conflict management, have your attitudes changed toward your conflict approach? How did the role play activity help you in understanding your conflict styles, would it help you in modifying your behavior in future. What were the strongest lessons learned? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Have students keep a reflective journal for this session as well, contemplating and writing on their personal approaches to conflict and the resolution of problems. On the final day of the session, give students the choice to share a reflection with the class.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Azar, E. *The Management of Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Cases.* USA: Dartmouth, 1998.pp. 1-28.
- Burton, J.*Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*. London, England: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1990. pp. 36-45. 52.
- Coser, L. *The Functions of Social Conflict.* New York, NY: Free Press, 1956.
- Galtung, J. *Peace by Peaceful Means*. London, England: Sage Publications Ltd. 103-113, 1996.
- Lederach, J.P. *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. PA: Good Books, 2003.
- Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., and H. Miall. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005. pp 132-184 and 215-230.

III. ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES & VALUES: PEACE CONTENT AND PEACE POTENTIALS

By Sikander Mehdi

CHAPTER III: ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: PEACE CONTENT AND PEACE POTENTIALS

This chapter is designed to provide an understanding of many ways in which the principles of peace are embedded within the religion Islam. It highlights peace and nonviolence in Islamic teaching. Session one explores principles of peace in Islam, and connects those principles to several obligations in Islam. It further elaborates on peaceful principles of Islam like equality, justice, human rights and links true Islamic democracy to these principles, advocating that Islamic concept of democracy eventually leads to a peaceful society. In the end modern challenges to peaceful application of these principles are discussed while utilizing examples from Islamic history and contemporary Muslim world.

SESSION I: PRINCIPLES OF PEACE IN ISLAM

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand Islamic principles of peace and non violence
- To explore peace oriented obligations in Islam
- To understand the relation between Islam, equality and democracy
- To appreciate the democratic principles of Islam in its basic values
- To recognize that key insights and principles from Islam constitute basic principles for any democratic and peaceful society

KEY CONCEPTS

- Relationship between Islam and principles of peace
- Qur'anic injunctions on peace
- Nonviolence
- Muslim and non-Muslim world
- Equality
- Justice
- Democracy in Islam
- Ijtihad

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe of activities and discussions is open to the teachers' discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. Teacher will motivate the students to participate in the discussion, giving the information of the topic in an informal way, while maintaining utmost respect for the topic which is very delicate and sensitive**.**

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Before beginning the formal presentation, conduct the Peace Line Exercise[*].

OBJECTIVE: To understand peace potentials within Islam from a personal perspective

TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Locate 3 points of peace/peacelessness in a continuum around the room (i.e., peaceful, somewhat peaceful, and peace less)
- Have students choose a point along that continuum that represents their emotions that day
- After students have chosen a point, have students share their feelings

[*] Activity adapted from Kevin Kester lesson plan on Peace education retrieved from www0.un.org/works/Lesson_Plans/Women/UNworks_HR_GenderUnit.doc, (accessed June 1, 2008).

Finally, lead the discussion on students' responses. Explore their responses in relation to personal peace and religion, how they think their inner status of peace is connected to their religion. If the answer is yes, ask what values of religion they consider peaceful. Write down those values on the board. This will enable students to identify principles or values in Islam having peace potentials. Ensure that students know they may opt out of sharing (as they may not feel comfortable sharing their emotions publicly), listen attentively, and never negate what is shared in this personal activity. Create an open and welcoming space.

PRESENTATION

Both Islam and the world of Islam are besieged today by the popular Western media and clash theorists equating Islam with primitivism, fundamentalism and terrorism and the puritan Muslim protagonists to be brandishing swords in hands, romanticizing religious bigotry, and presenting Islam as the only theology and philosophy of salvation and monopolist of all the virtues and values. These inaccurate portrayals of Islam fail to represent the many ways in which the principles of peace are embedded within the religion. Fortunately, efforts are afoot in the concerned quarters all over the world to explore and highlight peace and non-violence in Islamic teaching and to rediscover the culture of peace in Muslim societies.

PRINCIPLES OF PEACE IN ISLAM:

Building peace perspectives on Islam and Muslim societies is all the more important today because Islam is the faith of over a billion people spread out in all parts of the world. Fifty-seven independent sovereign states have a Muslim-majority population. They are also members of the largest organization of Muslim states: the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). The geo-strategic, geo-political and geo-economic assets of this world of OIC have considerable attraction, especially for the major actors of world politics. Furthermore, misunderstandings and misperceptions about Islam and Muslim societies abound and tend to diminish the significance of Islam as a dynamic, transformative force. Islam has according to Peter Awn, "taken root in all the major cultures of the world" and "added great ethical values as well as cultural values as it has spread". Awn, a Christian and a professor of religion at Columbia University, adds:

> Islam is a populist faith, open to all races and classes, and not in any way restrictive in terms of gender as far as access to ultimate truth and salvation are concerned. Its consistent reverence for human being is clearly embedded in the Koran itself, which tells us that God created all humans by breathing into them his very own spirit. That is what distinguished us from all other aspects of creation: to literally possess within ourselves the spirit of God.[*]

[*] Peter Awn, " Panel 3 Presentation" in *The United Nations and the World's Religions: Prospects for a Global Ethic*, Cambridge, Massachussetts: Boston Research Center for 21st Century, 1995, p.67.

Indeed, humans are "a manifestation of God's will on earth and part of a larger divine plan"[*] and as His vice-regents on earth, they need to remember and appreciate all the time the great attributes of God: He is the All Mighty, the All Knowing, the All Just, the All-Wise and the Creator and the Lord of all the worlds. He is also the Guardian over his servants, Shelterer of the orphan, Guide of the erring, Friend of the bereaved and Consoler of the afflicted, the generous Lord, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Very-forgiving. He is the Rabb, the Fosterer, the Nourisher, the Sustainer, and the Developer of the potentialities of His creatures. Furthermore, He is not the Fosterer and Nourisher of the followers of Islam only, but the Fosterer and Nourisher of all including the followers of other faiths, even those who are opposed to the Kingdom of God. He is peace and His kingdom is the kingdom of peace. Maintaining that peace is "most central" to Islam, Asghar Ali Engineer rightly points out that the Muslims worship Allah as their only God and since one of His names is peace, worshipping Allah means worshipping Peace."[†]

VICEGERENCY STATUS OF HUMANS:

Being the vicegerents of God on earth and possessing His spirit, the humans are expected to nourish, nurture and foster humanism, democratic governance, justice, equality, mercy, forgiveness at local and global levels, and promote a culture of peace and tolerance everywhere. In this regard, they have important obligations and they cannot shy away from these obligations.

PEACE-ORIENTED OBLIGATIONS WITHIN ISLAM:

One such obligation is to rise up, "speak to power"[‡] and struggle non-violently against despotism, tyranny and authoritarianism. This is related to the guiding principles of Islam and it deserves a little bit of explanation on three counts.

First, Islam requires its adherents to submit themselves before God. However, this Islamic injunction has been frequently abused by the Muslim rulers who demanded total surrender and submission from the masses to their absolute despotic rule. Presenting themselves as representatives of God, they sought justification for asking for obedience to their rule of violence, deceit and plunder. But Islam is opposed to the submission of the creatures before anyone except God. Consider the following example:[§]

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[*] *Mohammad* Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice* , Gainsville: University Press of Florida, 2003, p. 57

[†] Asghar Ali Engineer, "Muslim and Terrorism" in *http://us.1534.mail.yahoo.com/ym/ShowLetter?Msgld=6585_457052(*accessed on 29 March 2006).

[‡] Derived from the title of a book by Petra Kelly, *Nonviolence Speaks to Power*, Honolulu, Hawaii: Center for Global Nonviolence, 1992.

[§] Quoted in Khalifa Abdul Hakim, *the Prophet and His Message*, Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1st ed. 1972, reprint 2000,p.215.

The instructions given by Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) and the four caliphs after him to the governors and administrators for taking good care of the masses and doing justice without fear or favour, and their advice to the people to pick up courage to say truth in the presence of the powerful and submit before Allah alone speak volumes about Islam's abhorrence for slavery of every kind. Islam does not recommend lying low in the presence of tyranny. Prophet Mohammad *(pbuh*) said, "If you see any evil, remove it with your hands; if you have not the power to stop it actively, then protest vigorously against it: if you cannot do even that, then detest it in your heart, but this is the weakest manifestation of faith."

Second, the followers of the faith are obligated to take care of the poor, needy and marginalized and fight for the cause of the oppressed. While much of recorded history for Muslims is about Muslim rulers and their reliance on absolute power, frequent use of brute force to subdue opposition, denial of human democratic principles in governance and stifling the voice of dissent by all means, there is also a history of the defiance of religious leaders, political activists and social reformers. However, since the court history written in praise of Muslim rulers refers to selective historical narratives, it disregards the nonviolent content in Islamic teaching and ignores the glorious nonviolent movements against autocratic, absolutist rulers in Muslim societies[*]. Many in the West and in Muslim societies also say that Islam somehow tolerates and even promotes fascism, extremism, and absolutism. This is far from the truth. In Islam, governance at any level is a highly responsible function and it demands justice, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and sharing.

Third, nonviolent struggle against injustice, inequality, and despotism is a religious and covenanted obligation and the battle between Abel and Cain must continue till the end.

[*] See Syed Sikander Mehdi ," Islam and Nonviolence", *Gandhi Marg*, vol.14, no. 1, April-June 1992, pp.116-140; A. Ezzati, *The Revolutionary Islam and the Islamic Revolution,* Tehran: Ministry of Islamic Guidance Book, 1981;

THE WORLD OF ABEL AND CAIN*

The Qur'an and the Christian and Jewish texts are the narrators of the story of Abel and Cain - the sons of Adam. It is a story of the conflict between two brothers. According to the story, "Cain preferred the sister who had been betrothed to Abel to his own fiancé" and "insisted on having her, and demanded the betrothal that had been concluded with Adam's approval to be annulled." They went to Adam who proposed that both should offer sacrifice and whoever had his sacrifice accepted by God should have the sister and the loser would accept the result. Abel, the good soul, who was not the original complainant and who desired nothing from Cain, sacrificed his best camel, his most precious possession. Cain, the bad soul, resorted to trickery and brought some withered corn as his sacrifice. Naturally Abel's sacrifice was accepted and not Cain's. Cain then threatened Abel and said that he would kill him. In reply, Abel said calmly: "But I will not raise my hands against you." Abel was then murdered by Cain**.**

"In my opinion," observes Ali Shariati, "the murder of Abel at the hands of Cain represents a great development, a sudden swerve in the course of history, the most important event to have occurred in all human life."† Maintaining that the story is not simply about a dispute between two brothers, but about the two wings of human society and about bifurcated humanity in all ages, Shariati observed:

> The wing represented by Abel is that of the subject and the oppressed, i.e., the people, those who throughout history have been slaughtered and enslaved by the system of Cain, the system of private ownership which has gained ascendancy over human society. The war between Cain and Abel is the permanent war of history which has been waged by every generation. The banner of Cain has always been held high by the ruling classes, and the desire to avenge the blood of Abel has been inherited by succeeding generations of his descendent---the subjected people who have fought for justice, freedom and true faith in a struggle that has continued, one way or another, in every age. The weapon of Cain has been religion, and the weapon of Abel has been religion. ‡

Therefore, on the one hand, there is the gross abuse of the principles and values by Cain who thrives through deceit, stupefaction, greed, exploitation, enslavement, thievery, bigotry, violence and becomes more powerful and resourceful; on the other hand, there is the passion of Abel for love, understanding, sharing, mercy, forgiveness, fairness, justice, equality, awareness, activism, and revolution. Regarding Islamic principles and values, the Cains, the followers of deceit, violence and the status quo, cannot be God's vice-

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* Ali Shariati , *On the Sociology of Islam,* Karachi: Haider Ali Muljee Taha, undated, pp.97-110.

† *Ibid,* p.103

‡ *Ibid,* p. 108.

regents on earth. Only the Abels, the followers of non-violence, peace, and political, social and cultural change, can be God's vice-regents on earth.
But the principles and values cherished by Abel have been set aside by a number of scholars in the West and also in the Muslim societies, and the world of Cain with all its despotic, retrogressive and violent features is being highlighted to project Islam as a medieval, barbaric, and non-democratic faith.

NONVIOLENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN ISLAM:

A cursory glance at the guiding principles and values of the faith may suggest that Islam is opposed to violence in all its forms - religious, political, cultural, and structural. The faith, as a matter of fact, provides space for democratic thinking and practice, promotion of equality, justice and peace and does not disallow the flourishing of alternative, even competing, ideas and faiths. It is in this perspective that the Qur'anic assertion of non-compulsion in religion (2:256) needs to be viewed. The Qur'an also recognizes the existence of other religions and says that matters relating to the Jews, the Sabeans, the Christians, the Magians and those who worship others beside God will be decided on the Day of Judgment. It further says that if God had willed, He could have ensured that all the people on earth became believers.

Again, the Qur'an forbids forcible imposition of faith on others and their conversion through coercion or temptation. It says that such people should be called to the path of the Lord with wisdom and words of good and reason with the best possible way should be adopted as a way of persuasion (16:125). Persuasion and dialogue is the way and not intimidation or persecution. Viewed in this perspective, a number of territorial conquests by the Muslim dynasties could be described as conquests driven by imperialistic impulses only. Likewise, the absolute despotism of the Muslim rulers in the past and even in contemporary times cannot be defended in the name of Islamic principles and values. At best, these are manifestations of undesirable, detestable, condemnable political expediencies and at worst, demonstrate a prostitution of politics.

Nevertheless, the democratic credentials of Islamic principles and values are widely challenged by many Western scholars of political and theological thought. Furthermore, there is no dearth of puritan religious and conservative political opinion builders in the Muslim societies who maintain that democracy is a Western concept, Islam and democracy are incompatible, and democracy does not suit the genius of the Muslims. In support of their position, they not only refer to the bloody and violent history of the Muslims - a history which is dominated by the despots and their despotic ideas - but also point at the firmly rooted authoritarian, fascist political regimes in the entire length and breadth of the contemporary Muslim world. Such a position is being increasingly contested during our turbulent times when the quest for peace, global ethics and universal humanism is intensifying and the need for dialogue among the faiths, cultures and civilizations is increasingly stressed.

One of the most important principles on which the whole idea of democracy is based is "a recognition of the worth of every human being irrespective of any of his or her

qualities, the acceptance of the necessity of law, that is a set of definite or rational norms, to regulate all social relationships, the equality of all citizens before the law, regardless of their racial, ethnic and class distinctions, the justifiability of state decisions on the basis of popular consent, and a higher degree of tolerance of unconventional and unorthodox opinions"[*]. In many respects, this and several other principles of democracy are quite compatible with the Islamic principles of politics and governance.

Take, for example, the concept of leadership. Democracy requires that the leaders be chosen through the free will of the electorate and clearly the electorate would prefer such persons to be their chosen leaders who, in their assessment, would have the imagination, will power and sincerity to work for the common good, be just and willing to promote equality of opportunity. In other words, in both principle and theory, democracy would prefer Abel and his followers rather than Cain. But in practice, it is Cain who is at the helm of affairs in so many democratic and non-democratic societies today. In Islam too, the preference is for the triumph of Abel over Cain and for the reign and rule of those who are chosen through consultative, electoral processes and who work for the common good, who are answerable to God and also to the ruled for all their action and policies and who enjoy the trust and confidence of the masses.

Islam, like democracy, is opposed to dictatorship. There is no place for arbitrary rule by one man or a group of men in Islam and the actions of the state have to be in accordance with the regulations drawn from the Qur'an and the tradition and should be initiated by invoking the principle of *shura* (consultation) and *ijma* (consensus). "The Prophet (*pbuh)* and the first four Rightly-Guided Caliphs (*Rashidun)*," Hamid Enayat points out, "are known to have accordingly made consultation with, and in some cases deference to, the opinions of their critics, an abiding characteristic of their rule." He adds: "According to Maududi, they took counsel not from a bunch of 'hand-picked men', but only from those who enjoyed the confidence of the masses. These practices were admittedly discontinued after the assassination of 'Ali', except for brief, exceptional periods of the rule of just and pious rulers."[†]

Subsequently, the tyrannical rule of the Muslim rulers, both past and present, and the fascism of Muslim warlords and their groups were justified by referring to the central role of *shari'ah* in the governance of Muslim societies and by discouraging *ijtihad* and application of reason in responding to the demands of the changing times. True enough that the sacred texts, the Qur'an and the examples of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), are sacred forever. However, this does not mean that these texts cannot be contextualized in the contemporary setting. As a matter of fact, if Islam is to be considered as a living faith for all times and if the Qur'an is to be regarded as a divine book offering guidelines for dealing with the challenges of the past, present and future, an interpretative relationship with the texts is very important. Ziauddin Sardar, a prominent Muslim scholar, observes:

> …[I]f the interpretative context of the text is never our context, not our own time, then its interpretation can hardly have any real meaning or significance for us as

[*] Hamid *Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought* , Austin : University of Texas Press, 1982, p.126.
[†] Ibid p.129

> we are now. Historic interpretations constantly drag us back to history, to frozen and ossified context of long ago; worse, to perceived and romanticized contexts that have not even existed in history. This is why while Muslims have a strong emotional attachment to Islam, Islam per se, as a worldview and system of ethics has little or no direct relevance to their daily lives apart from the obvious concerns of rituals and worship. Ijtihad and fresh thinking have not been possible because there is no context within which they can actually take place.[*]

He adds:

> The freezing of interpretation, the closure of "the gates of ijtihad', has had a devastating effect on Muslim thought and action. In particular, it has produced what I can only describe as three metaphysical catastrophes: the elevation of the Shari'ah to the level of the Divine, with the consequent removal of agency from the believers, and the equation of Islam with the state. Let me elaborate. Most Muslims consider the Shari'ah, commonly translated as 'Islamic law' to be divine. Yet, there is nothing divine about the Shari'ah. The only thing that can legitimately be described as divine in Islam is the Qur'an. The Shari'ah is a human construction; an attempt to understand the divine will in a particular context. This is why the bulk of the Shari'ah actually consists of figh or jurisprudence, which is nothing more than legal opinion of classical jurists. The very term figh was not in vogue before the Abbasis period when it was actually formulated and codified. But when figh assumed its systematic legal form, it incorporated three vital aspects of Muslim society of the Abbasid period. At that juncture, Muslim history was in its expansionist phase, and figh incorporated the logic of Muslim imperialism of that time. The figh rulings on apostasy, for example, derive not from Qur'an but from this logic. Moreover, the world was simple and could easily be divided into black and white: hence, the division of the world into Darul Islam and Darul Harb.[†]

Sardar raises an important point. He says that by raising the status of *shari'ah* to the divine level, the believers are denied the vehicle of agency. They then think that shari'ah will solve all the problems: since The Law is a priori given people have nothing to do but to follow it and that is all. Sardar points out that the believers then become passive receivers rather than active seekers of truth and adds that in reality, "the Shari'ah is nothing more than a set of principles, a framework of values that provides Muslim societies with guidance." Again, "these sets of principles and values are not static given but are dynamically derived within changing contexts."

The Shari'ah, according to Sardar, is a problem-solving methodology rather than law and requires the believers to exert themselves and constantly interpret the Qur'an and look at the life of Prophet Muhammad" with ever changing fresh eyes." He strongly suggests that the Qur'an should be interpreted from epoch to epoch and "the Shari'ah, and by extension Islam itself, has to be reformulated with changing contexts" and maintains that the "only thing that remains constant in Islam is the text of the Qur'an—its concepts

[*] Ziauddin Sardar. "Rethinking Islam".In *http://www.islamfortoday.com/sardar01.htm (* accessed on 18 August 2007*)*..
[†] Ibid

providing anchor for ever changing interpretations."[*] Given the context, it is not difficult to understand the problem of the Taliban. Consider the box below, which analyses their situation

CURRENT TRENDS IN MUSLIM WORLD:

The Taliban insists on closing all the doors and windows by force and not letting the fresh air in. But the insistence of the puritans, the fundamentalists on closing the doors of reason, on denying space to the movement for enlightened thinking and on justifying violence in the name of the faith, in fact, inflict violence onto the faith and its followers. As such, it needs to be appreciated that it is the Taliban and its collaborators who misinterpret Islam and the Qur'an and who are committing violence in the name of Islam - it is not Islam which is promoting violence. Likewise, it has to be appreciated that one does not have to be Muslim to be a Taliban follower. Every religion had and has its own Taliban who commits violence and promotes violence in the name of faith. There are also stronger Taliban who commit violence and promote violence in the name of national interest and civilization expansion. As such, the democratic credentials of Islam should not be questioned simply because Muslim rulers in the past were despotic, present-day Muslim rulers are tyrannical, or some warlords and their groups are committing violence in the name of their own version of Islam.

Islam's democratic credentials are also evident within its concept of equality, inclusive and participatory processes, justice, the notion of common good, and human rights and freedoms, which are all present in Islam.

EQUALITY:

To begin with, Islam regards humanity as a single family, based on the equality of all members. The idea of the oneness and common origin of all the people is the foundational idea in the Qur'an and it "reflects the universality and inclusiveness of Islam in dealing with mankind."[†] The Qur'an says emphatically that God has created the humans from the same pair of a male and a female and made them nations and tribes so that they may know each other, and do not despise each other (49:13). Again, no privilege is granted to any one on the basis of race, ethnicity or tribal association. What matters most is piety, righteousness, being good to others, and devotion to God.

SHURAH:

Also important to note is the fact that the requirement of mutual consultation (*shurah)* is not a mere formality for a ruler to resort to, nor a requirement to be subjected to political

[*] Ibid

[†] Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Op.Cit,* pp.58.

expediency. *Shurah* is a serious business in Islam. It is not a mere political gimmick, nor is it a sort of political sport of the Cains in the Muslim societies or elsewhere. According to Islamic scholars, particularly those who challenge the notion that Islam and democracy are antithetical to one another, assert that *Shurah* is:

> (1)… [A]n inclusive process in which all Ummah members are asked to provide input in the decision-making process. *Shurah*, unlike consultation, is obligatory; (2) it involves all matters of concerning the Ummah; (3) it represents all segments of society, regardless of how their position of power (parties, religious groups, Muslims, non-Muslims and so on) differs from the people of *ijtihad*, who are the Islamic jurisprudents (*fuqaha; sing. Faqih*.); and (4) holds freedom of expression as its core[*].

JUSTICE:

The Islamic concept of justice is another cardinal concept profoundly influencing Muslim thinking and action and carrying huge peace potentials. The term used for justice, *adl*, has an extended meaning and goes far beyond the narrower meaning of justice in the legal parlance. Along with *ihsan* (beneficence) and *rahmah* (compassion), *adl* manifests the yearning for a just social reality. "Justice rooted in divine wisdom is applicable to all times and all people" and its importance has been highlighted by both the Qur'an and tradition. According to Khadduri and as quoted in Abu-Nimer's excellent study entitled *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice,* " In the Qur'an there are over two hundred admonitions against injustice expressed in such words as *zulm, ithm, dalal,* and others, and no less than almost a hundred expressions embodying the notion of justice, either directly in such words as *adl, qist, mizan* and others noted before or in a variety of indirect expressions."[†]

Again, and as pointed out by Abu-Nimer, justice is "an absolute and not a relative value, a duty to be pursued among the believers and with the enemies, too."[‡] The Qur'an says: Serve Allah, and join not any partner with Him; and do good - to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: for Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious (4:36).

Islam attaches great importance to social and economic justice achievable through sharing, poverty alleviation efforts, and concerted individual and collective initiatives, voluntary charities and by developing the society on egalitarian lines. It obligates its followers to contribute towards the promotion of economic justice by doing well in anon-discriminatory manner. It also calls upon the state for the establishment of a fair and just distributive mechanism in order to reduce poverty and powerlessness and ensure an optimum degree of equitable distribution of resources in the society.

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[*] *Ibid,* p.77-78.
[†] *Ibid,* p. 51.
[‡] *Ibid,* p. 52.

The Islamic principle of justice, one may add here, is based on Qur'anic injunctions and tradition. It encompasses all spheres and all aspects of human and societal relationships and urges its followers to fight against injustice and establish a regime of peace everywhere. It also asserts that in the absence of justice, a regime of peace cannot be established anywhere.

HUMAN RIGHTS:

It is now widely recognized that justice is intimately connected with human rights. A society cannot be a just and peaceful society if it denies human rights to its people or if it opts for the abridgement of such rights. The importance of human rights for global and local peace and for long-lasting peace may be gauged from the fact that an impressive array of human rights documents have been prepared and adopted during the last few centuries in particular. The world has gone through a long journey in this regard and has been considerable enriched because of the first, second, third and fourth generation of human rights.

It was during the Enlightenment in Europe that "human rights first focused on what came to be called natural rights, that is, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" and "became the basis for the following credo of the United States - the Declaration of Independence - and other landmark documents."[*] The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948 launched the second generation of rights. It focused primarily on individual and social rights, chiefly freedom of thought, speech, conscience, assembly and petition. These two generations of rights were primarily concerned with individuals. The third generation of rights arrived with the Declaration of Social and Economic Rights which recognized the rights of collectivities pertaining to the right of employment, social security, dignity of labour and social welfare. And finally, the fourth generation of human rights has entered into international discourse. "In contrast to the first, second, and third generations of rights," Tehranian points out, "the new generation of rights may be described as inter-species". Taking note of the scale of the man-made environmental disasters during the last few decades (i.e. Chernobyl, Three-Mile Island, Bhopal, Exxon Valdez, the burning of the Kuwait oil wells, etc) he says that the tendency of putting humans above and in control of nature is being challenged and the emerging environmentalist view is now placing humans in nature as one part of it[†].

[*] Majid Tehranian in Daisaku Ikeda & Majid Tehranian , *Global Civilization: A Buddhist –Islamic Dialogue* , London: British Academic Press, 2003, p.115.
[†] Ibid, p. 116

CURRENT SCENARIO OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MUSLIM WORLD:

Human rights in Islam are without any doubt a hotly contested issue. There are the critics in the West who either pinpoint the deficits and flaws in the human rights granted by the faith or point at the distance between Islamic teaching and practice. They especially refer to what they call the highly controversial status of women in Islam, considerable abridgement of the rights because of the central and crucial role of *sharia* in the decision-making processes, and increasing hostility towards innovative, creative and non-traditional views and ideas. Again, there are the puritans, and the Taliban who justify medieval and barbaric politics in the name of Islam, and also support tyrannical and fascistic rule in the Muslim societies. In addition, there are those enthusiasts who claim that Islam and Islam alone offers the highly extended and advanced concept of human rights. Such approaches do confuse the position of Islam on human rights. Nevertheless, it is a truism that the human rights constitute an important part of Islamic teaching and values. Right to life, security, property, justice, economic welfare, dignity, employment, democratic and accountable governance, and numerous other economic, political, social and cultural rights are important human rights and are respected by Islam. The faith also emphasizes equality, non-discrimination, tolerance, empowerment of the most marginalized and minorities and urges dialogue among peoples, cultures and civilizations.

Although peace content abounds in Islamic teaching, rhetorical assertions of this content are clearly not enough. Principles and values need to be channelled into political action and peace potentials need to be realized and actualized.

In this context, certain important points should be noted. These, in brief, are: (a) other religions, like Islam, also have guiding principles and values and there is no dearth of peace content in them; (b) it is not enough to simply refer to the good things in the Islamic texts and narratives; what is important is to understand that as to why is there so much violence in the Muslim societies when the religion is so peaceful and nonviolent; (c) paradigms have been constructed by the extremists in favor of transformational violence and for forcing a change of their own choice by resorting to fascistic designs and tactics; (d) the Western scholars need to study Islam anew and rediscover the culture of peace in the Muslim societies and recognize that there is lot of violence in the Western societies as well; and (e) the adherents of puritan, Talbanized Islam need to understand that ‘going it alone’ and forcing the way violently is not good for the Muslim masses. Inclusion is clearly better than exclusion and fascistic or narcissistic approach toward one’s own religion and society is conflict-fuelling and violence-generating.

APPLYING PEACEFUL PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM:

Therefore, what is required is the application of these values, that is, to put the values "to the use of life"[*] and to pool the ethical, humanistic and holistic resources of the religions and secular thoughts for the actualization of peace potentials in them. Emphasizing the importance of empathy in making coexistence a reality, Daisaku Ikeda, a prominent peace educator and President of Soka Gakkai International, quoted French philosopher Simon Weil who said, "Pride about the greatness of a nation is essentially exclusionary, hence cannot be shared by other nations. By contrast, concern about the plight of others is essentially universal." Ikeda stated, "Basing her thinking on this idea of shared concern, Weil sought the possibility of a more universal humanism. In 'altruistic sympathy' she found the key to overcoming the narrow-minded pride about one's group---the "we" consciousness."[†] As such, instead of building their world views through fractured prisms, and remaining fettered to narcissism and myopic vision, the followers of Islamic faith and other faiths need to focus on what their faiths can do singly and in coalition with other faiths and secular philosophies to promote peace and harmony locally and globally. These efforts will help us fully appreciate the message of Rumi, the prominent Persian saint and poet, who wrote the following poem:

Alight in the same place are ten lamps.
They all vary in shape,
But gazing as their collective light
You cannot tell which light
Comes from which of the lamp.
In the realm of the spirit
You find no partition whatsoever,
No individuation whatsoever.

ACTIVITY 1: CLASS DISCUSSION

Divide students into groups; encourage them to share their opinion on the following points:

- Peace oriented obligation in Islam
- Islamic principles of peace
- Does the prevalent scenario of human rights and justice in Muslim countries suggest that Muslim have explored peace content of their religion and are aware of peace potentials, If not then what do you think needs to be done to rectify this problem

[*] Samuel Johnson quoted in Sissela Bok's panel presentation in *The United Nations and the World's Religions : Prospects for a Global Ethic*, Cambridge, MA:Boston research Center for the 21st Century, 1995, p.35.

[†] Daisaku Ikeda in Daisaku Ikeda & Majid Tehranian , *Op.Cit,* p.77.

Guide the discussion by elaborating on the lesson learnt during the presentation, help students connect their experiences of peaceful obligation on both individual and collective levels. Discuss do principles of peace in Islam and peace oriented obligations have a transformational power, encourage them to share examples. Ensure that students know they may opt out of sharing (as they may not feel comfortable sharing their emotions publicly), listen attentively, and never negate what is shared in this personal activity. Create an open and welcoming space.

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: What did you learn over the course of this module? Returning to peace principles in Islam, have your attitudes changed toward your conception of peace in Islam? Do you find yourself integrating these practices and principles in your life to create more dynamic peace? What were the strongest lessons learned? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Ask students to write a 500-word note on the following topics, making use of the lessons learnt during the formal presentation stage.

- Write a note on Islamic concept of democracy and how it relates to principles of peace and harmony.
- Discuss nonviolent principles of Islam and analyze if any Muslim movement in modern times has integrated them in their ideology?

REQUIRED READINGS

- Mohammad Abu-Nimer. *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam.* Gainsville: University of Florida, 2000. pp.48-84.
- Razi Ahmed .“”Islam ,Nonviolence and Global Transformation”. In *Islam and Nonviolence*, edited by Glenn D paige, Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Sarah Gilliantt, Honolulu, Hawaii: Centre for Global Nonviolence, 1993. pp. 27-52.

IV. PEACEFUL APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MUSLIM CONTEXTS

By Sara Saeed Khan Niazi

CHAPTER IV: PEACEFUL APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MUSLIM CONTEXTS

In previous sessions we have discussed basics of peace and conflict studies and peace potentials within religion Islam. This chapter will specifically focus on different Islamic values and principles that promote peace. It explores several approaches within the framework of Islam that facilitate conflict resolution, transformation and peacebuilding in society. It provides insight into the mechanism brought forward by the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), and utilized in Islamic history for peaceful resolution of conflicts. Through class activities and class discussion it provides a basic understanding of the peaceful approaches to conflict resolution in Islam. It explores the points of intersection and harmony between Islamic and western approaches to peaceful conflict resolution and explains with examples how these approaches have been employed to resolve conflict and promote peaceful coexistence in Islamic world and history.

LEARNING AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the importance of peace and nonviolence in Islamic teachings
- Introduce students to the basic Islamic principles relating to peaceful conflict resolution in Islam
- To elaborate on the specific Islamic concepts underlining peaceful approaches to conflict resolution
- To provide a better understanding of scripture and history in the context of nonviolence and violence in Islamic traditions
- Helping civil society develop strategies for nonviolent engagement with the political process within an Islamic context
- To encourage the establishment of institutions within governments to constructively and nonviolently engage with community

KEY CONCEPTS

- Afw (forgiveness)
- Ta'kul, Tafk'ur wa Ta'mul (reasoning, thinking and reflecting)
- Ijtihad (critical thinking)
- Refq wa Rahma (nonviolence)

- Shura (consultation)
- Nonviolent advocacy/ activism and civil society organizations
- Tabaiun: the importance of clarification and communication
- Preference towards nonviolence – when is violence permitted? Concept of a "Just war?"

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Before beginning the formal presentation adapt reconciliation game to Islamic context by utilizing the concepts of justice (*adl*), peace (*amn*), mercy (*rahma*t) and truth (*haq & tabiyun*).

OBJECTIVE: To understand the interrelatedness of Islamic concepts of peace

TIME: 30 Minutes

TEACHING AID: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Assemble students in a room and place the names of four concepts in each corner
- Ask participants to choose one of the values that they feel is most important
- Ask why they chose this
- Every student defends his/her position

In the end lead a discussion on student's choices. Make students consider how each of these four concepts is related and prioritization is not always effective and that each concept is inextricably linked to the other. The interplay of values is thus essential.

ACTIVITY 1: VIOLENT ARGUMENT DESTRUCTION

For understanding the need for peaceful approaches to conflict resolution within Islam there is also a need to look at what are the prevalent non-violent practices that exist in Muslim world today by this activity on deconstructing a violent argument.

OBJECTIVE: To explore the prevalent dynamics of violence in Muslim world

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AID: Obtain internet videos or other speech narratives from *jihadi* web sites. Flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Choose a radical cleric or leader's speech
- Make students first consider the logic of the argument
- Ask students to discuss if the logic is in coherence with Islamic teachings
- Lead a discussion on the analysis provided by students

This activity will assist students in framing the issue in realistic terms of extremist rhetoric being prevalent in Muslim societies. Afterwards define concepts and share concrete examples from Islamic history mentioned in the presentation stage.

PRESENTATION

The word Islam stems from the root meaning s*ilm*, or peace. There is a general agreement among the scholars of Islam that Islam as a religion has been based on values and principles that promote peace and harmony. The following session discusses teachings of peace and non-violence initiated by Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), which has been long lost to the violent realities of today's Islam. It will not only enable others to

understand Muslims but will also enable Muslims to understand themselves and actively participate in transforming their societies through democratic and peaceful means.

AFW (FORGIVENESS):

Forgiveness is the most valued virtue in Islam. In Islamic tradition forgiveness is held high in matters of conflict, both on personal and public level. Forgiveness has been given preference over anger and revenge no matter how evil the offense is. It is stated in the Qur'an, "And who shun the more heinous sins and abominations; and who, whenever they are moved to anger, readily forgive."(42:37). "Forgiveness is expressed in the Qur'an as Afw, Ghafara and Maghfira. 'Afw means to pardon, waiver of punishment and amnesty. Ghafara or maghfira means to cover, to forgive and to remit."* The Qur'an does not limit forgiveness only to large conflicts, rather it also mentions "forgiveness and kindness as a manner of interaction among individuals"† and communities for the cultivation of peace and harmonious relations within the society.

"Keep to forgiveness, and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant. And if it should happen that a prompting from Satan stirs thee up [to anger], seek refuge with Allah: behold, He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing." (7:199-200)	"But withal, if one is patient in adversity and forgives - this, behold, is indeed something to set one's heart upon." (42:43)

The life of the Prophet (*pbuh*) also reflects an unwavering commitment to acts of forgiveness and mercy, in spite of all the brutalities carried out by opponents. 'Oqbah Ibn 'Amer reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"you shall keep relationship with one who cut it off from you, you shall give one who disappointed you, and you shall pardon on who oppressed you."*‡ Forgiveness is a transformative process, simultaneously aiding in attaining other virtues associated with it. Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"Moses son of 'Imran had asked: O my Lord! Who is the best honourable of Thy servants to Thee? He [the God] said: He who pardons when he is in a position of power."*§ Here forgiving others while being in the position of power is a sign of magnanimity as well as humility. At another instance Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) declares an act of patience and forgiveness as a manifestation of an individual's strength and courage as compared to anger**. General amnesty to all the oppressors on the day of conquest of Mecca and the distribution of war booty after the battle of *Hunayn* to the

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* As defined by Dr. Amir Ali, in "*Forgiveness in Islam",* retrieved from, http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/library/Forgiveness-in-Islam.pdf

† Abu-Nimer, Mohammed, in *Nonviolence and Peace-Building in Islam Theory and Practice*. p 67

‡ *AL-HADIS*, op.cit. #192w, p548

§ M, Amir Ali, Forgiveness in Islam, by; The Institute of Islamic information and Education, retrieved from , http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/library/Forgiveness-in-Islam.pdf

** Abu Hurayra reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "The strong one is not he who knocks out his adversary; the strong one is he who keeps control over his temper".

Meccans[*] who had joined hands with him to fight the war provides an understanding that forgiveness in Islam is not just forgetting and moving on but also an attempt to improve relationships with adversaries and gaining their respect and trust.

TA'KUL, TAFK'UR WA TA'MUL/ IJTIHAD (REASONING, THINKING AND REFLECTING/ CRITICAL THINKING):

Critical thinking is considered an essential prerequisite for any dialogue and conflict resolution process. "Critical thinking is the ability to engage in reasoned discourse with intellectual standards such as clarity, accuracy, precision, and logic to use analytic skills with a fundamental value orientation that emphasizes intellectual humility, intellectual integrity, and fair-mindedness."[†] Reasoning, thinking and reflection is known as *Ta'kul, Tafk'ur wa Ta'mul* in Islam and considered a prized virtue, "oft repeated in Islamic text also as *Hikma* (wisdom) and *Aql* (rationality)."[‡] In Islam the relationship between faith and critical thinking is a dynamic one where a "creative mind is a critical mind."[§]

The Qur'an invites its readers to reflect on its text. Consider the following Qur'anic verse:

> "Here is, a Book which we have sent down unto thee, full of blessings that they may meditate on its signs**,** and that men of understanding may receive admonition." (38: 29).

Allah puts forward a challenge for people in Qur'an by asking them to ponder over his signs while using their reasoning and logic to better understand their faith, and not to accept it blindly. In fact, "verily in that are signs for those who reflect (30: 21). Pursuit of knowledge and reasoning are themes central to Islamic tradition and text. Islam considers knowledge essential for both spiritual and mental development. However knowledge without creativity and critical thinking is vain.[**] "*Ijtihad* or independent thinking is used as a principle of creative and critical thinking in Islam.[††] Creativity has been an integral part of Islamic reconciliation and conflict resolution. Consider the example from Islamic history on the following page:[‡‡]

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[*] People of Mecca, who have been the oppressors.

[†] Retrieved from http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/4/ct-def/def-of-ct.htm

[‡] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed.2003. *Nonviolence and Peace-Building in Islam Theory and Practice*. Gainesville, Florida: University Pres of Florida.p 67

[§] "Critical Thinking" by Ibrahim B. Syed, retrieved from http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_101_150/critical_thinking.htm

[**] Which is supported by "Worship without knowledge has no goodness in it, and knowledge without understanding has no goodness in it, and the recitation of the Qur'an which is not thoughtful has no goodness in it" (Abu Dawd as quoted in Abu Nimer, 1998,bk,20,ch.1;Tirmidhi 1965,bk.19)

[††] Critical Thinking by Ibrahim B.Syed retrieved from http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_101_150/critical_thinking.htm

[‡‡] Michael Hart, in "The One Hundred Most Influential People, p 3

Prophet Muhammad's (*pbuh*) inventive and novel approach to resolve the disagreement between tribes of Mecca regarding the replacement of the black stone in Kaba'h is one of such examples. "Black stone was the meteorite Abraham used in original construction of Kaba'h and was a reminder of Meccan's noble ancestry. The dispute took place when every faction of Mecca decided to have the honour of replacing the Black Stone after the rebuilding of Kaba'h which was badly destructed by heavy floods. Every tribe swore that they would kill if they weren't given the honour. Prophet asked the chief of each tribe to hold a piece of the sheet on which the black rock was placed; they jointly lifted the sheet, and then Muhammad, peace be upon him, lifted the black rock and set it in place. Nobody felt slighted, and every clan had participated."

Similar incidents from Islamic history bring forward the commonality that exists between inherent principles of Islam such as critical thinking and innovativeness and the basic tenets of secular nonviolent strategy and peacebuilding.

REFQ WA RAHMA (NONVIOLENCE):

Each time individuals or communities disagree or face a conflict; there exists two approaches to conflict resolution: violent methods and nonviolent methods. Violence leads to destruction, anger and hatred, whereas nonviolence makes way for peaceful means avoiding violence and confrontation. The Qur'an tells us that Allah does not like *fasad* or those who perpetrate *fasad (violence, destruction*[*]*).*

Islam prefers nonviolence over violence. Almost all the basic virtues revealed in the Qur'an like patience, kindness, forgiveness, truth, generosity and respect for human life and dignity are also guiding principles for modern day nonviolent strategic action. The box[†] below provides an explanation of the importance of patience in Islam.

PATIENCE A PEACEFUL RESPONSE:

The Qur'an attaches great importance to patience. Wahiduddin Khan elaborates further on the relationship between patience and nonviolence and states:

> Patience implies a peaceful response or reaction, whereas impatience implies a violent response. The word *Sabr* exactly expresses the notion of non-violence as it is understood in modern times. That patient action is non-violent action has been clearly expressed in the Qur'an.

[*] Al-Qur'an (2:204-05; 28:4; 30:41; 26:150-52; 7:74

[†] MaulanaWahiduddin khan in "*Non-Violence in Islam*", retrieved from http://saif_w.tripod.com/questions/violence/non_violence_and_islam.htm on 5th October 2007

In almost all religious scriptures including the Qur'an, there is mention of war, but this mention does not establish a link between religion and violence, or religion perpetuating violence, rather it is a reflection of political and social realities[*]. However it must be kept in mind that Qur'an does not insist on pacifism but it gives preference to nonviolence and peace over violence and conflict. Qur'an's entire spirit is in consonance with peace and nonviolence and does not permit use of violence as a norm at all. Rather violence has only been allowed in a situation where one is in a defensive position. As Asghar Ali Engineer, a religious scholar from India notes, almost "every verse in the Qur'an permitting violence of any sort is preceded by the words 'if they commit violence against you…."[†] Similarly *Jihad* which means struggle has been given great importance in Qur'an. However, the greatest form of jihad is *Jihad al Akbar* which is to fight one's own lower self; a struggle towards being a better human being. Wahiduddin Khan notes:

> What is *jihad? Jihad* means struggle, to struggle one's utmost. It must be appreciated at the outset that this word is used for non-violent struggle as opposed to violent struggle. One clear proof of this is the verse of the Qur'an (25:52) which says: Perform *jihad* with this (i.e. the word of the Qur'an) most strenuously. The Qur'an is not a sword or a gun. It is a book of ideology. In such a case performing *jihad* with the Qur'an would mean an ideological struggle to conquer peoples' hearts and minds through Islam's superior philosophy.[‡]

EXAMPLE FROM THE LIFE OF PROPHET (*pbuh*):

After the first revelation of Qur'an on Prophet Muhammad, Prophet Muhammad kept the recitation of Qur'an peaceful and secret to avoid violent confrontation with the opposition. Instead of retaliating and reacting violently Prophet Muhammad preferred secret migration to Medina from Mecca where there was growing opposition and violence against him. This is also an example of a nonviolent mechanism employed by Prophet Muhammad. Similarly during the battle of *Al-Ahzab* when the tribe of Quraysh had initiated a war, Prophet Muhammad with his colleagues dug trenches to evade a violent battle to take place even when the adversaries had all the intentions of waging war. This is another example of the Prophet's preference for nonviolence irrespective of the circumstance.

In modern Muslim history Muslim Pashtun[§] movement of North West Frontier Province of India from 1930-1934 is an excellent case study of organized use of nonviolence against tyrant authority.

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[*] Asghar Ali Engineer in *On Developing Theology of Peace in Islam*, retrieved from http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~rtavakol/engineer/theology.htm on 5th October 07

[†] Ibid

[‡] MaulanaWahiduddin khan in "*Non-Violence in Islam*", retrieved from http://saif_w.tripod.com/questions/violence/non_violence_and_islam.htm on 5th October 2007

[§] Mohammad Raquib, in "*The Muslim Pushtun Movement of the North-West-Frontier of India, 1930-1934*, pp 120-125.

EXAMPLE FROM CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WORLD:

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan founded Pashtun *Jirga* which added a contingent of volunteer members once it gained momentum. The body of volunteers was known as *Khudai Kitmatgar* (Servants of God). The pledge of service for the recruits was based on Islamic values and principle with a commitment to serve all humanity equally. *Khudai Khitmatgar's* purpose was to win complete independence for India and transformation of oppressive social, political and economic structures in N.W.F.P strictly within the framework of non violent means.

Tracing nonviolent resistance in the Islamic world, Stephen Zunes regards the "Iranian revolution in 1977 as a movement heavily depending on nonviolence and unarmed resistance despite its bloody image. In addition the two Palestinian *Intifadas*, 1919 revolution in Egypt, the overthrow of General Suharto in 1999, the uprising against Zia ul Haq the Pakistani dictator in 1988 and many more are a real life manifestation of nonviolent activism in Islamic world."*

SHURA (CONSULTATION):

Inclusiveness and participation are integral elements of any process of conflict resolution and peace. Rather any effort towards peace will be futile if it is exclusive and hierarchal in nature and benefits only the few. Consensus building and consultation are essential ingredients which make conflict resolution and peace-building strategies democratic. Qur'an attaches great importance to mutual consultation and consensus building, and has therefore introduced the principle of s*hura*. It is among four other fundamental principles of Islam: justice, equality and human dignity. "Shura is solidarity in society based on the principle of free consultation and genuine dialogue, reflecting equality in thought and the expression of opinion."†

PARALLELS BETWEEN WESTERN DEMOCRACY AND SHURA PRINCIPLE:

Sadek Jawad Sulaiman in his essay "The Shura Principle in Islam" elaborates on the nature of *shura* principle in Islam. He considers it essentially *parallel* to the democratic principle in Western political thought, having analogous aspects and about the same tendency or direction. It is predicated on *three basic precepts*:

1. All persons in any given society are equal in human and civil rights;
2. Public issues are best decided by majority view;
3. The three other principles of *justice*, *equality* and *human dignity*, which constitute Islam's moral core, and from which all Islamic conceptions of human and civil rights derive, are best realized, in personal as well as public life, under *shura* governance.

* Stephen Zunes in Nonviolent Resistance in the Islamic World'. pp.3-5,9.
† Sadek Jawad Sulaiman in "The Shura Principle in Islam", retrieved from, http://www.alhewar.com/SadekShura.htm 6th October 2007.

Islam is egalitarian in nature and denies any sort of authority, privilege and hierarchy. The Qur'an stresses on equality, dignity of the human individual, popular consent, shared responsibility, personal freedom and above all justice. While elaborating on the qualities of blessed ones the Qur'an states, "*those who answer their lord, establish the prayers, and their affairs are by consultation; who spend of that which we have given them*" (42:38). Consider the following example:[*]

> Caliph, Abu Bakr Al Siddique, after being confirmed as a successor to Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) said, "I have been given authority over you, but I am not the best among you. Obey me so long as I obey God in the administration of your affairs. Where I disobey God, you owe me no obedience." At another instance caliph Omar while upholding the principle of Shura and ijma said "Where I do right, assist me; where I do wrong correct me."

Therefore *shura* is an act of worship, which is obligatory and assists Muslims and their leadership in making decisions and taking actions upon them.

SULH (CONCILIATION):

Islam promotes peace and harmony both at interpersonal and communal level. Muslims are urged time and again to settle their clashes and disagreements in a nonviolent manner, preferably through dialogue or other sort of interventions. "The word Islam is derived from the Arabic root Silm meaning 'peace', 'submission', 'deliverance' and 'safety'. From the Qur'anic perspective, attention should be paid to the relationship between the concept of *sulh* (conciliation, peace) and the concept of *sâlih amal* (good deeds). *Sâlih*, like *sulh*, comes from the same root and means 'to cleave to peace or move towards peace."[†] Thus "a good Muslim is the one whose hand and tongue leave other Muslim in peace."[‡]

According to both the Qur'an and Prophet's (*pbuh*) tradition, Muslims are supposed to settle their conflicts and disagreements with peace. As mentioned in the Qur'an *"In most of their secret talks, save him who orders charity or kindness or conciliation between mankind and he who does this seeking the good pleasure of Allah, we shall give him great reward*" (4:14). Therefore in Islam peacemaking, dialogue, and conciliation in matters of conflict are necessary requirements for being a good Muslim.

Consider the box on following page:

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[*] As quoted by Sadek Jawad Sulaiman in "The Shura Principle in Islam", retrieved from, http://www.alhewar.com/SadekShura.htm 6th October 2007.

[†] Ismail Albayrak in "*Islam and Terror: From the Perspective of Fethullah Gulen"*, retrieved from http://en.fgulen.com/content/view/2243/32/ on 6th October 2007

[‡] Sahih Al Bukhari, 1998, vol. 1, bk, 2, no.10

"*If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses till it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair. Believers are but a single brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."* (49:9-10)

The verses quoted above stress both the importance of peaceful interventions as dialogue and the need for the dialogue, or any other effort, to be just and fair. Miriam in "*Islamic Approaches and Principles of Dialogue*"* writes that Islamic texts are rich with examples of dialogue. "Nature of dialogue in Islamic history include communication between the Prophet (*pbuh*) and angels, dialogue among the Prophets, the companions, dialogue within the Muslim *ummah*, the dialogue of *dawah* , interreligious dialogue by engaging those of other beliefs and many unrecorded dialogues have occurred between believers at the mosque with imams, within the community, and within the family."†

In her book, *Brief History of Islam,* Tamara Sonn counts the concept of *sulh* as one of the several reasons of the expansion of Islamic rule and notes that the methods of conquest resulted in the division of world into three parts, *dar-al-islam, dar-al-sulh* and *dar-al-harb*. Dar-al-Islam refers to those regions where Islamic law prevails. *Dar-al-had*, or *Dar-al-Sulh* (region of truce) were both regions whose leaders had agreed to pay the tax and to protect the rights of Muslims and their allies. However they still maintained their autonomy including their own legal systems.‡

The use of s*ulh* as a mechanism to govern broadens the impact of conciliation within Islamic society. The tradition of the Prophet (*pbuh*) also upholds peacemaking, dialogue and conciliation. The Prophet (*pbuh*) said, *"Shall I inform you of merit greater than fasting, charity, and prayer? It is in the conciliation of people*."§ The incident of the placement of black stone in Kabah, explained earlier, is one such example. Scholars of peace** in their work have also mentioned mosques as a centre for mediation in Islamic society. Consider the box below*:

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* Miriam, Sabirah Ashki, in "Islamic approaches and Principles of Dialogue, retrieved from http://www.salaminstitute.org/ashki.pdf, p 26, on 7th October 2007

† Ibid

‡ Tamara Sonn in, "A brief History of Islam", p33.

§ Imam Ghazzali's Ihya Ulum-Id-Din (The Book of Religious Learnings), Islamic Book Service, New Delhi, 2001,Volume III, p.167

** Scholars of Peace– The Islamic Tradition and Historical Conflict Resolution in Timbuktu: The Special Conflict Resolution Research Group in Mali, by Dr. Mahmoud Zouber, Abdoul Kader Haidara, Mamadou Diallo, Dr. Stephanie Diakité, retrieved from

EXAMPLE FROM MUSLIM WORLD:

"The Mosques of Timbuktu were centres of mediation and arbitration between warring regional factions. Imams, judges and scholars opened the Mosques and declared them sanctuaries for any factions willing to seek resolution to the conflicts separating them. The scholars didn't limit their interventions there, however. They often opened their homes to parties in conflict – women in conflict with their husbands, sons in conflict with their fathers sought refuge and found mediation in their midst. The scholars travelled great distances in the desert to bring peace between people of the region. They considered themselves Ambassadors of Peace and champions of the Qur'anic tradition calling for peaceful resolution to conflict and dispute both in principle and in practice. Mahmoud Ben Umar (1463-1548), Grand Cadi (Islamic leader) of Timbuktu and one of the greatest jurists in the history of Timbuktu, vehemently disapproved the tyrannical arrest of Jewish merchants in the city of Gao further south in the desert kingdom. His objections and subsequent well articulated arguments obliged the King, Askia Mohamed, to rescind his order and to free the merchants."

Islam over the period of time has played a great role in introducing, and setting mechanisms to intervene community and government conflict, in perpetuating a culture of peace, and in the application of methodologies and processes of conciliation between people, primarily based on fundamental principle and values like *Sulh* put forward by Qur'an.

NUSRAT AL HAQ (ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY):

Islam as a religion not only lays down foundational principles towards a peaceful and just society, but has also stressed upon putting these values and principle in practice for the empowerment of the week and oppressed. In Islam passivity is looked down upon and there is great support for "dynamic social activism in terms of individual duties and sense of social responsibility."[†]

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http://www.sum.uio.no/research/mali/timbuktu/research/articles/conflictresolution.pdf p.2, on 5th October 2007.

[*] Scholars of Peace– The Islamic Tradition and Historical Conflict Resolution in Timbuktu: The Special Conflict Resolution Research Group in Mali, by Dr. Mahmoud Zouber, Abdoul Kader Haidara, Mamadou Diallo, Dr. Stephanie Diakité, retrieved from http://www.sum.uio.no/research/mali/timbuktu/research/articles/conflictresolution.pdf p.2, on 5th October 2007.

[†] Abu-Nimer, Mohammed.2003. *Nonviolence and Peace-Building in Islam Theory and Practice*. Gainesville, Florida: University Pres of Florida.p 67

The **Qur'an** elaborates on characteristic of the right ones as the ones who are active in executing tasks that will benefit others and says, *"They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and compete in doing good. They are among the righteous"* (Surah Al 'Imran, 114).

In addition these traits also become factors, distinguishing true Muslims from others as they compete for goodness. In chapter An-Nisa of the Qur'an there is a clear indication that whatever the conditions might be all Muslims are obliged to lend a helping hand to the people who are oppressed, "*What reason could you have for not fighting in the Way of Allah—for those men, women and children who are oppressed and say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city whose inhabitants are wrongdoers! Give us a protector from You! Give us a helper from You!"*? (Surat an-Nisa', 75). "Zaakat and Sadaqah serve as mechanisms in Islam which relate to social and individual responsibility for the betterment of poor, needy, orphan, and destitute and slaves."[*] *Zaakat* is obligatory whereas *Sadaqa* is voluntary and both are considered a form of worship. Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) was documented as saying: "*The people when they see the tyrant and do not restrain his hands, Allah will be about to punish them all*". In addition Prophet (*pbuh*) said: "*Any people amongst whom sins are committed, and they could change them but they did not (change), Allah will be about to bring a punishment which engulfs all.*"[†] All human beings, according to Islam, have been created by one and the same God, and belong to one great brotherhood, that is why Islam has laid great emphasis on the activism to support poor and needy members of society, to empower society. Believing that all humans have the same origin, in Islam activism and advocacy for good is irrespective of differences of religion, race and gender. Though the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet (*pbuh*) set examples of strictly nonviolent activism, contemporary Islamic activism has manifested itself in various forms within the Muslim world - both violently and nonviolently. Wendy Asbeek Busse and Jan Schoonenboom in *Islamic Activism and Democritazation* [‡]note:

Responsibility for advocacy and activism for the good extends both on individual and social level.

[*] Ibid

[†] [Abu Dawud: Book of Battles/3775]

[‡] Wendy Asbeek Brusse and Jan Schoonenboom in "Islamic Activism and Democratization", retrieved from http://www.isim.nl/files/Review_18/Review_18-8.pdf p.1, on 7th October 2007.

CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ACTIVISM:

"Islamic activism has transformed a lot over the period of time. *Jama-al Islamiyya* in Egypt is an example of Islamic activism which was initally violent but after 1997 the organization renounced violence and started advocating non-violence." Asbeek Busse and Schoonenboom also write about the changing trends in Islamic activism and note that "the younger generation in particular often draws on Islamic grassroots network to gain support among ordinary citizens. They have become familiar with the role of democratic principles and human rights in the fight against state oppression, arbitrariness, lawlessness and social mobilization."

In short, Islam as a religion supports activism and advocacy for the rights of individual, and the collective and shuns apatheitc attitude towards the poor plight of others.

MAROF UL IHSAN (KINDNESS):

Peacebuilding approaches generally try to create an atmosphere where everyone is respected and valued. Equality for all humans, respect for human dignity and constructive behavior and communication among individuals is of great importance for the success of any peacebilding process.

Within the Islamic framework of peace, *Ihsan* provides the basis for constructive behavior both in peace and conflict situations and constitutes one of the basic themes in the Qur'an.

Ihsan is all about those human qualities and behavior, which are related to goodness and desired by God. *Muhsin* are those individuals who practice *Ihsan*. In Qur'an it is mentioned "*Is there any reward for Ihsaan other than Ihsaan*" (55:60). "The root for word *Ihsan* is H-S-N, which means: to do right, to improve, to treat with kindness."[*] In Islamic tradition kindness is oft-repeated, both Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) have mentioned it time and again. Consider the following saying by the prophet (*pbuh*) "*Whoever is kind to His creatures, God is kind to him; therefore be kind to man on earth, whether good or bad; and being kind to the bad, is to withhold him from badness, thus in heaven you will be treated kind*ly."[†] Consider the box below:[‡]

[*] Hans Wehr dictionary of Modern Arabic as quoted by Saif Manzoor in Ihsan, retrieved from http://clearvisionpk.com/Ihsan.html on August 2007

[†] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*.

[‡] Kabir Helminski in "Sayings of the Prophet Mohammed", retrieved from, http://www.sufism.org/society/hadith.html, on 8th October 2007.

The Prophet **(***pbuh***)** while elaborating on the nature of noble actions said, "*What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the wrongs of the injured."*

Forgiveness, the struggle to fight evil, and oppression, charity, and generosity are all considered acts of kindness. Acts of kindness within Islam are not only limited to humans, rather there are specific instructions in the Qur'an and tradition of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) regarding kind treatment of animals as well. Kindness is a way of life and has been elevated as the embodiment of worship. *Ihsaan* is the most desirable quality in a Muslim. To be a Muslim a person must practice acts of goodness towards humankind, be humble, fear God and strive against evil in the way of God. Such a person is promised an immense reward from God.

Knowledge of truth is considered equivalent to knowledge of Allah

TABAIUN (CLARIFICATION)- TRUTH SEEKING:

Truth seeking in matters of dispute and its resolution holds great importance in any peacemaking effort that is to be sustained. "There is great emphasis in Islam to be just and truthful in all matters and to be truthful it is mandatory to seek knowledge of truth. Islam is based on knowledge and does not accept ignorance. Several times the Qur'an mentions the relationship between truth and knowledge by stressing that only through knowledge one can reach the truth."[*] Striving to attain knowledge of truth is considered as a great act of piety in Islam. In Islam ignorance is highly condemned. "*Elevated status is accorded to those who seek, possess, teach and act upon knowledge. Dismiss any thought of equality between those who know and those who do not*" (39:9).

The life and tradition of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) also upholds truth, truthfulness and truth seeking both in action and word - particularly during conflict. He said, "*No man's faith is complete if he doesn't discard falsehood even in a joke and refrain from it even in a dispute, though his cause may be just."*[†] And "*a hypocrite is one who is disposed to untruths, violates trust, does not fulfil promises and fabricates falsehoods in a dispute.*"[‡] As mentioned above, *hadith* instructs Muslims to avoid hypocrisy and seek truth in dispute as lack of truth will harm both the parties adversely. It emphasizes clarifying positions and making decisions on the basis of truth.

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[*] Quote from Qur'an Only those are Believers who have believed in God and His Apostle, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of God: Such are the truthful ones (49:15).

[†] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*.

[‡] Reported by the Companion, Abu Hurayrah, in *Saheeh Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim*.

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY:

The Prophet's (*pbuh*) wife Ayesha, while accompanying him on one of the expeditions lost her necklace on the way back, and when she went to search for the necklace in the desert where she had earlier been, the caravan left in her absence. Later, she was picked by a camel man and brought to Medina. In Medina, mischief mongers accused Ayesha of unseemly conduct. Consequently, she and the Prophet Muhammad became estranged and she left for her father's house. Later, Allah revealed that Ayesha was innocent and no blame rested on her. As a consequence the Holy Prophet and Ayesha were reconciled and the revelations that followed strictly condemned the ones who lied and slandered her, "*Those who brought forward the lie are a body among yourselves: think it not to be an evil to you; On the contrary it is good for you: to every man among them (will come the punishment) of the sin that he earned, and to him who took on himself the lead among them, will be a penalty grievous"(24:11).*

Truth is the basic ethic and essence of religion Islam. If truth is missing in the actions or words of a Muslim his worship lacks sincerity. Conclusively, Islamic values and principles are in absolute harmony with the values and principles that form the fundamentals of secular peacemaking and peacebuilding. For Muslims, reconciliation, peacebuilding are not latest trends towards establishment of a peaceful society, rather they are embedded in Islamic tradition and text which needs to be revived once again, to address the violent realities of Islamic world.

Truth-seeking in any matter is an essential quality for a believer. Similarly truth-seeking is also an essential quality needed for peacemakers as well as peace-builders for sustainable peace and development.

ACTIVITY 2: CASE STUDY

The presentation will provide students with a basic understanding of Islamic principles of peace and their application in Islamic history. This activity will take that understanding further and will enable students to analyze conflict situations in Islamic world through the lens of Islamic approaches to peace.

OBJECTIVE: Application of Islamic approaches to peace

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Different case studies of conflict situations involving Muslims; it can be Kashmir, Palestine or any other conflict

METHOD:

- Assemble students in groups of 4-6
- Give students a series of case study of a conflict situation involving Muslims
- Ask students to discuss how they might resolve this conflict keeping in view the Islamic approaches to peace they have studied during the presentation
- They should provide a set of recommendations on how to resolve the dispute peacefully
- The cases should be chosen in the context of the region but some external examples might also be useful to give the students a global perspective

After students have finished the exercise lead a discussion on the results and recommendation they provide.

ACTIVITY 3: SIMULATION EXERCISE

Simulation exercises enact situations and problems that are much like those expected in the real world. A simulation exercise on *Ijtihad* will allow students to see what difficulties might arise, when discussing controversial issues within Islamic world. In addition, the exercise allows the students to explore their ideas without harm, being a part of what would be a natural consequence in real life. In this manner, students can explore ways to develop conceptual clarity of *ijtihad*, the meaning and need. (*This simulation can also be conducted by changing the scenario to that of a peace negotiation between parties*)

OBJECTIVE: To gain conceptual clarity of the process of *ijtihad (or negotiation process)* and understand the challenges faced during the process

TIME: 45 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words, different cases of contemporary controversial issues in Muslim world, (*Bahthul Masail in Indonesia on family planning and nuclear energy cases written by CSIS can be a resource. Similarly Consensus Building Institute Cambridge, MA can also be a valuable resource for the exercise*)

METHOD:

- Divide students into groups of 4-5
- Ask the students to choose any new controversial topic relating to Islam
- Students would play the roles of different constituents and points of view in the simulation and attempt to reach an agreement or conclusion
- The role of the mediator must be played by the instructor

Once the activity is over, lead a group discussion using their experience as different constituents. How was it to defend their positions, what kind of dynamics occurred while coming to a conclusion?

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry, what did you learn about peaceful principles and approaches within Islam. Have you ever and will you in future employ these approaches for personal conflict management. How did the simulation activity help you in understanding different issues concerning the process of Ijtehad or negotiation? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

During the presentation highlight the role of Muslim nonviolent activist, later ask students to write a short research paper on this personality and consider critiques of the individual. It will assist students in understanding the importance of leadership in peaceful approaches to conflict resolution.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Mohammad Abu-Nimer. *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam.* Gainsville: University of Florida, 2000. pp.48-84.
- Razi Ahmed .“”Islam ,Nonviolence and Global Transformation”. In *Islam and Nonviolence*, edited by Glenn D paige ,Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Sarah Gilliantt, Honolulu, Hawaii: Centre for Global Nonviolence, 1993. pp. 27-52.

V. IDENTITY & DIVERSITY IN ISLAM

By Amr Abdalla

CHAPTER V: IDENTITY & DIVERSITY IN ISLAM*

This chapter is designed to provide a basic framework to discuss identity and diversity within an Islamic context in relation to peace and conflict. We will define and discuss concepts like identity, diversity and stereotypes. Specific class activities and exercises are devised to create an interactive environment where students are able to apply what they learn through formal presentation. The session will further elaborate on both Islamic and western world view on identity and associated concepts and issues. Simultaneously emphasizing Islamic principles and approaches, and comparing them with dominant Western ones. It will also highlight the concepts of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Islam and will provide religious support to such concepts, and discuss historic examples of the application of these concepts during the life of Prophet Mohammed (*pbuh*) in Medina. We will conclude by addressing some of the misconceptions and modern challenges to principles of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Islam.

SESSION I: WHAT IS IDENTITY?

LEARNING AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- Understand basic concepts related to identity
- Utilize identity concepts as a tool to understand and analyze social interaction
- Explore concept of diversity
- Perceive the problem of stereotyping
- Explore how identity intersects with peace and conflict studies

KEY CONCEPTS

- Identity
- Identity-based interaction
- Diversity
- Stereotypes

* Different Scenarios presented as examples of identity in the curriculum are adapted and customized accordingly from Library Professional Curriculum Manual Developed by Allison Antenello.

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts
TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Warm-up exercises are useful to introduce students to each other and will serve as an entry point to the discussion on identity. This warm up activity will prepare students for information during this session. It is an informal way to engage students in the topic and begin discussion.

OBJECTIVE: To explore identity as a concept particularly individual identity

TIME: 10 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Instruct students to form a circle
- Ask the students to choose three adjectives to describe themselves
- Students state their names and their three adjectives
- Teacher will write the adjectives on the board

- Then teacher leads a discussion by asking what comes to your mind when you hear the word identity
- Elicit key words from students and write words on the board, facilitate discussion on following points
- What are different types of identities (use traits on board) and which identities are represented in the classroom
- How do people express their identities?

In the end lead a discussion on student's responses. Make students consider how different identities intersect and what role identity plays in society. Discuss how identity is layered and complex. (e.g. we are not only a man and/or a woman) People can have multiple identities (religious, ethnic, gendered, national, professional etc). Pose the question: What is an Islamic Identity. Allow for some answers and then define that identity is *Rahma*; the purpose of sending Muhammad (*pbuh*) was to be a *Rahma* for the entire world. Now proceed to the final presentation on identity.

PRESENTATION

This session provides an overview of the main concepts, and definitions related to identity and diversity. Thus, in addition to the concept of identity, three associated concepts, namely *diversity*, *stereotypes*, and *interaction* are discussed. In addition the session also elaborates on their significance in relation to the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in modern times. Students are encouraged to apply lessons learnt in chapter two on basic principles of peace and conflict, to thoroughly understand the dynamics created by identity and diversity in conflict situations.

IDENTITY is an essential part of one's self, a part that an individual strives to discover, affirm and present to others. It includes two elements: how an individual conceives him or herself and whether the individual can or cannot achieve a mutual recognition with others. However, these elements of identity can be problematic, a Muslim may misconceive the Islamic component of his/her identity, or he/she may know it, but misrepresent it to the others. Hence, an identity crisis within a Muslim is possible, unless he or she makes a constant *ijtihad* in this regard.

Identity is something that every individual has and needs in order to exist and function in a social environment. Therefore, identity is a basic need that is found in all societies and cultural groups. Each individual has multiple identities; identity is multi-faceted. Identity can be simultaneously related to family, culture, religion, occupation, gender, age, etc. Different facets may be more or less important on a temporary or permanent basis depending on the situation or environment. For example, a person may identify as a Muslim woman lawyer (religion, sex, occupation), while another may identify himself to be a young artistic male (age, interest, sex). Different elements of one's identity may be more or less important at any given time depending on the situation or environment.

Consider the following example:[*]

Fatima Khan is a Pakistani-American woman living in the United States. She was born in the U.S. after her parents emigrated from Pakistan in the early 1970s. Fatima is now a professor of South Asian studies at a large U.S. research university. Significantly, at the start of each term, Fatima discusses her Pakistani-American identity with her students. She tells her students that her parents are Pakistani immigrants and that she grew up in a Pakistani neighborhood in New York City with Urdu as a first language. She also explains that her extended family still lives in Pakistan and that she visits them frequently. Fatima views her Pakistani identity as an important element in her professional work. She feels that being Pakistani-American adds a degree of legitimacy to her scholarship, which focuses on South Asian American diasporas. It is for this reason that she emphasizes this element of her identity in her professional environment. Fatima views her own identity as a Pakistani-American. We may also infer that she identifies as a woman, a professor, a researcher and a daughter. Significantly, these individual dimensions of identity become group dimensions when they are shared with others. Thus, when Fatima's identity is viewed by other Pakistani Americans, she is viewed as having shared national identities. Likewise, when colleagues view Fatima they recognize a shared professional identity as professors and/or researchers.

Even though identity is integrally tied to social existence, it has both group and individual dimensions. Identity is formed through inclusion, as well as exclusion; identity is based on affirmation as well as negation of certain things.

*Fatima Khan **includes** both her Pakistani and American identities as part of her larger personal identity. She is careful not to exclude either her Pakistani or American identity, which would change how she perceives herself and also how others perceive her. It is her dual national and cultural identities that are central to her personhood. Importantly, Fatima is careful to articulate that she is not **(exclusion)** a Pakistani immigrant like her parents. It is often assumed that Fatima is an immigrant because of the community in which she lived and also because she speaks with an accent. She can discuss immigrant identity based upon the experiences of her parents and her research; however she does not share this identity and thus excludes it from her own identity. Additionally, a Pakistani immigrant identity has a different set of associations and elements that Fatima does not necessarily embrace – for example stereotypes that assume Pakistani immigrants in the United States have an illegal status, and are uneducated. Thus, Fatima identifies herself with elements she embraces (includes) but also those she rejects (excludes).*

Identity is expressed in a wide variety of forms, including actions, language, clothing, beliefs, practices, symbols, understanding and relationships. These expressions of identity

[*] Examples are adapted from Library Curriculum Manual, by Allison Antenello, Amr Abdalla, and Samar Sehata

will change and be emphasized more or less strongly depending on the environment that a person has entered and the identity they seek to express.

Fatima's Pakistani-American identity is clearly identifiable both in her clothing and her cooking. Fatima dresses similarly to her professional colleagues, wearing jeans, long pants, sweaters or jackets. The university atmosphere is casual and Fatima feels no need to dress formally. Her clothing is therefore indistinguishable from her colleagues and is not necessarily "Pakistani-American" in any way. Her jewelry however, is very distinct. Fatima collects traditional Pakistani jewelry, which is unique in color and texture. She wears large necklaces and bracelets in gold. Her jewelry is distinctly Pakistani. Fatima's cooking is a similar blend of South Asian and American influence. Fatima uses many of the spices and traditional Pakistani recipes of her parents and grandparents, infusing them with American flavors and cooking techniques. Thus, looking at Fatima's unique style or eating her cooking, one may infer that she has dual national and/or cultural identities.

IDENTITY-BASED INTERACTION:

In general, interaction describes the reciprocal contact and communication between two or more individuals or groups. Since our identities shape how we behave and communicate, it necessarily follows that identity directly impacts interaction. Our ability to understand each other and interact in an effective or comfortable manner is greatly determined by our understanding of our own and other's identities and modes of behaviour/communication. Some common forms of interaction are integration, coexistence, separation and hostility. Shared identity may encourage group formation – developing friendships, professional associations or collectives based on common interests or goals.

The South Asian Association of Journalists (SAJA) a professional association of South Asian Journalists in the US, is one example of integration – when a group of people with the same profession gathers together with the common interest of discussing and improving their profession.

Peaceful coexistence is fostered between people or groups when understanding of different identities can be reached.

Two students attend the same class and strongly disagree with one another's opinions regarding human rights issues. However, each student understands that the personal experiences, nationality, culture and religious identity of the other student influence their opinions. The two students agree to disagree and coexist in the class without a problem.

Separation between groups may occur when understanding cannot be reached regarding identity and interaction would lead to escalating tension and hostility – potentially erupting in violence. Separation involves physically creating space between parties.

The final match of the FIFA World Cup has ended and Italy has won the 2006 football championship beating France 5-3. Football fans in the stadium are celebrating and rioting simultaneously and police have already been positioned inside and outside the stadium to address a potential violent outbreak. Both French and Italian fans identify strongly with their country, wearing the colors of their nation and proudly displaying the football jerseys of their favorite players. This strong identification with both the sport and their countries has lead to shouting matches between the two parties. In several instances the police have ***separated*** *the two groups to avoid escalating violence.*

DIVERSITY:

Diversity refers to variety within any group or society. Diversity can be reflected in any area of identity. In terms of this training, diversity is important because the Qur'an teaches that diversity is an intentional aspect of creation from which one can learn. It is also important to recognize that diversity exists not only in the world at large, but also within the Muslim community, the *ummah*. How does diversity relate to identity? As discussed above, members of specific group can share an identity. For example, a group of Muslims who attend the same mosque all share a religious identity. However, this same group of people may be very diverse. In fact, their religion and geographic location (proximity to the mosque) may be the only elements of their identity that they share.

The #12 bus drives through several neighborhoods in East London, England. Passengers of many ages and races fill the seats and little room is left for standing. As you look around you notice several West African men, each of them holding worry beads. You assume they are on their way to a mosque, which is on this bus route. A middle-aged Indian couple sits opposite the group of men, wearing trendy clothing and listening to music on a portable CD player – they laugh and pass the headphones between them. Next to you there is a young woman with red hair and green eyes, she is reading a book in French. When the bus reaches the next stop in front of the mosque you watch the bus empty. It is surprising to see how many people walk toward the mosque greeting one another before they enter. Each of the people you observed walks toward the mosque and centers.

We can only speculate about the diversity of the passengers described in the example above. It is possible that the West African men, the middle-aged Indian couple and the young red-haired woman have many things in common. However, it is also likely that their different ages and nationalities have led them to have different experiences, interests and identities. The objective is not to hypothesize what each of these different identities might be, but rather to recognize that a group of people can simultaneously share one identity while having other diverse identities that are not shared. Let us explore identity through this activity.

ACTIVITY 1: UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

OBJECTIVE: To help students realize that they are all a part of the "big (perfect) picture"

TIME: 30 Minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Post it notes, chart paper, markers, puzzle (try to find at least something where students will have one puzzle piece each)

METHOD:

- Give each student a piece of a puzzle
- Have them try to create the puzzle

Lead a discussion on the experience of trying to create the puzzle, how did they feel when a piece was missing. It will make them understand that if one piece is missing then the entire picture is incomplete. This picture includes – Muslims and non-Muslims alike (Allah is Lord of ALL people and the entire world).

Continuing with the presentation diversity is an important component of identity. It is a concept we must understand in order to avoid making generalizations, assumptions or stereotypes about a group of people who share a particular identity. Generalizations or assumptions based on lack of understanding or failure to recognize diversity can lead to stereotyping.

STEREOTYPES:

Stereotypes are generalizations about entire categories of people and are therefore inherently inaccurate. Webster's New World Dictionary defines a stereotype as "a fixed notion or conception, as of a person, group, idea, etc, held by a number of people, and allowing for no individuality, critical judgment, etc." This definition identifies some important facets of stereotypes. First, stereotypes are ideas about people, values and behaviors rather than facts or descriptions of the actual people, values or behaviors. In some ways stereotypes are akin to generalizations, categorizations and descriptions of a group, but the main difference lies in the fact that stereotypes are always based upon limited, insufficient or oversimplified information.

Secondly, stereotypes are ideas that are imposed upon a group of people - in this way stereotypes relate to group identity. Specifically, stereotypes may use the element of identity that is shared amongst group members as a factor for making judgments.

Consider the following example:

> *A group of students gathers every Saturday night to study together in the university library. Group members all identify as dedicated, high-achieving students. However, this group is critically perceived by other classmates to be compulsive over-achievers, socially awkward and unpopular.*

Lastly, stereotypes do not allow for “individuality” on the part of the stereotyped group, or "critical judgment" on the part of the stereotyper. Stereotypes are the conceptions of one group about another and they do not address nor take into account the diversity within the stereotyped group. In the case of the university students, the students are not viewed as individuals with unique interests and goals; rather they are seen merely as part of a larger group. Furthermore, the absence of “critical judgment” means that the stereotyper does not critically analyze the value or factual basis of a claim. In other words, the person/group that imposes a stereotype upon an individual or group does not consider whether a stereotype is valid or factual. The classmates of the study group students do not consider whether the stereotype of “compulsive over-achiever”, “socially awkward” or “unpopular” is based in reality. In actuality, the classmates interact very little with the students in the study group. The Qur’an itself insists on critically analyzing the value and states, "*And among His signs is the creation of heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colors. Verily, in that are indeed, signs for people of sound knowledge*" (30:22). The absence of "individuality" and "critical judgment" in stereotypes is the lack of "sound knowledge."

On a basic level, stereotypes, like generalizations and associations, serve the function of making sense of a very complicated world. A natural part of human development is the need to organize the vast amount of information we learn through experience, emotion, socialization and history. We group, catalogue and distinguish between the people, things, objects and experiences in the world in order to make sense of what would otherwise seem like chaos. This natural inclination to organize information serves another purpose; it allows one to predict the behaviours and values of others. Unfortunately, since stereotypes are based on limited and inaccurate information and experiences, they create a false prediction and understanding of others' values and behaviours. Another aspect of stereotypes, one that distinguishes them from other ways of processing and sorting information, is that they are not purely objective categorizations of people; stereotypes are categorizations that involve emotion and value judgments. The categories become the stereotyper's expressions of his or her values.

Another significant source of stereotypes is a group's desire to express its own identity. This is done by not only saying what it "is," but also by juxtaposing itself against images, symbols and behaviours of other groups, in order to say what it "is not." In many cases,

the act of stereotyping and the stereotypes themselves define not only the other group but perhaps more importantly and definitely more accurately, the group who is doing the stereotyping. This expression of self-identity is precisely the aspect of stereotypes that makes them so pervasive and so difficult to deconstruct.

ACTIVITY 2: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF STEREOTYPES IN DAILY LIFE

After students are familiar with the concept of stereotypes, this activity will help them put the formal presentation in practice and students will be able to get a perspective on the interplay of stereotypes, identity and diversity.

OBJECTIVE: To understand how stereotypes affect our daily lives

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Paper, marker, flip charts

METHOD:

- Ask students to take a piece of blank paper
- Advise students not to write their names
- On a piece of paper, Label one side A and the other B
- Write a time that you felt that you were a victim of stereotyping. (If you don't feel that you've had that experience, write about someone you know who may have experienced this. It could be based on a personal experience or something that you felt stereotyped you through media, or some other type of policy)
- On the other side of the paper write how you felt
- Crumple up the paper. Have everyone sit in a circle with their paper
- Once students are sitting in a circle, have them crumple their paper up and throw it at the same time somewhere in the circle
- Have other students pick up a piece and sit in their seats
- When they are finished have students take turns reading the situation
- Ask students open-ended questions – how would you feel in this situation
- Take one or two responses
- Next have the reader read Side B which mentions how the person felt
- There are to be no perspectives added after this point, this is the person's experience

This section of the lesson has the potential to become very long and also can be quite personal. Preface the circle discussion by reminding students that this is a safe space and respect must be mutual. Others have chosen to share something that made THEM feel uncomfortable. Regardless of what we think or feel, it is important for us to recognize and respect their experiences. Also limit responses to situations or maybe one or two answers in order to keep to time.

ACTIVITY 3: DISCUSSING ISLAM, IDENTITY AND DIVERSITY

OBJECTIVE: To review and summarize Islamic teachings on identity, diversity and stereotypes

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Any article on diversity and identity (it can be from recommended readings as well). Post-it notes, chart paper, markers

METHOD:

- Have students meet in groups of four or five and summarize an article
- Have them do a place mat activity where they write all the key points on a section of the page
- In the middle they write all the similar points
- After students complete their placemats, have them post it on the walls. Have other students walk around and read. Using post-it notes have them pose questions, or thoughts
- Divide students into groups and let them take one of the placemats and post-it notes and become an expert group
- What does the Qur'an say about diversity?
- How did the prophet (*pbuh*) operationalize diversity in Medina and through the Median constitution?
- How do stories from the life of the prophet (*pbuh*) help to inform us about peace and conflict in the time of the prophet (*pbuh*)

By reading the articles, students are able to become more informed and present the information back to their classroom colleagues in a manner they choose.

REFLECTION WRAP UP

Have students write a one-page reflection about the stereotype activity. The reflection should address the issue of diversity and stereotypes and what they learnt during the class, how they felt during the activity, any learning or challenges to their thoughts before the process, any personal changes they may think they need to make in their own lives or in their surroundings. Ask students to be brave and mention if they feel they are guilty of stereotyping at some point in their life. (Reminder this is a safe space, no one will be penalized for the thoughts expressed in their reflections.) Reflection assists with the consolidation of learning and makes classroom learning more relevant to experiences of individuals.

EVALUATION

Ask students to write a 500-word essay exploring from their personal position how knowledge learnt/read/discussed on the Islamic construction of identity and diversity can impact conflict and peace in local contexts.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Al Qaradawi, Yusuf. *Islamic Awakening between Rejection and Extremism*. American Trust Publication, 1991.
- Al Umari, Akram Diya. *Madinan.. Society at the Time of the Prophet*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991.
- Mohamed, Yasien. *Fitrah.. The Islamic Concept of Human Nature*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers, Ltd, 1996.

SESSION II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS IN ISLAM AND THE WEST & ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

LEARNING AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- To understand Islamic views in relation to peaceful coexistence
- To explore western world view of identity and diversity
- Identify points of convergence and divergence in both world views
- Introduce students to the values of peaceful co existence in Islam
- Explore how these principles have been applied in Islamic history
- Provide examples of application of peaceful coexistence in Islamic history
- Critically analyze modern challenges to peaceful coexistence in Muslim world

KEY CONCEPTS

- Western and Islamic Worldviews
- Muslim non Muslim interaction
- Islam and Orientalism
- Islam and Colonization
- Universality, Tawhid, Vicegerency
- Tolerance
- Diversity
- Respect
- Jihad

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

This role play will introduce students to the concepts that will be elaborated further in the formal presentation.

OBJECTIVE: To analyze different contextualization of Islamic principles and its consequences

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AID: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Separate students into groups
- Give students a point from this section of the readings e.g. jihad, pagans, kufr
- Have students take their point and demonstrate through role play how it can cause conflict
- Initiate a guided discussion on the dynamics involved in this activity

PRESENTATION

In this section we will review some of the significant concepts that influence human interaction and coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims. Firstly, some of the prevalent frameworks and concepts in the West are reviewed followed by a review of Islamic concepts related to peaceful coexistence. We will elaborate on different principles of peaceful coexistence in Islam put forward by the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet (*pbuh*). Principles like tolerance, respect and diversity will be discussed. We will now explore different ways in which Islam has been presented in the west, how it has been conceived and affiliated repercussions with such a stereotyped representation of Islam ignoring the diversity within it. Consider the following examples:

ISLAM AS THE ORIENT

Islam was made to be seen as alien and remote, the opposite of the "Occident." The students of the Orient, the Orientalists, were expected to make authoritative statements about Islam and supply Western audiences with all the information that they needed to know about Islam. The Orientalists were not necessarily objective nor informed when it came to their subject matter, Islam. They wrote about and judged Islam based upon external and foreign concepts and notions, rather than notions that were internal and organic to Islam. Therefore, Islam was misrepresented and painted as the "other" in an "us/them" dichotomy. Islam was an "other" that was seen as inferior, backward and remote. This bred hostility and fear that continues in modern times.

ISLAM IN THE NEWS

Islam has been presented as a threat to the West by the media, academic experts and analysts. It has also been presented as a manifestation of those things disdained by the West. This presentation has been possible through a concentration on certain violent and unpleasant events. Although such events occur in all societies and in all groups, they are presented as integrally and intrinsically related to the core values of Islam. This presentation has been extremely harmful due to the fact that most Westerners come into contact with Islam through the media, media not solely concerned with descriptive reporting. The media has highlighted the issues of oil, turmoil, conflict, "fundamentalism" and "extremism," always incorporating images of Islam including the call to prayers, mosques and women in *hijab*. This trend continues today, although the Muslim presence in the West and the closing of the gap between the Orient and the Occident has modified the format and blatancy of the representations.

ISLAM AS A COLONY

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines colonization as the conquest and control of other peoples' lands and resources. By the mid 19th century, 80% of the world was covered by colonies and ex-colonies, and these included most of the Muslim world. This deep penetration into Muslim societies involved restructuring them, controlling them and attacking certain symbols, values and institutions. Muslims, on their part, began to gradually recognize the injustice and resist it, relying on their social groups and religious and cultural values. The colonizers conceived the Islamic family system- with the traditional veiled woman at its centre- as the cornerstone of a social structure that fuelled the anti-colonial sentiment. To destroy that structure, and its capacity for resistance, they felt that they had to conquer the women. Hence the unveiling of the Muslim woman became an obsession, and the veil became a symbol of the colonial failure. At the same time, it became a symbol of Muslim identity, dignity and resistance.

Anti-colonial wars led, among other things, to the strengthening of traditions, both Islamic and pre-Islamic, and to the emergence of a European type of nationalism within Muslim communities. Some Muslims began to re-identify themselves, not only as Muslims who belonged to an extra-national *ummah*, but also as Algerians, Egyptians and Pakistanis. Others began to suspect both tradition and nationalism, and to call for a return to purer Islamic sources. Internal struggles flared among Muslims around the meanings of tradition and nationalism; their roles in achieving the post-independence development; and whether Muslims could develop their countries independent of the West or in collaboration with it. This struggle continues today.

WESTERN WORLDVIEW(S) is not a unified entity. There are many different facets, and different individuals and groups express these facets in varying degrees. It also must be noted that the West refers to a conceptual entity, rather than a reality that is confined to space, time or geography. Following are some prevalent components of the Western worldview**.**

RATIONALISM in philosophy is a theory that holds that reason alone, unaided by experience, can arrive at basic truth regarding the world. Associated with rationalism are the doctrines of innate ideas and the method of logically deducing truths about the world from "self-evident" premises. Rationalism is opposed to empiricism on the question of the source of knowledge and the techniques for verification of knowledge. René Descartes, G. W. von Leibniz, and Baruch Spinoza all represent the rationalist position, while John Locke represents the empirical. Immanuel Kant in his critical philosophy attempted a synthesis of these two positions. More loosely, rationalism may signify confidence in the intelligible, orderly character of the world and in the mind's ability to discern such order. It is opposed by irrationalism, a view that either denies meaning and coherence in reality or discredits the ability of reason to discern such coherence. Irrational philosophies accordingly stress the will at the expense of reason, as exemplified in the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre or Karl Jaspers. In religion, rationalism is the view that recognizes as true only that content of faith that can be made to appeal to

reason. In the middle ages the relationship of faith to reason was a fundamental concern of scholasticism. In the 18th century rationalism produced a religion of its own called deism."[*]

EFFICIENCY describes an approach to activities and development that is characterized by an attempt to produce a desired outcome with minimal waste, expense or time. This approach is connected with capitalism and mass production. It, also, frequently negates or ignores the social factors that are involved in any process.

INDIVIDUALISM refers to the "belief in the primary importance of the individual and in the virtues of self-reliance and personal independence…freedom from government regulation of personal economic or social goals…that the interests of the individual should take precedence over the interests of the group."[†]

HUMANISM is a "philosophical movement in which human values and capabilities are the central focus. The term originally referred to a point of view particularly associated with the Renaissance, with its emphasis on secular studies (the humanities), a conscious return to classical ideals and forms, and a rejection of medieval religious authority."[‡] Humanism was developed as a rejection of the authority of religion in the public sphere. In this philosophy, God and the church are removed from the state, and authority and power, moral and political, was given to the people. Humanism became a dominant worldview of Western society. It was held by the founding fathers of the United States of America and is reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution. Mankind's interests and values are at the centre of this worldview. Like Islam, humanism purports the essential goodness, value and equality of all human beings. However, an important difference is that Islam necessitates that God be the absolute centre, and secular humanism places man at the centre. The view does not necessitate atheism, but insists that God be subjected to the experience of man. Religion is tolerated and accepted, but is a personal affair.

SECULARISM refers to "religious skepticism or indifference" and "the view that religious considerations should be excluded from civil affairs or public education."[§]

DEMOCRACY refers to "a government where the people share in directing the activities of the state, as distinct from governments controlled by a single class, select group, or autocrat. The definition of democracy has been expanded, however, to describe a philosophy that insists on the right and the capacity of a people, acting either directly or through representatives, to control their institutions for their own purposes. Such a philosophy places a high value on the equality of individuals and would free people as far as possible from restraints not self-imposed. It insists that necessary restraints be imposed only by the consent of the majority and that they conform to the principle of equality."[**]

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[*] Columbia Encyclopedia. Online Version, 2003.
[†] Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.
[‡] *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.
[§] Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.
[**] Columbia Encyclopedia. Online Version, 2003.

CAPITALISM refers to an "economic system based on private ownership of the means of production, in which personal profit can be acquired through investment of capital and employment of labor. Capitalism is grounded in the concept of free enterprise, which argues that government intervention in the economy should be restricted and that a free market, based on supply and demand, will ultimately maximize consumer welfare. Capitalism has existed in a limited form in the economies of all civilizations, but its modern importance dates at least from the Industrial Revolution that began in the 18th cent., when bankers, merchants, and industrialists—the bourgeoisie—began to displace landowners in political, economic, and social importance, particularly in Great Britain. Capitalism stresses freedom of individual economic enterprise; however, government action has been and is required to curb its abuses, which have ranged from slavery (particularly in Britain and the United States) and apartheid (in South Africa) to monopoly cartels and financial fraud. Capitalism does not presuppose a specific form of social or political organization: the democratic socialism of the Scandinavian states, the consensus politics of Japan, and the state-sponsored rapid industrial growth of South Korea while under military dictatorship all coexist with capitalism. Yet despite the capitalist ideal of "hands-off" government, significant government intervention has existed in most capitalist nations at least since the Great Depression in the 1930s. In the United States, it exists in the form of subsidies, tax credits, incentives, and other types of exemptions." [*]

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW has three key aspects; *tawhid*, vicegerency and universality.

TAWHID is the foundational principle of Islam, which is expressed clearly in the proclamation, "There is no god but God." This proclamation clarifies that there is only one god, and implies that God occupies a central position in the Islamic worldview. God, in this consciousness, is the ultimate reality. *Tawhid* can be better understood by examining some of its components.

First, reality consists of two natures, one is God, the creator, and the other is non-God, the creation. These two natures are completely unique and can never be confused or confounded. The Creator "remains forever absolutely unique and devoid of partners and associates. The second is…creation. It includes all creatures, the world of things, plants and animals, humans, *jinn* and angels, heaven and earth, paradise and hell..."[†]

Second, creation has a specific purpose. This purpose is defined, within the Islamic worldview, as serving the Creator. This purpose is ordered, not chaotic. However, man has a choice to act in accordance with the divine plan or to act against it. This freewill is fundamental to responsibility, judgment and morality.

Third, man is capable. Man has the ability to actualize the divine will in the creation. This reinforces the purpose of creation, in general, and in man, specifically. Therefore, man

[*] Columbia Encyclopedia. Online Version, 2003.
[†] Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Rafi. *Al Tawhid: Its Implication for Thought and Life*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute for Islamic Thought, 1992, p. 10.

can change and effect change in himself and in nature in accordance with the divine pattern.

Finally, *tawhid* involves responsibility and judgment. In addition to man being able to effect change, he also has an obligation to do so in conformity with the divine pattern. This obligation is related directly with responsibility and judgment; man must recognize the obligation and take responsibility for fulfilling the obligation. In return, the Creator will judge his action.

VICEGERENCY is the second core value of the Islamic worldview is vicegerency. In general, vicegerency is defined as the "position, function, or authority of a vicegerent," where vicegerent is defined as "a person appointed by a ruler or head of state to act as an administrative deputy."* In the Islamic worldview, as was seen in the above discussion of *tawhid*, man has been designated, by God, as His vicegerent on earth; man is God's "administrative deputy" charged with effecting change in accordance with the divine pattern and under obligation of the moral imperative. Vicegerency also implies that God has subjugated the creation to man in order to facilitate his actualization of this. In *Surah al-Jathiyah*, verses 12 and 13, Allah says "*It is Allah who has subjugated the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command, that ye may seek of His bounty, and that ye may be grateful. And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold in that are Signs indeed for who reflect*." Another important aspect of man's vicegerency on earth is the nature of this vicegerency. Man's vicegerency is moral vicegerency; this morality is only possible in a creature that has free will and, therefore, the ability to choose to carry out the responsibility of the vicegerent.

UNIVERSALITY refers to the fact that the message of Islam is not confined to a "chosen" people or a specific sacred land; it is a message for all mankind. The Qur'an is seen as the final message of guidance to all humanity. Furthermore, the values of Islam are seen to be universal. A Muslim, by virtue of this belief, rejects racial discrimination, cultural chauvinism and narrow nationalism. What follows from this is that anyone who believes in this message bears the duty of conveying it to others. Conveying the message to others is one of the means of spiritual development for the Muslim. In essence, the message is a spiritual disclosure, *fath*, from God, thus when one believes in it, he also has to open himself up to others. A Muslim is expected to transmit guidance to others. Opening up to others, in this context, must necessarily be based on free discussion, mutual respect and sharing the wisdom of the message.

TOLERANCE is based in *tawhid*. Belief in *tawhid* includes the belief that there is no deity other than God, the creator of the universe, and that God is unequalled in power, knowledge and wisdom. God is the source of ultimate goodness, and it is not acceptable to believe anything other than good about God. Recognizing God's ultimate goodness leads to recognizing the ultimate goodness of God's creation and plan. All of humanity has been created from a single soul. They are all created with the same nature and God has made that nature essentially good. It is important to respect all of mankind, as they

* Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993, p. 1503.

are part of God's creation. It becomes, then, unacceptable to hold hatred and intolerance towards any part of the creation of Allah. The only thing that a Muslim should not tolerate is that which Allah has expressly forbidden.

Humanity has been given free will, and, with it, the ability to do that which is forbidden, to practice oppression and to commit crimes and transgressions.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

"Nor can goodness and Evil be equal. Repel Evil with what is better: Then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate." (41:34)

These forbidden actions must not be tolerated. Nevertheless, an important distinction must be made between the transgression and the individuals. If this is not done, there is a great risk of developing hatred towards part of God's creation, and this can lead to further transgressions.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

"*And let not hatred of some people...lead you to transgression and hostility on your part.*" (5:2)

At another instance Qur'anic verse stresses upon the need to show tolerance and respect every religion.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

Say: O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine. (109:1-6)

DIVERSITY is an intentional aspect of the creation of Allah. Allah created the world and mankind in such a way so that we could learn valuable lessons about the will of Allah, ourselves, and the rest of creation. Since diversity is deliberate, it must be valued. Furthermore, submission to Allah's will does not demand the eradication of diversity in all realms.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

Mankind was but one nation, but differed later. Had it not been for a word that went forth before from thy Lord, their differences would have been settled between them. (10:19)

Let there be no compulsion in religion, Truth stands out clear from error. Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things. Seest thou not that Allah sends down rain from the sky? With it We then bring out produce of various colors. And in the mountains are tracts white and red, of various shades of color, and black intense in hue. (2:256)

EQUALITY is the belief that all of mankind is held to be equal in creation and potentiality. One individual only exceeds another in relation to piety, not in relation to superficial categories such as race, gender, age or class**.**

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered like seeds countless men and women;- reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual rights, and reverence the wombs That bore you: for Allah ever watches over you. (4:1)

For Muslim men and women- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast and deny themselves, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, - for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. (33:35)

RESPECT FOR ALLAH'S CREATION:

If we have faith in Allah, we necessarily must respect his creation. The implications of this are broad and include the respect for the environment, as well as respect for fellow members of mankind. Respect implies that we "feel or show deferential regard for; esteem…avoid violation of or interference with…show consideration or appreciation."*

* Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

*There is not an animal that lives on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but forms part of communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they all shall be gathered to their Lord in the end. (*6:38)

Who made good everything that He has created, and He began the creation of man from dust. (32:7)

ALLAH AS JUDGE:

Allah is the final and ultimate judge of all mankind. Although, in societies we may have to judge, to the best of our ability, in accordance with Allah's will in order to maintain order, this judgment must always be tempered with the recognition that we have incomplete and imperfect knowledge.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

*He knows what is before them and what is behind them: and to Allah go back all questions for decision. (*22:76)

*And if there is a party among you who believes in the message with which I have been sent, and a party which does not believe, hold yourselves in patience until Allah doth decide between us: for He is the best to decide. (*7:87)

SEPARATION OF PEOPLE FROM ACTION:

This principle teaches us to distinguish between individuals and their actions. Being the creations of Allah, we are not solely defined by our actions, some of which may be good and some of which may be bad. We should not encourage nor tolerate bad behaviour, but we must recognize that even when an individual is acting inappropriately or in a blameworthy manner, we are not authorized to act cruelly and meanly towards that individual. We can disapprove of the behaviour, without disapproving of the person. The prophets, themselves, serve as ideal role models; they clearly rejected and hated the transgressions of their own people, while, at the same time, they deeply loved them and wanted to assist them.

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN:

*And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. And if they repent and improve, then let them be. Lo! Allah is ever relenting, Merciful. (*4:16)

APPLICATIONS OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN MUSLIM HISTORY:

After elaborating on the many principles of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in Islam, it is important to discuss how these principles were implemented during the Medina period of the life of Prophet Mohammed (*pbuh*), and in his practices and those of his companions (*Sahabah*).

IDEAL SOCIETY/ MEDINA CONCEPT:

Many of the principles herein described were intended to contribute to the creation and actualization of the ideal Islamic society. By examining a few distinct characteristics of the implementation of these principles in Medina one can learn valuable lessons about tolerance. Some of the foundational concepts upon which Medina was based are affiliation, unity, diversity, central and autonomous rule, common interests, diplomacy and the universality of Islamic norms.

AFFILIATION:

The teachings of Islam in general and the practices of Medina in particular point to a unique understanding and basis of affiliation. In pre-Islamic society, as is frequently the case in many societies even today, the primary affiliation was determined by ethnic kinship. Islam modified this structure because it placed Allah and obedience to Allah in a central position. Membership in the Islamic community was determined by actualization of the principles of Islam on an individual basis, not by kinship.

UNITY:

This unity does not refer to unity of belief, as one will see when diversity is discussed; rather, it refers to unity of the inhabitants of Medina against any external forces. The Constitution of Medina illustrates that all parties had to commit to defending the city against external attack. It also specified that no allegiances should be formed with, nor assistance offered to, enemies of the inhabitants of the city. This unity had to be absolute, and by being so, it provided for security and stability within the diverse city.

DIVERSITY:

It is important to acknowledge the fact, a fact that many people frequently underestimate, that Medina was not based upon homogeneity. There was no requirement for ethnic, tribal or religious homogeneity. For example in the Constitution of Medina, Muslims, Jews and polytheists were all accorded their respective rights as well as obligations. Nobody was forced to change his/her religion or to believe in Islam. The only homogeneity that was demanded was commitment to the Medina and the founding principles of the Medina. Interestingly, even this commitment, which was demanded, could be based upon a variety of motivations, including religious belief, economic aspirations or desire for political security, and stability.

RULE:

The kind of political structure that is used to rule has an immense impact on creation of peace and harmony in any society, consider the following example:

EXAMPLE OF RULE IN MEDINA:

In Medina, the Prophet erected a political structure that encompassed both centralized and autonomous rule. Each group, whether it was a kinship group or a religious group, was given a certain level of autonomy and responsibility in dealing with its internal affairs. This autonomy covered local affairs and religious minority issues, but there were certain matters that remained within the jurisdiction of the centralized political power of the Prophet. The centralized authority was to provide for any social security needs that could not be met on the local level. Furthermore, certain issues were the exclusive domains of the Prophet's central authority; these included war, peace, and criminal justice. All matters of dispute that could not be resolved locally were to be referred to the Prophet for resolution.

COMMON INTERESTS:

As was mentioned in the earlier discussion on affiliation a large component of the foundation of Medina was based upon the recognition of common interests. This recognition began before the Prophet (*pbuh*) emigrated, when the people of Yathrib, tired of incessant conflict and lack of stability, sought out an arbitrator who would be able to better the situation. This action shows that, although they were not at that point equipped to give up their conflict-causing tribal loyalties, they had recognized the common goal and their common interest in security and ending the conflict**.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON INTEREST BY PROPHET (*pbuh*):

The Prophet (*pbuh*) furthered the recognition of common interests. He established a society in which the common interests of stability, security from internal aggression, as exemplified by the ban on arms in Medina, communal defence of any members of the city, limited autonomy, and diversity were paramount. This was acceptable to all the different parties that were involved. The Prophet recognized that common interests extended beyond religious affiliation, and that acknowledging and utilizing those interests to create a unified, diverse state was vital.

DIPLOMACY:

The Prophet (*pbuh*) was renowned for his diplomacy in dealing with believers and non-believers alike. He utilized this skill to create cohesion in a diverse community where conflict was frequently a possibility. Diplomacy facilitated the implementation of the

other principles of Medina that have already been discussed. By consulting different individuals and groups, he showed his willingness to discuss and listen. The Prophet (*pbuh*) was not an autocratic ruler who forced his will and decisions upon others. He also recognized the incompatibility of force and coercion with the basic principles and teachings of Islam. He followed the code of diplomatic conduct that was set forth in the Qur'an, as the box below elaborates:[*]

CODE OF DIPLOMATIC CONDUCT:

A code for communicating and negotiating that demands first…understanding and sympathy, mildness and moderation, love and understanding as opposed to force and compulsion, arrogance and conceit, intimidation and coercion. It inculcates persuasion as against the display of strength and severity…it demands patience and perseverance. One must proceed slowly and cautiously, one must show tolerance and possess a readiness to understand the point of view of one's opponent; one must aim at winning over his heart; and if one fails to carry conviction after all one's effort, one must remember that there is no coercion in Islam, and one's duty is to convey the message and not necessarily convert one's opponent to one's point of view.

Another important facet of this diplomacy is that it served the functional role of creating and sustaining a buy-in in a situation where compromise was not always possible. The Prophet (*pbuh*), as the messenger of Allah, was not free to utilize diplomacy to simply effect compromise and consensus based on human interests and desires. There were issues upon which compromise and consensus had no role. Nonetheless, the Prophet (*pbuh*) was able to use diplomacy in his delivery and institutionalization, thus avoiding the type of conflict, which can easily arise in such a situation.

UNIVERSALITY:

Medina was founded upon the principle that Islamic values are not only applicable on Muslims alone but they apply on all people. Consider the following statement by Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*):[†]

"One cannot have one set of values for oneself and another for those who do not belong to one's group. Islam lays down definite rules of human conduct in all its spheres. The party concerned may be individual or a community, the matter may be personal or political, the person may be a relative or a stranger, a friend or a foe; he may inside or outside the fold of race or community; the time may be of peace or war."

[*] Iqbal, Afzal. *The Prophet's Diplomacy: The Art of Negotiation as Conceived and Developed by the Prophet of Islam*. Claude Stark & Co., 1975, p. 96.
[†] Al 'Umari, Akram Diya. *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet: Volume 1, Its Characteristics and Organization*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991, p. 98-99.

This characteristic defines the Islamic conception of society, and shows why rights and protections are granted to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Furthermore, it shows that Islamic values do not become incumbent upon conversion to Islam, but they are perpetually incumbent. General Islamic values are believed to be applicable to all people, regardless of religion or other affiliation.

QUR'ANIC VERSES SUPPORTING THE IDEAL SOCIETY:

- "Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; And when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things." 4:58
- "O ye people! Eat of what is on earth, Lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the evil one, for he is to you an avowed enemy." 2:168
- "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity." 3:104

MODERN CHALLENGES TO PRINCIPLES OF TOLERANCE AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN ISLAM:

There are certain topics related to human tolerance that are frequently misunderstood, misinterpreted and seen as problematic. These concepts typically relate to relationships with others and war. Following are clarifications of some common topics:

JIHAD:

It is a term that has become very controversial. The frequent translation as "holy war" perpetuates the idea that Muslims should fight everyone who is not Muslim. However, the actual meaning of the word in Arabic indicates striving or working with full determination and effort towards something. It is never used in Arabic to indicate simply war or killing. Any effort that is undertaken with the sincere desire to please God is *jihad*. Therefore, *jihad* includes a wide range of activities such as controlling ones desires; pursuing knowledge; delivering and raising children; and combating social ills. Fighting can be a legitimate form of *jihad* in some circumstances as indicated by the following verses:

QUR'ANIC VERSE ON JIHAD:

"Let those fight in the cause of Allah Who sell the life of this world for the hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah - whether he is slain or gets victory - Soon shall we give him a reward of great value. And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated and oppressed? Men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help!" Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of Evil: So fight ye against the friends of Satan." (4:74-76)

Some other verses, taken out of context, have fuelled the "holy war" interpretation not only amongst Muslims, but among those who have hatred or fear in their hearts and do not have a firm grasp of the Qur'anic guidance on human relations and tolerance. Among the infamously misquoted verses is: "*But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them.*" (9:5)

Within the Qur'anic context, the word *mushrikun* is constantly used to refer to the Arab pagans, but not all pagans were killed. In fact, some of them were in alliance with the Prophet (*pbuh*). This can only be understood within its context and the social reality of how the Prophet (*pbuh*) acted upon those revelations. The excerpt 9:5 is actually about specific *mushrikun*, who violated their treaty, killed the Muslims and escaped to the mountains. If one were to read the verse in the context of surrounding verses, it would be clear that not all pagans were meant to be killed: "*But the treaties are not dissolved with those pagans with whom ye have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided any one against you, so fulfill your engagements with them to the end of their term: for Allah loveth the righteous.*" (9:4)

It is important to remember that the Holy Qur'an repeatedly reminds one to fear Allah, purify our hearts and avoid practicing oppression and transgression, this automatically excludes the permissibility of fighting without a cause: "*Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not the transgressors.*" (2:190)

KUFR:

The concept of *kufr*, disbelief, is not a simple monolithic concept. Rather, it includes a variety of levels. The first meaning is straying, *dalal*. This means a state of bewilderment or ignorance of one's way; be it geographical, or spiritual. Such straying and ignorance could be the result of forgetfulness. Hence, an individual needs to be reminded and guided. The second meaning refers to the individual who, when guidance reaches him and the path becomes clear, may accept it and submit to it (i.e. become a Muslim), or recognize the light of truth but decide to conceal and bury it. The latter is the literal meaning of *kufr*. The third meaning relates to the individual who outwardly declares his

submission to the Islamic system, without sincere, inner belief. This refers to the Qur'anic definition of a hypocrite. The fourth meaning is the individual who does not declare himself a Muslim, and refuses to publicly engage in any serious dialogue. This individual is *mutawali*, one who turns his away. This is a type of disbelief. The fifth meaning relates to the individual who goes beyond *tawali*, a simple, negative position; they go from merely denying God's signs and bounties to ascribing them to other sources. This is polytheism, *shirk*. It is also called *zulm*, injustice, and *israf*, transgression. Finally, the last meaning relates to the individual who moves from merely denying the message to scorning it; harming its adherents; provoking them; undertaking direct action to compel them to disown it; preventing others from embracing it; et cetera. These hostile actions qualify the unbeliever as a belligerent individual, against whom *jihad* becomes lawful.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK:

The Qur'an gives the title of the "People of the Book" to those who follow the revelations sent by God to earlier prophets, namely the Christians and the Jews. The stories of their prophets and their histories are well documented in the Qur'an, illustrating both the blessings that God bestowed upon them and their mistakes. Islam has a close spiritual kinship with the People of the Book, since all of the religions are based originally on revelation from God through prophets. Based on this closeness, Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) hoped greatly that the People of the Book would accept his message as the continuation of what they had received from Moses and Jesus. He was disappointed by their initial rejection. Despite the fact that the People of the Book generally reject the Qur'an, the Qur'an describes them by saying that among them are some that are sincere in faith, piety, righteousness and who do good deeds.

Generally, Islam seeks to have good relations with the People of the Book, working towards shared goals and values for society.

"*Say: 'Oh People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but God; that we associate not partners with Him…*" (3:64)

However, when they abandon their religious values and practice injustice, oppression or aggression, it is permissible to fight them.

RELATIONS WITH CHRISTIANS:

Such a situation happened during the time the Qur'an was being revealed. Some Christian Arab tribes, who were in alliance with the Romans, attacked and killed some of the Muslim trade caravans. The murder of some Muslim leaders and a messenger sent to the King of Basra led to the first armed conflict between Christians and Muslims. It was in this context that the following was revealed: "*Fight those who believe not in God nor the last day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of truth, from among the People of the Book, until they pay the jizyah with willing submission, feeling themselves subdued.*" (9:29)

Permission to fight was given, in this case, because they had transgressed what was forbidden, they had committed acts of war. The verse indicates that they should be fought until they are no longer a threat or a disruption to the society, until they decide to submit themselves to the rule of law and become tax-paying citizens. They should not be fought indefinitely or in every situation.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PAGANS:

Pagans, *mushrikin* in the Qur'an are those who associate partners with God, which is to say they believe in and worship more than one deity. The absolute essence of Islam is *tawhid*, and polytheism is in direct opposition with this.

According to the Qur'an and the Islamic view, the worst sin is to associate partners with God. Much of the mission of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) was aimed at clearing up the confusion of polytheistic ideas and guiding people to abandon worship of that which is powerless. However, even at the point of greatest opposition, the Qur'an is clear that there is no compulsion in religion and to those who adamantly refuse Islam we should say "*to you is your way and to me is mine.*" (109:6). One should be respectful of others' religions, not insulting them and, consequentially, not inviting insults upon oneself.

While polytheism is not acceptable, one must acknowledge that the pagans remain part of God's creation with the same human nature and potential as Muslims or anyone else. One should also keep in mind that the Islamic position is to refrain from fighting these groups as long as they refrain from fighting Muslims. Adherence to a different religion is not a reason for a just Islamic war.

ACTIVITY 4: ROLE PLAY

Going back to the warm up activity conducted in the beginning, let the students do it again but with proper contextualization of the concepts used earlier.

OBJECTIVE: To analyze different contextualization of Islamic principles and its consequences

TIME: 30 Minutes

TEACHING AID: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Separate students into groups
- Give students a point from this section of the readings e.g. jihad, pagans, *kufr*
- Have students re-do the skit and show how proper Islamic contextualization can de-escalate these conflicts

In the end lead a discussion on student's experiences. Initiate a guided discussion on how out of context use of injunctions on *kufr* etc can effect the situation. If time permits, when students do both versions of their play (* first version- problem * second version solution once proper Islamic contextualization is given.) give other classroom members the chance to say the word "freeze" and go up and replace one of the performers, to show what they would do differently to solve the conflict. It allows students to see how knowledge of the Islamic paradigm can lead to multiple creative solutions to dealing with conflict.

REFLECTION WRAP UP

Review key concepts and definitions delivered during the lecture. In a circle format, have students orally reflect on learning's, questions, dissonance, changes that may have come up during this session. Give students time to write down their reflections on this issue.

EVALUATION

Ask students to write a 500-word essay on what they consider as the points of convergence of western and Islamic world views.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. Traditional Islam in the Modern World. London: Kegan Paul International, 1987.
- Said, Edward W. Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books Random House, 1979.
- Smith, Jane I. Islam in America. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

VI. HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

By Zahid Shahab Ahmed

CHAPTER VI: HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

This chapter discusses the universal nature of Islam and diverse ways it is practiced particularly with regards to human rights. Students will explore the relationship between Islam and human rights. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam and the Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam will be discussed. Discussion of principles of human rights in Islam exploring support from Qur'an, as well as examples from *Hadith* (example set by Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*)) in connection to contemporary practices, which demonstrate how human rights are defined and protected in Islam will also be provided.

SESSION I: HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM, CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES*

- Explore comparatively several international secular and Islamic human rights frameworks
- Study human rights principles in Islam
- Critically analyze the application of these principles in contemporary Muslim world and Islamic history
- To gain a better understanding of human rights principles in Islam
- To inculcate critical thinking on practices of human rights in the Islamic context (in South Asia and Southeast Asia)
- To highlight the relevance of human rights in students' daily lives

* As a matter of policy, UPEACE fully supports the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which applies to all people, everywhere, at all times. UPEACE also encourages its students to study the situations in countries where application of human rights differs in various ways, in order to understand better the reasons for this.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- Cairo Declaration on Human Rights
- Equality
- Freedom of Religion
- Peaceful Coexistence

TEACHING AIDS: DVD, Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts, copies of the UDHR and the Cairo and Rome Declarations on human rights

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

With this activity students can practice their own knowledge in understanding human rights issues. This will also be a good indicator for the teacher on immediately understanding the "social orientations" of the students.

OBJECTIVE: To explore the prior knowledge of students on human rights

TIME: 25 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: At least 10 pictures or posters scattered on the walls, whiteboard and pens

METHOD:

- Post a series of pictures of various situations—in conflict or otherwise
- Ask the students to walk around an ask them to reflect on "what human rights issues" are present on the picture
- Now ask the students to present their observations to the class
- The teacher should write down all these comments on the board

In the end lead a discussion on student's opinions. Through discussion assist them in understanding and framing different human rights issues that they observed.

PRESENTATION

Human rights are considered an inalienable right of humans that they carry from the time of birth to death, no discussion on establishing peace and harmony can ever be complete without integrating human rights into it. A society that does not grant or respect human rights can never be in a position to achieve peace or strive towards peacebuilding. Considering the importance of human right several instruments and documents protecting rights of human being have been put forward. Let us discuss the most important ones in this regard.

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS:

One of the world's most translated documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is an advisory declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December 1948 in Paris. This guiding document consists of thirty articles outlining the view of the General Assembly on the human rights. Technically this documents is not legally binding the United Nations' member states, therefore there are no signatories to UDHR. However, being the principal human rights document, the UDHR is the basis of several prominent and internationally respected laws. The International Bill of Human Rights is comprised of the UDHR, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights etc. The International Bill of Human Rights was partly completed in 1966 with the addition of the above mentioned conventions and was ratified by several nations in 1976, therefore the Bill transformed into international law. Several aspects of the Bill are elaborated in international treaties, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC) etc. The four predominantly Muslims states of South Asia, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Maldives have

ratified most of the principal human rights treaties, for example the CEDAW, and the two optional protocols to UN-CRC besides several other conventions.[*]

The UDHR is practiced and highly respected in the entire world; however Muslim scholars have held different opinions about it. Overall, there are points of differences between the Islamic positions on human rights and the international human rights law, but there are commonalities as well.

UDHR & HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM:

There are many connections between the teachings of Islam and the UDHR, and one connection here can be shared between the Article 4 of the UDHR, which advocated to abolition of slavery and all forms of servitude in whatever form they are found to persist. For the entire Muslim community the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) has set a wonderful example. After marrying Hazrat Khadija, and 15 years before receiving Divine call, he freed all her slaves as she had placed them at his disposal. One young person, Zaid, choose to stay with the Prophet Muhammad, because he was given so much love that he refused to go with his father. It is significant to note that throughout his life the Prophet Muhammad never owned any slave a common practise in those times.

Most UDHR articles for the protection and promotion of human rights are in agreement with Islamic teachings, except for two articles, due to the reservations made by some Islamic states at the UN. Predominantly Islamic countries, like Sudan, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia, have frequently criticized the UDHR for its perceived failure to take into consideration the cultural and religious diversity of non-Western countries.

- United Nations Declaration on Human Rights
- The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam-1990
- Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam.-2000
- Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam-2004

In Islam, human rights are religious obligations and are considered as an integral part of faith. However, there is also an understanding that there needs to be a human rights framework inspired from Islam and that covers the human rights put forward by Islam, which led to the creation of *The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights*, issued by the 19th

[*] Visit the following website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for more information on country specific on status of ratifications of the principle international human rights treaties: http://www.unhcr.ch/pdf/report.pdf

Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Cairo in 1990. On 30th June 2000, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) official resolved to support the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, an alternative document to the UDHR saying that people only have freedom and rights to a dignified life in accordance with the Islamic law/Shari'ah. This document presented the fundamental principles on human rights as brought by Islam to humanity. Later in the year 2000, the World Symposium on Human Rights in Islam, which was held in Italy, came up with *Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam*. At the same time the Organization of the Islamic Conference has also been active in persuading Muslim states to develop and commit to specific aspects of human rights, especially OIC has a *Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam* (OIC, 2004) and the Convention of the OIC on Combating International Terrorism.[*]

PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM:

Human rights in Islam are embedded into Islamic religious practices; therefore it is of great importance to understand the essence of human rights in Islam by linking the rights with religious beliefs and practices recommended by Allah in the Qur'an through the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*).

The ***Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam*** (2000) in its Principle 2 states the "necessity to link rights with obligations through a concept based on balance between man's functions and his needs to construct a family and society and populate the earth in a way that would not run counter to Allah's Will".

Allama Shatabi, a famous Muslim jurist, is of the view that all Ahkam (injunctions) of Islam are directed to achieve five ultimate goals, which he terms as *Masalih Khamsa* or Five Goods. These are protection of life, of property, lineage/dissent, dignity and protection of senses.

In fact, these human rights protections are universally identified by all civilized nations. Qur'an terms the suspension or violation of human rights in a society as *fitna;* severe action extending to *jihad* has been commanded to curb *fitna* and restore human rights.

Islam asserts that the fundamental rights and privileges that Allah has given to humanity can never be taken away or suspended, even temporarily, by anyone or for any reason. Human rights are granted by Allah, not his creation, and apply to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The hungry must be fed, the destitute must be given shelter, and the sick must be given medical treatment regardless of their pro or anti-Islamic sentiments and activities. The Qur'an declares that human rights are universal, and that all individuals are to enjoy and observe them under all circumstances- even in war – regardless of where one is living. Human rights are meant to be implemented and lived out; they are not meant to remain in the annals of unenforceable philosophical treaties. Every Muslim must accept human rights and recognize people's right to have them enforced and obeyed.

[*] OIC website: www.oic-oci.org/english/convenion/terrorism_convention.htm

EQUALITY:

The principle of equality is given a lot of priority in Islam, so as to develop a foundation for a peaceful and harmonious social setting. The Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (2000) in its Principle four states, "seek to secure ways and means that would help reject discrimination between the members of the human society on the grounds of gender, colour, language or national origin".

Consider the following example:

EXAMPLE FROM THE LIFE OF PROPHET (*pbuh*):

Everyone is equal before law and the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh)* has clearly illustrated the principle of equality in making judgments. Once a woman from the Makhzum clan (which was one of the noblest clans within the tribe of *Quraish*) committed theft and the people of that tribe approached the Prophet to have her acquitted, but Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) said: "O people, those who came before you came to ruin only because they used to pardon their nobility when they stole and would carry out the punishment on the weak. By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad (*pbuh*), committed theft, I would cut off her hand." Equality before law is the depiction of a strong foundation of equality in the society, and therefore principle of equality in Islam sets the foundation of equal rights for everyone, without any discrimination.

According to the Islamic concept of human rights, no one is above the law, not even the rulers and elites. This point was dramatically emphasized by the fourth caliph of Islam, Ali, when he said, "do not address me in the manner that despots are addressed. Do not adopt towards me any special behaviour, nor meet me with flattery or obsequious manners. Do not imagine that your candour will displease me or that I expect you to treat me with veneration." [*]

ISLAM, EQUALITY & SOUTH ASIA

Despite principles of equality which are evident in the Qur'an and in the practices of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), tremendous inequalities remain in South Asia, a region where Islam is a religion practised by millions of people. Islam is a dominant religion in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives, and has a significant following in India and Sri Lanka.

In relation to disparities in practices of human rights in the region, many cases civil society organizations and state institutions are working to address these equality gaps, however much work remains to be done, as explained in following sections.

[*] "Human Rights in Islam", article retrieved from: http://www.thaqalayn.org/pamphlets/Pamphlet-HumanRights.htm

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY:

Rich and poor gaps are widening in South Asia, especially in countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan, where there are great disparities in terms of access to money. Civil society is making efforts to reach out to disadvantaged communities, especially women and children. In this regard, the examples of the Grameen Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), National Rural Support Program (NRSP) and their micro-credit schemes are successfully reducing poverty in respective countries.

GENDER INEQUALITY:

In present times, in the West, Muslim world is known for violating women rights by giving men authority to make decisions on behalf of women, and for restricting women's mobility as well as freedom of expression. Nevertheless, in theory Islam gives equal rights to women, and Article 6 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam confirms this commitment, "Woman is equal to man in human dignity, and has rights to enjoy as well as duties to perform; she has her own civil entity and financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage".

While Islam grants right to women even today in South Asia, a major human rights issue is that of women's rights, particularly in Pakistan. Through 1990s and until 2006, the civil society in Pakistan has struggled to change the discriminatory Hudood Ordinance of 1979, which was a grave violation of women's rights. It was passed by the parliament during the regime of General Zia ul Haq. However, with successful activism of domestic and international non-governmental organization the ordinance has now been replaced by the Women Protection Bill in 2006. Still there is a lot to be done to provide women with equal access to health, education, jobs and finances. However, a positive action has been to reserve seats for women in politics in three South Asian countries; India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. But what impact they (women parliamentarians) have made so far to empower other women from their constituencies is still questionable, as most of these women still depend on male members of their families for political decision making.

LABOUR INEQUALITY:

Bonded labour is one of the contemporary forms of slavery that still exists in South Asian states, and mostly constitutes of young girls and children working at the brick kilns or trapped inside the sex industry. Nothing much has been done to address this issue at the state level in the Islamic states of Bangladesh and Pakistan. Article 11 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam signifies freedom of human beings and states, "*Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate or exploit them, and there can be no subjugation but to God the Most-High"*.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION:

This right means that everybody has the right to express his/her views on all concerning matters. In a political environment, an individual has a right to vote and to criticise the conduct and actions of all policymakers and the government.

Islam allows complete freedom of thought and expression, provided that it does not involve spreading that which is harmful to other individuals or to society at large. The great caliphs welcomed criticism even from an average individual. Consider the following example:

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY:

The great caliph, Umar was criticized and asked to explain the extra length of cloth he got as booty of war. Additionally, a woman criticized him when he advised the people not to fix huge amounts in dower. In reply, Umar accepted his mistakes and withdrew his advice.

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE:

This principle in Islam respects the value of global unity for peace and harmony on earth, by recognizing presence of diverse races.

QUR'AN, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND DIVERSITY:

"*O mankind, we created you from a single (pair) of male and female and made you into nations and tribes that ye may know one another (not that ye may despise each other). Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous of you.*" (49: 13)

The Rome Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (2000) in its Principle 4 encourages "*dialogue amongst cultures and civilizations in a manner that would contribute to a better understanding of human rights and would help human societies eschew confrontation and armed conflict and their negative effects on man and environment."* Nevertheless, a peaceful dwelling clears the path for the fulfilment of equal human rights for all beings.

Consider the example on the following page:

MEDINA CHARTER –AN EXAMPLE OF A LEGAL MECHANISM TO PROTECT RIGHTS AND PROMOTE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

In today's global village , the Medina Charter (622 C.E.) can be a source for answers to many of today's questions, presenting approaches to solving and preventing conflicts between groups based on differences in culture and belief. The Charter was the first written constitution in Islam and arguably the first constitutional law in society. Before Prophet Muhammad's (*pbuh*) arrival from Mecca, Yathrib (later known as Medina) had a population of 10,000 that was organized into approximately 22 tribes. Approximately half the population was Jewish and half was Arab. Constant warfare was taking a toll on the tribes. While some sought external military assistance for the conflicts, many were making preparations for the enthronement of a leader from one of the tribes (Yildirim, 2005).

- The Prophet Muhammad was requested by the tribes in Yathrib to act as a third-party mediator to try and help resolve the ongoing conflict between them.
- While drafting the Charter, the Prophet consulted the leaders of each tribe, thereby demonstrating his willingness to listen to the needs of all tribes, an example of involving all stakeholders in any productive conflict resolution process.
- The Medina Charter, which contains 47 sections in total, addresses the power structures that contributed to the conflict in Yathrib. The Charter expressly identified the parties involved in the conflict which were Muslim immigrants from Makka, Muslims of Yathrib, and the Jews of the community.
- The Charter outlined the rights and duties of its citizens, provided collective protection for all citizens of Medina, including Muslims and non-Muslims, and provided the first means of seeking justice through the law and community instead of via tribal military actions.
- One of the articles of the Charter says, "The God-fearing believers shall be against the rebellious or him who seeks to spread injustice, or sin or animosity, or corruption between believers; the hand of every many shall be against him even if he be a son of one of them."
- The Charter not only set the foundation of a cooperation between the Muslims and non-Muslims but also ensured equal rights to non-Muslim, as manifested through one of its articles; "To the Jew who follows us belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided".

EXAMPLE FROM CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WORLD:

In the past decade, electronic media, especially TV, has emerged as the strongest medium influencing the mindsets of people having access to it. Understanding this, Islamic scholars from all over the world launched Peace TV (www.peacetv.in) with offices in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and India. Peace TV has programs in English and Urdu on a range of issues, including human rights in Islam, and can be received in more than 125 countries. Many people have found Peace TV to be educational on various Islamic concepts in connection with other faiths, and significant amount of research has gone into the production of these programs. Peace TV has also initiated inter-faith dialogues in an effort to make people understand similarities and differences between major organized religions.

SOCIAL SECURITY:

In Islamic society, it is state's responsibility to provide equal social security rights to all of its citizens, as a violation of social security rights are considered to be a cause of deviated behaviours. The United Nations UDHR in its article 22, draws attention to the social security rights, "Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each state, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality." This chapter contains an explanation of socio-cultural rights of the human being in Islam particularly the Islamic principles of economics rights.

ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN ISLAM:

Providing economic rights to everyone is an important principle of Islam, which emphasizes proper distribution of wealth. In addition to individual Zakah or charity, the state is obligated to provide for the disadvantaged population through Zakah and Bait-ul-Maal (public treasury). Zakah/Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam, requiring that those Muslims who have fulfilled their basic needs and comforts of life, to pay a share of their wealth in order to purify their wealth. This money as charity should be exclusively used to support the poor and needy. Zakat money is now collected in different ways, either deducted by banks or paid by people by themselves each year. Later, it reaches Bait-ul-Maal for distribution. In addition, Sadaqa is a voluntary Islamic charity therefore different from Zakat, which is an obligation on Muslims. Sadaqa may be financial assistance, public service, or even a smile to someone who needs it. It is often a social norm to give "Sadaqa" when visiting sites holy to Islam or while making pilgrimage in Mecca.

Consider the example on following page:

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY:

Once there was a great famine in Hijaz. The Caliph Omar took steps to get food supplies from Syria and Egypt. All the same, the general suffering was widespread. At this Omar felt very much for his people. So much so that he swore not to touch butter and honey as long as the famine lasted. This had a bad effect on his health. Seeing this, his servant managed to get some butter and honey with the meals on day. But Omar refused to touch food. Not only this but also during the time of famine the hand-cutting punishment for theft was also abolished considering that many people are forced out of their struggle to survive under these very difficult and unique circumstances.

BALANCE OF ACTION- MIZAN OR MEEZAN:*

Islam avoids extremes so as to maintain balance and orderliness in society, especially by motivating individuals to lead a simple and philanthropic life. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) bridged the gap between the rich and poor, the superior and the inferior, and also encouraged his followers to do the same by following the true Islamic values. He also advocated a society in which there would not be any exploitation of one by another. Therefore, what Islam preaches is a balanced life that represents the equilibrium of social forces, so as to ensure a dignified life for each member of society. Therefore, this very important principle in Islam not only teaches rich people to lead a simple life but also encourages them to contribute to the existing charity systems.

ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA:

Ever since the independence of Pakistan in 1947, the feudal and landlord system has been prevalent in the country which has led to a continuously growing gap between the rich and the poor. The equilibrium in the society can be maintained only if each segment of the society has equal access to resources and basic facilities (education, health, shelter etc.). Considering this there are some very well-known charitable initiatives partly sustaining on Zakat money, established by individuals such as the Pakistan Shoukat Khanam Cancer Hospital, Sahara for Life Trust, Zindagi Foundation, Edhi Foundation etc. Pakistan has one of the largest grassroots level, network of Bait-ul-Maals in the entire Muslim world. It is actually a fund to provide financial support and rehabilitation to the deserving, poor, needy, orphans, widows and students. Pakistan Bait-ul-Maal has established 141 vocational training centres across the country to economically empower women. These centres are providing free training to widows, orphans, and eligible women, in different skills including drafting, cutting, sewing, knitting, and hand and machine embroidery." Only in 2003-04, Zakat funds benefited 15,940,874 disadvantaged people in Pakistan by disbursing 5860.6 millions Pakistani rupees.

* *Miyana Ravi* in Urdu.

RIGHTS OF PEOPLE IN TIMES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS:

"Peace in Islam is a state of physical, mental, spiritual and social harmony (AALCO, 2006)." There are many such examples that even in times of wide spread violence the emphasis has been to save as many lives as possible, especially those of innocents.

RULES FOR BATTLE FIELD:

"Stop, O people, that I may give you ten rules for your guidance in the battle field. Do not commit treachery or deviate from the right path. You must not mutilate dead bodies. Neither kill a child, nor a woman or an aged man. Bring no harm to the trees, nor burn them with fire, especially those which are fruitful. Slay not any of the enemy's flock, save for your food. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services, leave them alone." According to a well known speech made by the first Caliph Abu Bakr, when he dispatched his army on an expedition to the Syrian borders (AALCO, 2006)

Human life is sacred in Islam and therefore Allah in Qur'an clearly says, "You shall not kill any person- for God has made life sacred-except in the course of justice (17:33)".

Article 3 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) clearly highlights what a person should do in times of violent conflict, "In the event of the use of force and in case of armed conflict, it is not permissible to kill non-belligerents such as old men, women and children. The wounded and the sick shall have the right to medical treatment; and prisoners of war shall have the right to be fed, sheltered and clothed. It is prohibited to mutilate dead bodies. It is a duty to exchange prisoners of war and to arrange visits or reunions of the families separated by the circumstances of war".

Consider the example on the following page elaborating Hudabiya peace treaty:[*]

[*] http://www.witness-pioneer.org/vil/Books/SM_tsn/ch4s14.html

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY
HUDAIBIYA TREATY 6 H.A.
A PEACE TREATY

The clauses of the treaty were:

The Muslims shall return this time and come back next year, but they shall not stay in Mecca for more than three days.

They shall not come back armed but can bring with them swords only sheathed in scabbards and these shall be kept in bags.

War activities shall be suspended for ten years, during which both parties will live in full security and neither will raise sword against the other.

If anyone from Quraish goes over to Muhammad without his guardian's permission, he should be sent back to Quraish, but should any of Muhammad's followers return to Quraish, he shall not be sent back.

Whosoever wishes to join Muhammad, or enter into treaty with him, should have the liberty to do so; and likewise whosoever wishes to join Quraish, or enter into treaty with them, should be allowed to do so.

It was during this time while the treaty was being written that Abu Jandal, Suhail's son, appeared on the scene. He was brutally chained and was staggering with privation and fatigue. The Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) and his Companions were moved to pity and tried to secure his release but Suhail was adamant and said: "To signify that you are faithful to your contract, an opportunity has just arrived." The Prophet's heart welled up with sympathy, but he wanted to honour his words at all costs. He consoled Abu Jandal and said, "Be patient, submit yourself to the will of Allah. Allah is going to provide for you and your helpless companions relief and means of escape. We have concluded a treaty of peace with them and we have taken the pledge in the Name of Allah. We are, therefore, under no circumstances prepared to break it."

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES OF PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PROMOTION OF PEACE IN MUSLIM WORLD

AMAN (Asian Muslim Action Network: www.arf-asia.org/aman.php) based in Thailand, is a network of progressive Muslims in Asia, seeking to respond to the numerous challenges faced by the people in Asia. AMAN's major activities include; peace education at community level, interfaith dialogue on major issues such as peace and human rights, School of Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation.

The Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (www.csss-isla.com) has been established in India, where a very well-known Islamic scholar, Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer, is busy in highlighting very important issue of Islam and inter-faith engagement.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION:

Religious freedom is essential to spread harmonious social waves. All international human rights documents depict the importance of religious rights of human beings.

Article 18 of the UDHR, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

However, the 1990 Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, adopted by a foreign ministers' meeting of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference), avoids the question of religious freedom and religious minorities' altogether (Nielsen, 2002).

FREEDOM OF RELIGION & ISLAM:

Islam affords inalienable rights to all followers of holy books. Minorities living in an Islamic state must be protected from harassment and mistreatment at all times. Even their religious institutions are to be kept intact. The Qur'an states:

"And has there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered; and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause; most surely Allah is Strong, Mighty."(22: 40)

"There shall be no compulsion in religion." (2:256)

There are numerous examples of protection of the rights of non-Muslims in the history and texts of Islam. The Medina Charter clearly says in its article 17, "No Jew will be wronged for being a Jew." In his last sermon, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) emphasized on the equality and diversity of human beings.[*] Moreover, Islam condemns the killing or even the persecution of people merely because they have different religious faiths. The Qur'an allows absolute freedom of religion in the society; it does not allow Muslim to fight except in self-defence and to enforce peace. Islam also does not allow the exploitation of vulnerable social segments so as to convert them into Islam.

Article 10 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam says, "Islam is the religion of unspoiled nature. It is prohibited to exercise any form of compulsion on man or to exploit his poverty or ignorance in order to covert him to another religion or to atheism."

HUMAN RIGHTS, RIGHTS OF ALLAH AND RIGHTS OF PEOPLE IN ISLAM:

As per Islamic teachings, the violation of the rights of Allah can be forgiven but not of the rights of Allah's creatures. Considering the emphasis placed upon the interconnectedness of *Haquq Allah* (Rights of Allah) and *Haquq al-`ibad* (rights of all creatures and not only of human beings); both in Qur'anic teachings and in the life of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), it is difficult to understand their compartmentalization in the minds and lives of many present-day Muslims. But what has happened is not surprising given the fact that many generations of Muslims have been told by their leaders that the primary duty of a Muslim is to engage in "`*ibadat"* - which is understood as "worship" rather than "service" of God (though the root from which the term "'*ibadat*" is derived, means "to serve") - and to obey those in authority over them rather than to engage in *"jihad fi sabil Allah"* (i.e. to strive in the cause of God) to ensure that the fundamental rights given to all creatures by God are honoured within the Muslim "ummah". Consider the following example:[†]

[*] http://www.inter-islam.org/hadeeth/sermon.htm

[†] Zaoui, Ahmed (2005). Islam and Human Rights. Vice-Chancellor's lecture series, Massey University, Albany campus.

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY:

One of the first steps that were taken by the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) when he established his state in Medina was to develop and implement two important Charters. The first Charter regulated the relationship between two tribes in Medina. The second Charter, namely the *muada'a*, was a constitutional charter to uphold harmonious and peaceful relations between the Muslim and Jewish communities. In this Charter, the religious and property rights of the Jews were acknowledged and protected, as well as protecting their rights of religious practice (Zaoui, 2005).

However if we look at the contemporary status of freedom of religion in Muslim world, the situation does not reflect the ideals that were practised in early Islamic history.

Consider the case study on next page:

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN SOUTH ASIA:

Islam arrived in the South Asian region in 711 CE, when the Umayyad dynasty sent a Muslim Arab army led by Muhammad bin Qasim. Later, during the Mughal era this religion went through some changes; Jalal ud Din Muhammad Akbar (Akbar the great) became the king of the Mughal Empire in 1556, after the death of his father Humayun. During his lifetime he not only studied Islam but also had shown keen interest in learning about other religions, such as Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity. Therefore, he organized many religious debates inside his court. He proved himself to be an unconventional Muslim leader, and therefore founded a new religion, *Din-i-Ilahi* (Religion of God), in 1582. This new religion was vaguely defined, and gave an impression that Akbar himself as its deity. However, there are other views that Akbar intended to merge the best elements of the religions of his empire (primarily Hinduism and Islam; elements were also taken from Christianity, Jainism and Zoroastrianism), so to induce peaceful values of inter-faith harmony in his empire.

However, in the present times, rights of the minorities are violated in the Muslim world. The cartoons and the subsequent article written by Flemming Rose, published in the cultural section of the largest newspaper (*Jyllandsposten*) in Denmark on the 30th of September 2005 presented Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) in a manner which was shockingly humiliating for the Muslims. The most unfortunate development emerging from this incident is the unrest and violent demonstrations that took the lives of many innocent people in the Middle East, Pakistan and Africa. Furthermore, it caused the eruption of deadly clashes between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. This globally opened another cycle of debates on the rights of minorities, especially the rights of Muslims in the Western world, as minorities. Also there is a strong need to correct the perceptions of Islam in the West and reassure the innocence of Islam and the soundness of its firm stand on its commitment for peace, security, stability and harmony between peoples and nations, and contribute to building a united human society.

There is no doubt that the conflict between the followers of different sects in Islam, such as Shia and Sunni, is highly prevalent in Pakistan and is more visible than the Muslim and non-Muslim conflicts. Bangladesh and Pakistan are known as predominantly Muslim states and though Islam is understood to respect the rights of minorities, these rights are violated on a large scale. The plight of minorities in Muslim countries is a worrying fact, for example in Pakistan it is mainly due to a general misconception that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a Muslim country, created for Muslims by Muslims. Understood as such, the country has never been able to create an accepting environment for minorities.

Ahmadiyas, both in Bangladesh and in Pakistan, are facing numerous abusive and discriminatory behaviours. However, in Pakistan Ahmadiyas were declared non-Muslims in 1970s and now religious segments in Bangladesh are forcing authorities to follow what Pakistan did. Overall, minority rights are violated in both of these Islamic Republics in South Asia.

RIGHTS TO EDUCATION IN ISLAM:

Islam ensures equal access to knowledge from all available sources and also motivates knowledge seekers to travel far and wide to obtain knowledge. Therefore there is a great deal of value and respect for education in Islam.

ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION:

In Islam, it is the responsibility of the state to provide quality education for all as is clearly mentioned in the Article 6a of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, "The state shall ensure the availability of ways and means to acquire education and shall guarantee educational diversity in the interest of society so as to enable man to become acquainted with the religion of Islam and the facts of the Universe for the benefit of mankind." Some fundamentalists emphasize that only Islamic education is what is needed to be progressive in this world, as Islam is the complete code of life. However, in Islam no distinction is made between religious and the worldly education. This very important aspect has been further expressed as follows:

ARTICLE 9B OF THE CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM:

"Every human being has the right to receive both religious and worldly education from the various institutions of education and guidance, including the family, the school, the university, the media, etc. and in such an integrated and balanced manner as to develop his personality, strengthen his faith in God and promote his respect for and defence of both rights and obligations."

EDUCATION IN SOUTH ASIA:

However, even in the Muslim world, there are manifestations of non-Islamic practices/preferences, for instance, in South Asian Muslim as well as in non-Muslim cultures there is an inclination of marrying girls at a very early age, therefore most often, they do not reach higher educational levels, and if they do so, then they are encouraged to enter the teaching or medical profession. As of 2004, female adult (age 15 and above) literacy in South Asia, puts two Muslims states, Pakistan with 36% and Bangladesh with 31.4%, along with Nepal (34.9%) in the bottom three positions in comparison to other South Asian states (World Bank, 2006).

ISLAMIC LAW AS A MECHANISM TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS:

Security and stability are basic human desires, no less essential than food and clothing. Without security and stability, a human being is not able to conduct his/her daily life properly, let alone come up with creative ideas and contribute towards the development of a progressive society. And these needs in Islam are fulfilled with the application of

Islamic law, which is a mechanism to stop any violations of human rights and disorder in the society. The fundamentals of codes of conduct in Islam are derived from Islamic law.

A sound knowledge and understanding of the sources and origins of Islamic law is essential for the study of Islamic law. Islamic law is referred to as *sharia*, which literally translated means 'the path', whereas the study and science of Islamic law is named as *'fiqh'* (the sacred knowledge). *Fiqh* is Islamic jurisprudence. It is an expansion of what is called the Sharia, complemented by the rulings (fatwas) of the Islamic jurists to direct the lives of Muslims. *Fiqh* encourages critical thinking to understand the concepts of Islam and practice them as per the needs of contemporary times.

SOURCES OF ISLAMIC LAW:

- The Qur'an and the *Sunna* are the first two sources of Islamic law but are also the principal religious guidelines in Islam.
- The *Sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) is the other supreme source of law. It comprises of practices and examples set by the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*). These practices and precedents were recorded after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) and compiled into collections of 'ahadiths'. There are differences between the Sunni and the Shia schools as to what constitutes the *Sunna* as the *Shia* accept traditions from their own Imams as being of divine inspiration.
- The secondary sources of the Sharia are *Ijma*[*] (consensus) and *Qiyas*[†] (analogy).

There are also other sources of law that do not fall within the framework of al *fiqh* (source of law), such as *Ijtihad* (individual reasoning), *Istihsan* (juristic preference) and *Istisab* (the doctrine of continuance). However, following is an expansion on the Muslims' right to do *Ijtihad* alone. *Ijtihad* or individual reasoning is the secondary source of Islamic law which is generally removed from contemporary practices. The main concept is that individual reasoning could be used in order to find legal solutions to legal questions not directly answered by the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna*, as well as through *Qiyas*. Therefore, under such circumstances the jurist could employ his/her own mental capabilities to find appropriate solutions to the case. *Ijtihad* is therefore a careful opinion formed by someone skilled in the law; one who is a great scholar of Islamic law. In

[*] *Ijma*, represents the third source of Islamic law and its authority as a secondary source of Islamic law is based on a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad which states that "my people will never agree on an error". The doctrine of the Hanbali School is that *Ijma* is binding only when it is a consensus of the entire Muslim community. The interpretation of *Ijma* permits Islamic law to arrive at authoritative interpretations of the two primary sources of Islamic law (the Qur'an and the Sunna).

[†] *Qiyas*, the fourth universally accepted source of Islamic law is unlike the other three sources, which are based more or less directly on the divine commandments; rather it depends on personal judgments from the human beings. Therefore, it allows deducing from earlier decisions, a rule that could be applied to a case not directly covered by either the *Qur'an* or the *Sunna*.

contemporary times there are examples of Islamic laws getting adapted according to the needs of the modern world, and this is the case in some of the Arab countries, as well as in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Scholars in Islam terminated the practice of *Ijtihad* five hundred years ago. But principles of interpretation *Qur'an* and *Sunna* are well established and the need for contemporary interpretations is persuasive. Obviously, the desire is present under the current swiftly changing contexts to take benefit from the mechanism of *Ijtihad*.

CONTEMPORARY HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN MUSLIM WORLD:

In Muslim states, education on human rights in Islam is mostly integrated into a course on Islamic Studies, which is taught from the primary school up to the graduation levels. Mostly, these texts books highlight the importance of rights of parents, children, women, neighbours and disadvantaged people. However, this mode of teaching does not leave much room for critical analysis.

- The Human Rights Studies Centre was established at the University of Peshawar (www.upesh.edu.pk), Pakistan, in 1999. This centre has developed a good reputation for offering international standard certificates and an M.A. in human rights. Specifically, this centre offers a course on "Islam and Human Rights".

- International Islamic University Islamabad (www.iiu.edu.pk), Pakistan, has courses on sharia and law, but does not specifically teach human rights in Islam, however there are some courses on basic of Islamic principles. An institute of IIU Da'wah Academy (www.dawahacademy.org) in Pakistan offers national and international courses on Islamic teachings for Imams and community leaders. It is really a unique program as this academy also offers distance learning courses with the aim "to develop ethical and moral vision in human beings, who are concerned about human rights, peaceful and friendly environment and just social order".

- Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences (www.al-mawrid.org), which is based in Pakistan, is a good example of not only a scholarly work on Islam, but also of an efficient knowledge sharing in the cyberspace through journals (monthly renaissance), discussion forum and online education. Studying Islam online (www.studying-islam.org) teaching institution is an affiliate of Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences, offering courses in English on ranges of Islam related issues. Human rights related topics are; family and marriage related issues, norms of gender interaction, Islamic customs and etiquettes.

- Faculty of Islamic Studies and Social Sciences at the Jamia Hamdard (www.jamiahamdard.ac.in) in India offers post-graduate courses in Islam and human rights.

Conclusively it must be understood that with changing global trends and emerging issues particularly relating to Muslims and Islam it is the responsibility of the Muslims to uphold principles of human rights in Islam, and to translate them into reality. After the tragic incident of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it has been felt that there is a strong and urgent need to correct the perception of Islam in West; to reassure international audiences of Islam's sound stand on issues relating to human rights. However, Muslim nations have neglected the fact that there is a need to teach Islamic concepts of human rights, in connection to international human rights instruments, to the members of Muslim communities. Both secular and religious international instruments of basic human rights are available and these instruments contain important principles of Islam on human rights, but unfortunately are not included in the education systems of Muslim countries, hampering full recognition of Islamic values and principles.

ACTIVITY 1: LEARNING HOW TO APPLY HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

After the presentation of basic concepts and introduction of various instruments of human rights, students will be in a position to analyze their varied application.

OBJECTIVE: Application of human rights knowledge to human rights concerns

TIME: 25 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: At least ten pictures or posters scattered on the walls, whiteboard and pens. Cards of UDHR, Cairo and Rome Articles

METHOD:

- Divide students in small groups of 4-5
- Give out various cards that state the articles of UDHR and the Cairo and Rome Declarations to the Students
- Discuss different articles of UDHR and the Cairo and Rome Declarations that have been handed out
- Ask them to attach these cards to the appropriate pictures or posters on the wall (the same materials used in the Warm Up activity)

In the end lead a discussion on their learning experience through this activity. The teacher would have to make sure of preparing relevant pictures and posters of the various UDHR, Cairo and Rome Declarations. After the activity, you should also discuss with the class their answers and position students' opinions.

REFLECTION WRAP UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: What did you learn about human rights issues. How did the warm up activity help you in understanding human rights issues in today's world? Are there any specific cases that you would want to share? What were the strongest lessons learned? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Have students keep a reflective journal for this session, contemplating and writing on human rights abuses and issues within their own local context, and what human rights instruments can be used to rectify them. On the final day of the session, give students the choice to share a reflection with the class.

REQUIRED READINGS

- AALCO. Report of the Meeting of International Experts on Human Rights in Islam, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, organized by Asian African Legal Consultative Organization, 2006.
- Altwaijri, Abdulaziz. Human Rights in Islamic Teachings. Publication of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Malaysia, 2001.
- Ali, S. Sardar. *Gender and Human Rights in Islam and International Law: Equal Before Allah, Unequal Before Man?* Kluwer Law International, The Hague, 2000.
- Svensson, Jonas. *Women's Human Rights and Islam,* Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm, 2000.
- Syed, K. Khalida. Misconceptions about human rights and women's rights in Islam, *Interchange*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 245-257.

VII. WOMEN, GENDER, PEACE EDUCATION AND ISLAM

By Sara Saeed Khan Niazi

CHAPTER VII: WOMEN, GENDER, PEACE EDUCATION AND ISLAM

This chapter provides an understanding of the relationship between gender and Islam, and the need to explore gender, conflict, Islam from a peace education perspective. Session I while taking a comparative approach defines the basic concepts from secular as well as Islamic perspective to broaden understanding of these concepts. A variety of activities are introduced throughout the session to make the learning process interactive and cooperative. The session explores associated concepts like, sex role and stereotype. It explains Qur'an's position on gender and women rights and critically analyzes the impact of religious and cultural practices on the current situation of women and gender rights in Islam. In the end, we will further elaborate on the relationship between gender and conflict and examine it from an Islamic perspective.

SESSION I: UNDERSTANDING GENDER FROM SECULAR AND ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of gender and the differentiation between gender and sex
- To understand the role of gender, women in conflict situation and in peace situation
- To understand women rights in the universal human right frame work
- To understand women right in the light of Islamic teachings
- To understand need for mainstreaming gender in the peace process

KEY CONCEPTS

- Gender and women in Islam
- Gender and conflict
- Women's rights in the light of the general human rights framework
- Gender and peace education

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

What is gender and gender roles and how do they affect us is a pertinent question to explore before we discuss formally gender in relation to peace and conflict. Through this activity students will be able build on their understanding of sex and gender.

OBJECTIVE: To explore what it is meant to be male and female

TIME: 10 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Make a group of two students, one male and one female
- Ask them to act out what they feel is a gender role
- The students are asked to reflect on what the two students acted out
- The large group is then asked what they feel are gender roles

Through this activity student will become familiar how the concept of gender roles operates in real life

- Again make a group of two students, one male and one female

- Ask the students to act out gender roles opposite to their own gender

This role-play exercise will provide an entry into the formal discussion on gender and associated concepts. It will also enable students to distinguish how society has different roles for men and for women. Now let us discuss how sex, gender and associated concepts are defined.

PRESENTATION

SEX according to Collins Concise English dictionary, 3rd edition of 1992, is "the sum of characteristics that distinguish organisms on basis of their reproductive organs. In other words, sex refers to the biological categories of *male* and *female*; sex is rooted in biology whereas gender is a socio-cultural construct.

GENDER refers to a defined set of character traits, attitudes, and behaviors that are imposed on women and men and learned through socialization processes. These traits are categorized as *masculine* and *feminine*. According to Saulnier, gender refers to a set of qualities and behaviors expected from a female or male by society. These qualities and behaviors vary within and among cultures. It can be understood from the above definitions that gender and sex are two different `concepts one dealing with the biological part of the identity whereas latter addressing the socio cultural aspect of any individuals identity. An associated concept relating to expression of gendered identity is that of gender roles.

GENDER ROLES are composed of patterns of behavior that are manifested by individuals when they perform certain functions in their life. In life, males and females are assigned different roles in society on the basis of their sex. For example childrearing is classified as a female role. Importantly, this is a gender role *not* a sex role because childrearing can be done by men or women. In other words, childrearing is not rooted in biology – women are not more equipped for childrearing by nature because of their biological sex. Some of the expected roles for females in the society may be to, help their mothers, get married, keep the house and help their husbands.

STEREOTYPES: Gender roles come with different behaviors and could be regarded as sex role stereotypes. Collins Concise dictionary defines the term stereotype as "a standardized image or conception of type of person". A stereotype is a generalization of characteristics that may or may not be true.

EXAMPLES OF GENDER STEREOTYPES

- *Women are weak and emotional*
- *Men are strong and do not cry*
- *Women are fragile*

GENDER EQUALITY means that there is no discrimination on grounds of a person's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. Islam as a religion distinguishes itself from the rest of the religions when it comes to gender issues on the basis that

It was the first one to give inheritance and political rights to women and has openly announced the equality between man and woman.

IN ISLAM DIFFERENTIATION IN SEX IS NEITHER A CREDIT NOR A DRAWBACK FOR THE SEXES

O humankind! We created you from a single (pair of a) male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous (or God-conscious) of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)." (49:13)

GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR: Both men and women work to maintain households and Communities but their work tends to be different in nature and social value. "The socially determined ideas and practices which define what roles and activities are deemed appropriate for women and men." It is argued that roles typically designated as female are almost invariably less valued than those designated as male. "Women are generally expected to fulfill the reproductive role of bearing and raising children, caring for other family members, and household management tasks, as well as home based production. Men tend to be more associated with productive roles, particularly paid work, and market production."

ACTIVITY 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR

OBJECTIVE: To understand the value associated with a woman's work

TIME: 10 Minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board, flip charts, marker

METHOD:

- Ask students to list daily activities both men and women from their household/community/do in a day
- Calculate the amount of time men spend working in a day
- Calculate the amount of time women spend working in a day
- Calculate the value associated with each gender's work
- Now compare the amount of work done by both genders and value associated with their work

Lead a discussion after students share the results of the activity, share with students that contrary to popular practice and belief, in Qur'an there is no such distinction or value set for particular deeds between men and women.

"Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, male or female. You are members, one of another." (3:195)

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: "The recognition that women's rights are human rights and that women experience injustices solely because of their gender". The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) advocates the notion of the universality of human rights; however it does not take into account women's needs and interests as women, focusing more on rights of the public sphere rather than the private sphere. On the contrary the Qur'an explicitly states the rights of women both in public and private sphere.

Within the realm of private sphere the Qur'an admonishes those men who oppress or ill-treat women by explicitly stating that *"O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dowry you have given them - except when they have become guilty of open lewdness. On the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you take a dislike to them, it may be that you dislike something and God will bring about through it a great deal of good."* (4:19)

Now let us proceed to study how gender and conflict are interrelated within the context of Islam. We will elaborate on the relationship between conflict and gender in recent times. However before we begin the definition let us revisit the definition of conflict.

"Conflict is usually based upon a difference over goals, objectives, or expectations between individuals or groups. Conflict also occur when two or more people, or groups, compete over limited resources and/or perceived, or actual, incompatible goals". As mentioned above, conflict exists on many levels, from intrapersonal to international. However in recent times the nature of conflict has changed immensely. Increased number of conflicts between tribes, ethnic and religious groups and communities within the boundaries of nation state has absolutely changed old notions of peace and security. Individual security of groups traditionally excluded from combat both as participants and victims mainly women and children, has come under great risk.

This change in focus demands a shift in the way traditional conflict analysis is done. It has become imperative to integrate a gender perspective while studying the role of actors and their actions during conflict, as all conflicts are gendered therefore carry gendered implications as well. To address this issue Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing, 1995) calls for increased access of women to conflict resolution and prevention efforts and has raised the awareness among international academicians and professional regarding the role women play in conflicts, like peace activism and confidence building among conflicting parties. Similarly *UN Resolution 1325* also reaffirms the need to integrate gender perspective in conflict analysis, resolution and peace building processes, and ensuring optimum participation of women in both private and public sphere and on

decision making levels. It is widely believed that public sphere is an extension of the private sphere.

UN RESOLUTION 1325:

UN Resolution 1325 was the first formal and legal document from the United Nations Security Council that requires parties in a conflict to respect women's rights and to support their participation in peace negotiations and in post conflict reconstruction.

If there is violence and gender injustice in the private sphere and human rights of individuals are violated, it will manifest itself in the public sphere in some forms of violence. One way of eliminating violence, creating a culture of peace, and enhancing human dignity and equality is by increasing gender justice in communities and societies. An understanding of women's relationship with violence is of immense importance in designing approaches to establish sustainable peace. It provides an extremely useful lens to examine problems both on personal and global level, because being culturally derived and socially constructed, gender roles and relations are the consequences of human intent and, as has been demonstrated, subject to change. Gender analysis and violence assessment of communities and cumulatively of global society illuminate a comprehensive diagnosis of global problems and their interrelationships and can be a useful approach towards a wholesome methodology in education for culture of peace. Consider the following illustration*, which clearly depicts the situation of men and women before and after a conflict within the private sphere.

GENDER, CONFLICT & ISLAM:

Although Islam is a religion of peace and openly shuns violence, when it comes to Islamic history, many wars and battles have been fought by Muslim leaders for various reasons. A gender perspective of those wars from the Islamic history provides several examples of the active participation of women in battles as well as peace-building, women showing their agency and activism no matter what the situation was. The example

* These illustrations were made as part of the class activity by the students of Gender and Peacebuilding MA program at University for Peace Costa Rica Campus. 2006

below provides an insight into the varied role of women, participating in the war both in the role of caregiver and nurturer and also as fellow combatants, receiving the booty.

Consider the following example:[*]

EXAMPLE FROM ISLAMIC HISTORY:

Um Sanaan narrates when the Prophet (*pbuh*) chose to go to the Battle of Khaibar, I went to him and told him, `O Prophet of God, I will accompany you to your destination. I prefer to provide water and treat the ill and the wounded, if there are any, and I hope there will be none.' The Prophet replied: `With God's blessings, you may come along. You will be accompanied by other women, from your own tribe and from others, who also sought permission to come. You can accompany them or us.' When he conquered Khaibar, the Prophet gave us a share of the war booty. I returned along with his wife, Um Salameh. When we entered Medina, I was riding on a camel that belonged to the Prophet. Um Salameh told me that the Prophet had given me the camel I was riding.

In another instance, when Hudabiya peace treaty had been formulated Muslim women came forward to negotiate peace and provided an example of female leadership. After the work on the treaty ended the Prophet (*pbuh*) told his disciples to sacrifice a lamb and shave. The task was not executed by his disciples and this angered the Prophet (*pbuh*). When his wife Um-Salameh heard the story, she suggested the Prophet (*pbuh*) initiate the task, stating that his disciples would follow suit. The advice was successful and later everyone followed the Prophet (*pbuh*)."[†] These examples provide insight into the status and role of Muslim women and the varied roles they have played in Islamic history. Women are seen as active leaders during conflict, in the form of auxiliary help, advisors, and post-conflict negotiators.

Although Muslim women face many barriers to achieving gender equality in legal, political and social spheres, there is general agreement and scholarly work accepting that the Islamic religion does not deny equality and rights between sexes. Rather it is the influence of culture, tradition, and patriarchal ideologies that need to be dealt with to achieve emancipation and empowerment for women. It is these factors which relegate women to the margins of Muslim societies and communities. Significantly, there is hope. There are growing and changing trends supporting Muslim women's agency to fight for their rights within the framework of Islam, which will undoubtedly rewrite the history of women in Islam in the coming decades. The above discussion manifests varied roles and responsibilities that women hold during the time of conflict, and Islamic history provides solid examples of women's participation in decision-making position during and after conflict. It is now time to reinvent those roles and responsibilities for an improved status

[*] In Al-Maghazi by Muhammed ibn Umar ibn Vaqedi.As quoted in Islam: Beacon of women in Women, Islam and Equality, retrieved from www.iran-e-azad.org/english/book_on_**women**.html - 3k -

[†] Ibid

of women in Muslim societies. Have a look at the boxes below that list various legal and policy mechanisms for the protection of women.

WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

- Security Council 1325 Resolution (October 2000)
- Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergencies and Armed Conflicts (1974)
- The Geneva Conventions (1949) and Additional Protocols (1977)
- Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1951)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women – CEDAW (1979)
- Optional Protocol to CEDAW (1999)
- The Vienna Declaration (1993)
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993)
- Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
- Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)
- ILO Convention 111: Discrimination (1958)
- Convention on Political Rights of Women (1952)
- ILO Convention 100: Equal Remuneration (1951)

GUIDING DOCUMENTS FOR WOMEN PEACE AND CONFLICT

- UN GA Resolution 337 on Conflict Prevention (2003)
- Secretary-General's Study on Women, Peace and Security (2002)
- UNIFEM Commissioned Independent Experts. Assessment on Women, War, Peace (2002)
- Secretary-General's report of the Prevention of Armed Conflict (2001)
- UNSC Resolution 1366 on the Role of the Security Council in the Prevention of • Armed Conflict (2001)
- G8 Roma Initiatives on Conflict Prevention - Strengthening the Role of Women in Conflict Prevention (2001)
- UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (2000)
- European Parliament resolution on participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution (2000)
- UNSC Resolution 1296 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (2000)
- UNSC Resolution 1265 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (1999)
- Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and Beijing+5 Outcome Document (2000)
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW (1979)

ACTIVITY 2: CASE STUDY ON GENDER AND CONFLICT

After presenting to students' the interrelated nature of gender and conflict, and its consequences on women, let students analyze a situation that reflects gendered nature of war. This will assist them in putting the lecture to practice.

OBJECTIVE: To analyze the role gender plays in conflict situations and its impact on women

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Power point, DVD of *Osama* the movie, relating to conflict in Afghanistan. (*Women's Agenda: Kenya/Uganda, Ramleh and Algeria: Women At War, Osama, And Une Femme Taxi À Sidi Bel-Abbès = A Female Cabby In Sidi Bel-Abbès = A Woman Taxi Driver In Sidi Bel-Abbès are few suggestions)*

METHOD:

- Screen the film "Osama"
- Once the film is over, create an open space for students to reflect on the following questions
- What gender roles were manifested?
- Identify instances where war had an effect on gender roles
- How did women survive after the war?
- What could have been done to improve the situation?
- What was the role of culture and religion?

Through this activity students would gain an understanding of how ideas of masculinity and femininity are worked upon in conflict situations and understand men's and women's relationship with violence. By conducting a thorough analysis they must be able to highlight that men and women, boys and girls, have different vulnerabilities and strengths– and how large is the cost of ignoring gender in peace processes.

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: How do you think gender roles and stereotypes operate n your local context. Do you think it has an adverse affect on the progress of women? Are you well aware of the need to integrate gender perspective before and after conflict and

the differential impact of conflict on both genders? Would it help you in analyzing and understanding conflict situations in a more in depth and balanced manner? What were the strongest lessons learned? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Students should take recent official CEDAW reports of their respective country and critically analyze the recent CEDAW reports of their respective country and write a 1,000-word essay on the violations and progresses made with regards to CEDAW in their respective countries, identifying trends and patterns.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Denise Spellberg. Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past: The Legacy of 'A'isha Bint Abi Bakr (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- Kandiyoti, D. Beyond Beijing: Obstacles and Prospects for the Middle East",p.3-10. in M.Afkhami and E. Friedl eds. Muslim women and the Politics of Participation. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997.
- Abdo (2002). "Women,War and Peace: Reflection From the Intifada." Women's Studies International Forum **25**(5): 585-593(9).
- Bennett, O., Bexley,J, Warnock,K, Ed. (1995). Arms to Fight, Arms to Protect: Women Speak Out About Conflict. London, Panos.
- Mernissi, Fatima. *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, trans. Mary Jo Lakeland (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1991) 111. Original edition was *Le harem politique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1987).
- All the guiding documents like Resolution 1325; CEDAW mentioned above in the lecture must be shared in class and reviewed.

VIII. DEVELOPMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND ISLAM

By Saleem H. Ali

CHAPTER VIII: DEVELOPMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND ISLAM

Development, the Environment and Islam takes into account the inalienable relationship between Islam, environment and peaceful development. It discusses the basic teachings of Qur'an with regards to environment. Individual behaviours that may or may not affect our environment are discussed. Simultaneously Prophet's (*pbuh*) traditions are explored to find guidance and appropriate responses to individual as well as institutional behaviours. Lastly students will be made aware of the contemporary challenges that are being faced globally as well as by the Muslim world in achieving environmental peace and balance. It will also bring to focus, contemporary narratives to find how peacebuilding and peace can be achieved.

SESSION I: QUR'ANIC CONCEPTS TO BRIDGE ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

LEARNING AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- To understand critical issues in contemporary environmental ethics in Muslim countries: animal rights, population, nuclear energy, waste and conservation
- Role of environment and poverty reduction tools in inter-faith peace-building
- Environmental pollution as a common threat between communities and the development of territorial peace zones
- Textual and historical importance of environmental factors in Islam: balancing development, environment and peace -- meezan
- To develop awareness of environmental ethics in Islam allowing for a common space of interactions with non-Muslim communities
- To encourage positive social activism among Muslim communities to channel youth toward constructive community service

KEY CONCEPTS

- Meezan /balance
- Islam and environment
- Population control
- Waste and conservation
- Conservation in times of war

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

What an individual's relation with the environment is, why conservation is needed in recent times are the main areas of concern in this lesson plan. Through this activity students will be able appreciate these concerns on an individual level and would realize their importance in daily life.

OBJECTIVE: To appreciate the importance of conservation and individual behavior on communities

TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: *Wudu* (ablution) facilities, somewhere near a mosque etc

METHOD:

- Ask students to do the six *rukn* of the *wudu* and observe the amount of water they use
- Afterwards, ask students to reflect on what the amount of water for each *rukn*

ACTIVITY 2 – EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CONSUMERISM

could be used for

OBJECTIVE: Makes students appreciate the impact of their choices on the environment and also on society and consider the importance of charitable giving

TIME: 15 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Board or flipchart to write words

METHOD:

- Ask students to go to their rooms at home and make a list of all the things they *need* versus what they *want*

- Then compare notes and see how they would potentially reflect upon this consumer impulse

Later lead a discussion on the relationship between individual practices and environment. How do you think your daily lives effect your environment? How can you contribute towards a balanced environment?

PRESENTATION

The advent of Islam as an organized religion occurred in the desert environment of Saudi-Arabia, and hence there was considerable attention paid to ecological concerns within Islamic ethics. While Islamic theology is not pantheistic, and shares many of the anthropocentric attributes of other Abrahamic faiths, there is a reverence for nature that stems from essential pragmatism within the faith. Due to resource constraints, early Muslims realized that long-term development was only possible within ecological constraints which were shared by all of humanity. Thus, the universality of environmental resources provides a valuable template for peace-building that is realized in Islam. Furthermore, Islam considers environmental deterioration as symptomatic of social injustice and hence development and the environment are inextricably linked. As Richard Foltz (2003b, p. 357) has noted, "Islam's tradition of social engagement is perhaps its most promising contribution to meeting contemporary environmental challenges."

Above discussion throws light on the relation between environment and Islam, to further elaborate on the topic below are various Qur'anic injunctions that promote development but a balanced development, which should not be in excess and not harmful to anyone either human or any other creation of Allah like our surroundings and the environment. In Islam the principle of *Meezan* holds great importance as it holds the essence of the religion and the most basic value and principles which cross cuts all the areas of human existence. Similarly *Meezan* (balance is of critical importance when we talk about environment as it is indeed a scriptural basis for this linkage between environment, development and peace. The concept of *Meezan* oft repeated in *(*42:17; 55:7-9, 57:25) or balancing the material and immaterial worlds (*duniya* and *deen*). Unlike the ascetic traditions in Hinduism or Buddhism, seeking wealth is considered a worthy goal in Islam: "*And when the prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land and seek the bounty of God, but remember God frequently so that you may prosper*." (62:10)

QUR'AN, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT:

Thus the Qur'an recognizes that economic development is essential but that it must not be undertaken in excess or by compromising earthly limits as highlighted in the following verse: "*And those who do mischief avail of material things and eat as do the animals, their abode will be hell*." (47:12). There is thus a clear distinction made between consumption for improving the human condition and wanton consumerism. In another verse, moderation in consumption is described as follows: "*Eat and drink, but waste not by indulging in excesses; surely God does not approve of the intemperate*." (7:31)

In this vein, there are numerous verses that highlight the importance of the public trust doctrine as applied to the environment as a resource, recognizing that this is not an easy task to implement: "*Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the Earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it. And were afraid of it, and man assumed it. Lo! he is a tyrant and fool."* (33:72)

The purpose of creation and the place of humanity in the cosmos is an important contextualizing tool for peace-building that is also articulated in the Qur'an quite clearly. The fact that ecological systems have purpose and teleological as well as theological value is enunciated in the following verse:

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN

"Know that We did not create the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them in a pastime. Had We wished to indulge in a pastime, We would have found the means at hand – as if We would ever be indulging in that kind of amusement." (11: 16-17)

The Qur'an thus has several foundational verses that provide strong backing for sustainable development in its contemporary forms.

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSES:

Many environmental concerns and their developmental impact are based on individual behaviour patterns for which the *Ahadith* or personal traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) can provide guidance to Muslims. Experiential learning can be an important means of inculcating peace through environmental education in this context through field-oriented clean-up programs, land enhancement efforts for poverty alleviation and food production, based on the life and teachings of Muhammad (*pbuh*) and of the *sahaba* (early followers who observed the Prophet's life). Some of the key areas of individual action that are useful in this regard along with some supporting Ahadith are given below.

CONSERVATION IN TIMES OF WAR:

Perhaps the most salient linkage between the environment and peace-building in Islam can be derived from strict injunctions and historical practices towards nature in times of war. For example, the first Caliph Abu Bakr made a famous proclamation to his armies not to harm animals, destroy crops or cut down any trees (Khalid and O'Brien, 1993). Scorched Earth campaigns are completely contrary to Islamic traditions and yet there are examples of using environmental harm as a weapon during the first Gulf War that could be used as a contemporary case study.

ACTIVISM AGAINST POVERTY:

Individual giving or *sadaqa* to reduce economic inequality has been repeatedly exhorted in Islamic traditions. However, the concept is meant to cover not only economic giving but also a sharing of resources. Consider the following Hadith:

SUPPORT FROM QUR'AN
"He whose property exceed his needs, let him support the one whose property does not (meet his needs), and he whose food exceeds his needs, let him share it with those who do not have food." - *Fiqh-us-Sunnah*, (3:93C)

POPULATION CONTROL:

Islam has always considered procreation as a natural process that should be encouraged. However, there are numerous traditions from the life of the Prophet (*pbuh*) which suggest that he was not averse to family planning as a means of effective nurturing of children and social cohesion. The point of contention remains the interpretation of a Qur'anic verse about infanticide that states: "*And do not kill your children for fear of poverty: We give them sustenance and yourselves (too): surely to kill them is a great wrong*" (17:31). There is a need to engage students in debate on interpretations of this verse according to contemporary scholarship, which would be worthwhile as a collective learning exercise in *ijtihad* (independent reasoning).

RESOURCE CONSERVATION:

Islam has traditionally been adamantly against wastage of resources, particularly with regard to food and water. Islamic rituals such as ablutions require copious amounts of water (and there is a tradition of the prophet (*pbuh*) which states that cleanliness is half of your manifest Faith). Nevertheless, the pragmatism and conservation ethic is exemplified by the numerous allowances for conservation of water even with such rituals. Furthermore, the concept of *israaf* or wastage extends beyond merely expenditure of wealth in vain but of any kind of wastage.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES:

Apart from individual action, there are important institutional examples within Islam which can be used as a means of promoting sustainable development and consequently for peace-building. Islam has always positioned itself as a 'way of life" rather than just a theology. Hence institutional development, particularly in matters of finance and economic development happened at a very early stage. The prohibition of usury and interest has been a singular distinguishing feature of Islamic finance which also has important environmental ramifications. Using rates of increase and discount can also have important impacts on valuing of the present versus the future which in turn can impact conservation incentives as well as incentives to resolve disputes.

Traditional economists use a discounting factor when valuing future benefits due to risk adverse behaviour of consumers. However, such metrics reduce incentives for long-term planning since benefits that would accrue in the future are often discounted heavily. Under Islamic views about interest rates of various kinds, such practices would be discouraged and greater importance would be accorded to the overall social outcome of a project in the long-term. There is an important Qur'anic verse that shows the expansive nature of equity as perceived within Islamic institutions: "*O' my people, give full measure and full weight with equity, and wrong not people in respect of their things, and act not corruptly in the land making mischief*." (11:85). As noted by finance scholar Timur Kuran, "unlike the incorrigibly selfish and acquisitive *homo economicus* of neoclassical economics, *homo islamicus* voluntarily forgoes temptations of immediate gain when by doing so he can protect and promote interests of his fellows." (Qtd. In Knitter and Muzaffar, 2002, p. 145)

Islamic financial institutions are flourishing, particularly in the Gulf states and could also be an important means of peace-building through development. The role of banks at various levels deserves consideration. Not only can large conventional banks play a role in this endeavour but also micro-credit institutions such as the Grameen bank which was formed by a notable Muslim, Muhammad Yunis. While there is continuing controversy among the ulama about the legitimacy of the Grameen model due to interest rates being charged, several scholars from Iran and Malaysia have accepted the borrower's ownership model of the bank as being within Islamic orthodoxy. Even if one does not accept the Grameen model as Islamic, there are important traditional examples of Islamic microfinance which can be considered within an environment and development context.

EXAMPLE FROM SOUTH-ASIA:

The Pakistan-based Akhuwat Foundation is an important example in this regard. Akhuwat's lending philosophy is based on Islamic principle of *Qarze-e-Hasna* or helping someone in need with interest-free loans, which are preferred over charity. The organization channelizes charitable giving into its loan programs. If such programs are also extended to non-Muslim minority communities, there is a tremendous potential for peace-building between Faiths. Furthermore, the loans could be given for public good projects such as wastewater management facilities that would bring environmental benefits alongside their developmental and peace-building purpose.

Several civil society organizations also exist that are using environmental and developmental factors in peace-building. The University of The Middle East Project[*] has held institutes in sustainable development and teacher's education between Muslims and other faith communities and have a network of over 500 alumni that are now developing further projects in this regard. The Arava Institute in the Negev desert has a Master's program in environmental studies in which Israelis and Palestinians enrol together to focus on experiential ecological education.[†] While such programs are often assailed for potential cooptation of interests by the dominant party, the chances of their success in fostering peace deserves attention. Evaluative studies of such programs such as one conducted by Ali and Chiota (2005), show that they are extremely effective in peace-building without compromising individual interests of political groups.

CHALLENGES:

There are several systemic challenges to a realization of a sustainable development paradigm within contemporary Islam, largely due to institutional inertia and a reluctance of *ulama* (scholars) to engage contemporary issues. First, the Islamic belief of humans as *Ashraf ul Makhloqaat* (the most superior creation) poses serious challenges to inculcating environmental ethics, particularly with reference to animal rights. However, this can be countered by considering numerous injunctions about the great responsibility that comes with the status of being a "superior creation." The concept of *khalifa* (vicegerent) can be considered an antidote to this concept since the role of a vicegerent is to act as a steward for the land and for all creation.

Second, the Islamic focus on the after-life rather than the present has also led many Muslims to consider environmental and developmental challenges as trivial compared to the hereafter. This has led to a sense of complacence and fatalism about our developmental predicament, since it is deemed the will of God. There are, however, some important injunctions that can counter this apathy. For example, there is a notable hadith

[*] Refer to http://www.ume.org
[†] Refer to http://www.arava.org

which states: “Live in this world as if you were going to live forever; prepare for the next world as if you were going to die tomorrow” (Hadith from Bukhari, qtd. Khalid and O’Brien, 1992, p.20)

Third, Islamic rituals such as the feast of Abrahamic sacrifice (*qurbani at Eid ul Adha*), raises serious questions about resource usage and utilization. While technological solutions such as freezing the meat from the sacrificial animals and shipping it off to poor countries has been implemented, there are clearly limits to this solution. Considering alternative kinds of sacrificial rituals have been proposed as an environmental initiative but have been met with tremendous resistance.

Apart from these issues, there is also a continuing perception in many Muslim countries that environmental consciousness is a luxury issue that can only be achieved at the expense of development.

WIN-WIN ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ISLAMIC HISTORY:

There are, however, considerable historical examples of that should be used to address these concerns. The field of Islamic architecture, which has been developed at the highest level, can be instrumental in this regard. Innovative design features in Islamic architecture and engineering such as the *Aflaj* canals of Oman or the *qanat* and *kareez* of Persia. Wind towers or *badghir* are also an important cooling technology which was developed by Muslims that needs to be resurrected in contemporary design to promote energy conservation. Technology transfer can always be an effective means of peace-building and environmental technology to promote conservation and development should play a leading role in this regard.

CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES:

Despite the challenges in promoting environmental education and the instrumental use of sustainable development in peace-building, there are several promising signs that narratives of policy makers are changing positively. In 2004, the Iranian government organized an international conference on environmental security in which Americans were also invited and there was a strong case made for using environmental conservation for peace-building. The former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami stated during his tenure that “pollution poses an even greater threat than war and suggested that the fight to preserve the environment might be the most positive issue for bringing the Gulf neighbors together.” (Qtd. In Foltz, 2002, p. 363)

Similarly, the importance of conservation for economic development is also being realized by many Muslim countries, and civil society groups are emerging all over. Even opulent Gulf States that were known for their profligacy are beginning to capitalize on environmental markets. Dubai has launched a bid to become a centre for trading greenhouse gas emissions permits, in partnership with the London-listed carbon-credit

company Eco-Securities. In addition the government of the UAE has launched several conservation initiatives to reduce its annual greenhouse gas emissions by 40% and build Abu-Dhabi as the first carbon neutral city.

Apart from the proliferation of international environmental organizations all over the Muslim world, numerous local groups and grassroots efforts that are predicated in religion are also emerging. New entrepreneurial initiatives such as the Canada-based i-Enviro [*] or the Green-Muslims network are attracting the younger generation of Muslims to channel their activist energies towards environmental and developmental goals. Nevertheless, there is still a greater need for prominent Islamic charities and foundations (such as the Edhi Foundation or the Aga Khan Foundation) to make the connection between environment and development.

There is also an emerging indigenous literature on environmental themes in many Muslim countries and stories of individuals from various parts of the Islamic world finding ecological commonalities are now being told at international forums. A notable anthology and bibliography prepared by the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Harvard University in 2003 compiled many of such narratives and this book was subsequently disseminated throughout the Muslim world through the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (Foltz et al, 2003).

The narratives are gradually changing towards sustainable development but there is a need of expediting the process through more direct infusion of this material within Islamic education. Overall, the potential for linking environment and development to peace education remains strong and there is enough intrinsic guidance within Islamic theology as well as grassroots activism to galvanize lasting curricular change.

ACTIVITY 3: OBSERVING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

OBJECTIVE: Makes students realize that poor people are often the first victims of environmental pollution and this has immense implications

TIME: 30 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Transport to travel to field area

METHOD:

- Take students to an impoverished area where people are living under environmental stress
- Once there, ask students to notice the standard of living, facilities and the overall environment

[*] Refer to the web site for this group: http://www.ienviro.ca/

Later, lead a discussion on students' experiences; ask them to compare it to the environment they live in. What differences did they notice, what were the living conditions, particularly relating to environmental concerns, how was it affecting residents health and living. What can be done to provide a cleaner environment to them?

ACTIVITY 4: ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION GAME

Involve students in environmental cooperation game[*]. In this activity let students put in practice what they have learnt during the formal presentation sessions. Details of the game are as following

GROUP 1

Fisheries Game A

You are the owner of a company that owns two fishing boats and are wondering if you should just send out one boat or both of them to fish on this small fishing ground. There is another company sharing the fishing grounds, and this second company is contemplating the same thing (whether to send out one or two boats). The thing is that, when there are too many boats on the lake, they interfere with each other; scare away the fish, etc. such that the catch per boat decreases as more boats use the lake. In fact, the catch per boat is as shown in the following table. How many boats do you send out, and why? Note that, for various reasons, you cannot communicate with the other company owner at all. What does the other do?

Method:

- Decide on a course of action
- Fill out form below
- Write a justification for your decision
- Discuss in class.

Total Number of Boats on Lake	Tons of Fish Per Boat
2	**3**
3	**2**
4	**1.25**

[*] Developed by Raul Lejano: rplejano@yahoo.com

Fisheries Game A
Company 2
1 boat 2 boats

	Company 1 1 boat (3 , 3) (2 , 4) 2 boats (4 , 2) (2.5 , 2.5)

Group 2

Tragedy of the Commons Game A

You are a rancher who currently owns one cow that presently grazes on a certain pasture. You are contemplating whether or not to add another cow (making it two in all). There is another rancher who shares the pasture with you and who is contemplating the same decision (i.e., to keep only one cow or to add a second). The thing is that, when there are too many cows on the pasture, they interfere with each other, compete for grass, disturb each other psychologically, etc. such that the resulting weight of each cow is reduced as more cows use the pasture. In fact, the expected weight of each cow is as shown in the following table. How many cows do you send out, and why? What does the other do? Note that, for various reasons, you cannot communicate with the other rancher at all.

Method:

- Decide on a course of action
- Fill out form on next page
- Write a justification for your decision
- Discuss in class.

Total Number of Cows in Field	Tons per Cow
2	**3**
3	**2**
4	**1.25**

Fisheries Game A
Company 2
1 boat 2 boats

1 cows (6000, 6000) (4000, 8000)
Rancher 1

2 cows (8000, 4000) (5000, 5000)

Group 3

Fisheries Game B

You are the owner of a company that owns two fishing boats and are wondering if you should just send out one boat or both of them to fish on this small fishing ground. There is another company sharing the fishing grounds, and this second company is contemplating the same thing (whether to send out one or two boats). The thing is that, when there are too many boats on the lake, they interfere with each other; scare away the fish, etc. such that the catch per boat decreases as more boats use the lake. In fact, the catch per boat is as shown in the following table. How many boats do you send out, and why? Note that, for various reasons, you cannot communicate with the other company owner at all. What does the other company do?

Method:

- Decide on a course of action
- Fill out form on next page
- Write a justification for your decision
- Discuss in class.

Total Number of Boats on Lake	Tons of Fish Per Boat
2	**9**
3	**6**
4	**3.75**

Fisheries Game B
Company 2
1 boat 2 boats

1 boat (3, 3) (1.5, 3)

Company 1

2 boats (3, 1.5) (2.5, 2.5)

Group 4

Tragedy of the Commons Game B

You are a rancher who currently owns one cow that presently grazes on a certain pasture. You are contemplating whether or not to add another cow (making it two in all). There is another rancher who shares the pasture with you and who is contemplating the same decision (i.e., to keep only one cow or to add a second). The thing is that, when there are too many cows on the pasture, they interfere with each other, compete for grass, and

disturb each other psychologically, etc. such that the resulting weight of each cow is reduced as more cows use the pasture. In fact, the expected weight of each cow is as shown in the following table. How many cows do you send out, and why? What does the other person do? Note that, for various reasons, you cannot communicate with the other rancher.

Method:

- Decide on a course of action
- Fill out form on next page
- Write a justification for your decision
- Discuss in class

Total Number of Cows in Field	**Pounds per Cow**
2	**6**
3	**4**
4	**2.5**

Tragedy of the Commons - Game B
Rancher 2
1 cow 2 cows

	1 cows (12000, 12000) (8000, 16000)
	Rancher 1
	2 cows (16000, 8000) (10000, 10000)

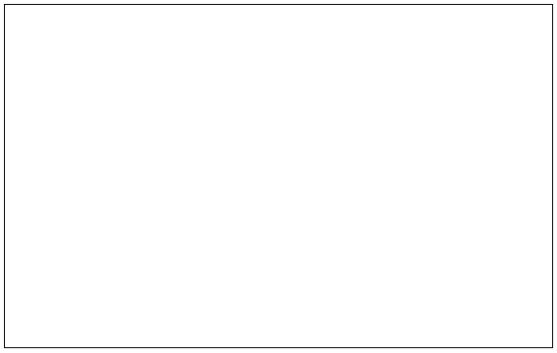
Fisheries Game
Company 2
1 boat 2 boats

1 boat (,) (,)

Company 1

2 boats (,) (,)

Tragedy of the Commons
Rancher 2
1 cow 2 cows



1 cows (,) (,)

Rancher 1

2 cows (,) (,)

REFLECTION WRAP UP

For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Offer students guided inquiry: What is your opinion about the relationship between Islamic principles, practices and environment. How do you think you can play a role in building a bridge between these principles and environmental practices in your own local context? Ask them to consider how they have resolved to change their behavior in terms of environment and development. It will give a clear path for students to contribute positively in environmental and social activism. Their "pledges" for change can be posted on the course web site as a reminder of their commitment. After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Students are advised to watch a video on environmental cooperation among religious scholars. Specific example of Ramsar convention on wetlands signed in Iran. Afterwards they should write an essay on how international treaties around the environment can bring even "enemy" states together.

- Documentary on drought in Central Java
- CDs from Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat and IUCN / UNEP Ramsar offices

REQUIRED READINGS

- Ali, Saleem H. "Ecological Themes in Islam and Islamic Societies." /Islamica, /Vol. 2, No. 1, 1997.
- Foltz, Richard , Frederick Denny and Azizan Bahauddin eds. 2003. Islam and Ecology. Cambridge MA; Harvard University Press.
- Khalid, Fazlun and Joanne O'Brien ed. /Islam and Ecology/. London UK; Cassel, 1993.

IX. MEDIA & PEACE-EDUCATION: DECONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING MUSLIM AND ISLAM IN THE MEDIA

By Jeewan Chanicka

CHAPTER IX: MEDIA AND PEACE EDUCATION: DECONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING MUSLIM AND ISLAM IN THE MEDIA

This chapter elaborates on the importance of critical media literacy skills as a tool for developing peace. It outlines skills and methodologies to empower students both young and old, to learn how to understand and critique what they encounter via media. Here we define media literacy and relate the ethics of journalism with contemporary practices of media. Ideally, as students become more media literate, they will also develop their abilities to use the media as a tool to facilitate conflict resolution and promote peace within the Muslim world as well as between Muslims and non Muslims.

SESSION I: DEFINING MEDIA LITERACY, ISLAM, AND PEACEFUL APPROACHES TO MEDIA LITERACY

LEARNING AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- To gain a better understanding of the media and media literacy
- To inculcate media literate participants and encourage critical thinking on the coverage of Muslims and Islam in South/South East Asia
- To develop a local critique of media coverage on local issues
- To explore how knowledge of an Islamic framework can help to create opportunities for peace through the media
- To empower students to see themselves as media creators who are able to create media to provide a local context to situations and to promote a culture of peace

KEY CONCEPTS

- What is Media Literacy?
- Critiquing media commentary on local & global issues
- Common themes/issues that arise in commentary on Islam & South/South East Asia
- How an Islamic perspective can have a positive impact on the media and public understanding

- Creating Media to include local perspectives and counter bias

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, markers, worksheets, reading materials and flip chart

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ co-operative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules and/or agreements (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM -UP ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE: To inform students about issues within their local and current context

TIME: 20 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: A variety of media pieces; should be varied media easily accessible to the students, board or flipchart to write words, and markers

METHOD:

STEP ONE

- Do not assign readings in the class prior to this session
- Instead assign the task for students to seek out at least 5 media pieces (varied media accessible to students)

- Explore how news from their region is being portrayed in the regional and international media
- Groups can also be divided and encouraged to explore a specific focus: local, regional and international- to have a more specific outcome

STEP TWO

Think, Pair, Share: Have students sit in pairs and share their initial views on how they feel that the news portrays events in the context specified. Later lead a class discussion among the whole class and have students come up with a running list of emerging themes that they have encountered from the media coverage. Themes/issues may include: **Bias, Missing Information, Accurate coverage, Area of focus (only one area focused upon), Semantics, Choice of people interviewed, Agencies/Reporters covering the situation** etc. This allows students to be able to develop a "big picture" idea of how issues are covered in the region and whether or not they help to promote peace or conflict.

PRESENTATION

Once the students have completed the warm up activity they should begin to realize that the importance of critical media literacy skills as a tool for developing peace cannot be underestimated. It is becoming increasingly important, especially in recent times, to empower children/youth and young people how to understand and critique what they encounter via the media. Furthermore, the development of such skills will enable them to critically deconstruct information transmitted through a variety of media and at the very least offer an informed but alternate perspective. Ideally, as students become more media literate, they will also develop their abilities to use the media as a tool to facilitate conflict resolution and promote peace.

In the current age, the wide-ranging influence of the media and its ability to influence the perceptions of and affect large groups of people should be actively utilized in the promotion of peace and to create moments for dialogue and discussion. A natural consequence of becoming more media literate would include the desire to create and develop their own media as a tool for peace. Within the Islamic context, students should be prepared and then equipped to analyze media presentations and provide an Islamic context to issues that are presented in a de-contextualized manner. Over time, they will become more skilled at using media, intellectually deconstructing biased/misinformed accounts or narratives being presented and be empowered to include their voices to present new and differing opinions. This will further allow the opportunity for the promotion of "Islam as a peaceful way of life." As this occurs, opportunities for bridge-building between groups of people traditionally holding divergent approaches to life, differing opinions or conflicting views will occur.

Finally, the promotion and development of media literacy can have the consequence of promoting social change in a healthy and positive manner, primarily because students

will learn how to read, interpret, critique and challenge media presentations about Islam and Muslims through the utilization of both media and Islamic texts. As this occurs, and more alternative media voices arise, masses of people will be "spoken to" in their own languages. The emergence of new voices having an embedded understanding of peace will lead to new discourses and a peaceful narrative which will become more accessible to a wider local audience. In short, by equipping students with media literacy skills, grounded in the Islamic context, the consequence will be the development of literacy and promotion of peace at a wider level across societies in South Asia.

DEFINING MEDIA LITERACY:

According to the Media Awareness Network, media literacy is defined as:

... The ability to sift through and analyze the messages that inform, entertain and sell to us every day. It's the ability to bring critical thinking skills to bear on all media— from music videos and Web environments to product placement in films and virtual displays... It's about asking pertinent questions about what's there, and noticing what's not there. And it's the instinct to question what lies behind media productions— the motives, the money, the values and the ownership— and to be aware of how these factors influence content.

Media education encourages a probing approach to the world of media: Who is this message intended for? Who wants to reach this audience, and why? From whose perspective is this story told? Whose voices are heard, and whose are not? What strategies does this message use to get my attention and make me feel included? In our world of multi-tasking, commercialism, globalization and interactivity, media education isn't about having the right answers—it is about asking the right questions. The result is lifelong empowerment of the learner and citizen.[*] (are both paragraphs from the Media Awareness Network? Is this formatting consistent with the other chapters in the manual?)

Media literacy and critical media skills on their own will be quite useful and empower media consumers to be able to read and respond in an effective manner. However, when combined with knowledge of normative and non-normative expressions of Islam and Islamic texts as well as explanations of these texts and expressions, responses will become even more effective. Furthermore, it will lead to the creation of pro-active media and media opportunities to develop and propagate peaceful responses to situations whether local, regional or international and promote a culture of peace.

[*] "What is Media Literacy," *Media Awareness Network*, Jane Tallim [Web site on-line] (Ottawa, Canada: Media Awareness Network, 2008 "What is Media Literacy," accessed 24 January 2008); available from http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_literacy/what_is_media_literacy.cfm?RenderForPrivn=1; Internet.

ADDRESSING CRITICAL ISSUES WITH MEDIA LITERACY:

In the South/South East Asian context, media literacy would be able to address some of the following issues:

- The media generally typifies the Muslim community as a monolith and does not take the range of religious/cultural expressions that exist. Such generalizations may focus on perceived features of Islam or of its adherents. For example: articles may generally discuss the actions of Muslims or in other cases highlight Muslim women as being oppressed;
- Profiling in the media by constantly referring to terrorists who identify as Muslim as being MUSLIM terrorists. However the religious labelling of other groups of people generally does not or rarely occurs. For example the labels "HINDU terrorist" or "CHRISTIAN terrorist" is not heard or used and rightly so since terrorism has no religion;
- When issues are framed in the media, critical discourse would allow some negotiation of frames of reference. For example "one man's terrorist may be another's freedom fighter";
- Questioning of agendas behind articles that targets Muslims/Muslim Community/Islam: Who is setting the agenda? What is the agenda? Why are particular articles being produced during certain periods of time?
- An exploration of the diversity of Muslim societies and perspectives as well as attitudes of Muslims towards western society over and above stereotypes; The deliberate lack of representation of positive news, or positive contributions of Muslims locally and internationally;
- Lack of media accountability.

MISINTERPRETED VERSES OF THE QUR'AN:

Knowledge of *tafseer* of Qur'an and explanations of *hadith*, along with media literacy skills can empower students to respond to misinterpreted Qur'anic verses and/or *hadith* that are often used to portray Muslims and Islam negatively. Furthermore, it can enhance interfaith dialogue and understanding that can facilitate peace. Consider the verse and its framing in the media as an example on the next page:

CASE OF MISINTERPRETED VERSES OF QUR'AN IN MEDIA:

"And fight in the cause of God those who have (initially) waged war against you, but do not transgress limits (by causing more damage to your enemy than the damage they initially caused you, thereby expanding the circle of war). Indeed, Allah loves not transgressors [190]. And slay them wherever you overtake them and expel them from where they have expelled you (a reference to Quraysh who for 14 years had been expelling the Muslims from Mecca), for tumult and oppression (that Quraysh heavily incurred on you) are worse than killing; but fight them not at the Inviolable House of Worship, unless they (first) fight you there. If they were to fight you, then do not be reluctant to kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers (in the sanctity of the Holy Shrine of Ka'ba). [2:191]"

"And fight against those who – despite having the Book (aforetime) – do not (truly) believe either in God or in the Last Day, nor consider forbidden that which God and the Conveyor of His Message have forbidden, nor follow the religion of truth (which God has enjoined upon them) until they agree to the payment of the exemption tax (of defense-obligations, jizya) by those who afford it, and acknowledge their subjection (to the state)." [9:29]

"When the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush" [9:5]

An explanation of some of these verses can be found in John Esposito's article, "*True Islam has been Distorted*", which appeared in the Washington Post and Newsweek's online series, On Faith. The article addresses the importance of reading Islamic texts within their social and political contexts in a similar fashion to Jewish and Christian scriptures. While some of the verses in the Qur'an may talk about fighting, they must also be understood within a wider Islamic framework that is balanced by a strong mandate for peaceful relations: "*If your enemy inclines toward peace, then you too should seek peace and put your trust in God"* (8:61). Esposito highlights the fact that from its earliest times, Islam forbade the killing of women, children, monks, and rabbis- except those directly involved in combat, these were given a promise of immunity. These verses "have also been selectively used (or abused) by religious extremists to develop a theology of hate and intolerance and to legitimize unconditional warfare against unbelievers."[*]

[*] John Esposito, "True Islam has been Distorted," On Faith, *Newsweek and Washingtonpost.com*, 19, April 2007 [interactive online conversation]; available from, http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/john_esposito/2007/04/islam.html; Internet; accessed 24 January 2001.

It addresses the fact that militants of all types will "hijack" religion to add a divine level of authority and to legitimize their actions. It concludes by calling on both Christians and Muslims to address "exclusivist theologies which are anti-pluralistic and weak on tolerance for they contribute to beliefs, attitudes and values which feed religious extremism and terrorism."[*] As the article asserts, especially when the media misrepresents such verses in support of terrorism and militant action, there is a need for a critical reading of both the media and the sacred texts in light of the context of revelation and within the wider framework of Qur'anic discourse.

EXAMPLES OF MEDIA COVERAGE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SOUTH/SOUTH EAST ASIA:[†]

AN INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE:

One example of interpersonal/community conflict that led to an international focus on Pakistan was the gang-rape of Mukhatran Mai. The responses to Ms. Mai's decision to speak about her fate of being gang-raped based on the orders of a local council comprised of elders, were varied and led to a lot of turmoil in her village, region and across Pakistan. Much of the media carried stories about the plight of Muslim women in Pakistan, as well as other related issues such as "honour" killings of Muslim women. Whether or not we agree with the views espoused by articles such as the one below (featured on BBC), it is important that students develop a critical understanding and awareness of how to read, interpret, analyze and respond to media. In such situations, the media can become a tool to develop peaceful resolutions or it can facilitate or perpetuate conflict.

As an example, media responses around this topic could include the Imam's role in raising awareness of women's rights; Mukhatran Mai as one of the many brave women who choose to fight for their human and Islamic rights; an exploration of rights of women according to Sharia law and a distinction between that and cultural practices that diminish women's rights; the concept of "shame" as a form of female oppression; the role of supporting villagers from both Mai's village as well as the one in which the council was situated, to develop a context for building relationships. In this particular case, many of the responses were generated because it was carried in the International media. It is for this reason, that critical media literacy and skills should include a component based on media responses. Proactive interaction with media and the development of independent media as a source of empowerment are pre-cursors to developing a transformative peaceful culture.

[*] Ibid.

[†] [Please note that the articles that appear below were originally printed on BBC News online at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/ and on CNN online at http://edition.cnn.com and are only be used here for educational purposes. These materials cannot be reprinted for any other purpose.]

Pakistan rape victim's blog makes waves

Friday, 8 September 2006, 00:08 GMT 01:08 UK
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/5323858.stm

Mukhtar Mai has campaigned since being raped in 2002

By Dan Isaacs
BBC News, Islamabad

Mukhtar Mai was once an anonymous Pakistani villager - but that was before she was gang-raped, apparently on the orders of local elders in a neighbouring village.

From then onwards she has been determined to bring them to justice, and her fight made her an international figure.

Some of the men she said attacked her were convicted, but then the appeal court in Lahore overturned their convictions, amid an outcry from human rights groups.

Now Mukhtar Mai, who is in her mid-30s, is writing her own internet diary, or blog, about her life and her concerns, as a woman from a remote village in southern Punjab.

'Exceptional'

Girls in Mukhtar Mai's village have her to thank for their education.

She established the school and others with compensation money awarded to her by the courts in her rape trial.

Mukhtar Mai is exceptional because she defied the shame of the gang-rape four years ago by not only bringing her attackers to justice, but also by fighting for a change in traditional attitudes towards women.

In that role, she hears many of the problems facing the women of her village. And she now contributes a weekly diary or weblog to the internet site of the BBC Urdu Service.

Mukhtar Mai has become a familiar face on TV around the world

"Mostly I talk about incidents which are cruel and painful. I try to discuss only the most serious things in my blog: the poor treatment of women, sometimes leading to killing," she says.

Mukhtar Mai's blog is unique. Although she cannot read or write, she tells her stories to a local BBC journalist, who types it up as a web diary.

'Encouraging'

And it provides an insight not only into the crimes committed by men against rural women, but also the hardships of their daily lives.

> I set up my school because I believe education is the key to ending the cruelty I see around me every day
>
> Mukhtar Mai

"I sometimes talk about my childhood memories - events that take place at my schools; or perhaps just about the household chores.

"I don't think that the people in our village know what it's all about and what I am writing. But I've received a few e-mails from other places - people who have been reading my blog on line and who encourage me to continue."

When Mukhtar Mai says her blog has prompted a few emails, she does herself a disservice. Scores of emails have flooded into the BBC Urdu site, in response to her diary. Mostly they are from men and mostly they have been encouraging.

"Mukhtar Mai, you have begun a wonderful thing. Such crimes as the one committed against you will continue to happen if the powerful continue to harass the weak," says one man.

"May God grant you the power to continue your endeavour. For the illiterate people of the village, it's not easy to bring these thugs to justice," says another.

The comments received have been not just from within Pakistan, but from the Urdu-speaking diaspora worldwide.

'Shame'

But they are not all positive. Some - a significant minority - speak of Mukhtar Mai's disservice to the image of Pakistan, and the unbalanced view she gives of rural life.

"All of us sympathise with what happened to you. Everyone feels bad about that. Please now try to forget and stay at home, and don't make us a laughing-stock in the world," says one writer.

Another is equally outspoken: "What a shame! Are women in Europe and elsewhere not raped every day? The way certain Western organisations have given prominence to Mai in their reports - to me, it's a conspiracy to humiliate Pakistan.

"I accept that Mai has suffered; but I am against the things she did afterwards, exposing such incidents as really wrong, when the Pakistani government is trying to provide justice. She should stop it right now."

Life in Ms Mai's home village is tough

Make what you will of those railing against her - perhaps 5-10% of the mailbag. But it is a measure of the controversy she has stirred up within Pakistan, and the hidden issues so rarely talked about that she has managed to bring into mainstream discussion.

For Mukhtar Mai, it is the overwhelmingly positive message she has received which she says gives her the strength to carry on.

"It's their kindness that they read the material. I am grateful to them. They encourage me to continue in my work in the village, and for women everywhere in Pakistan.

"And I set up my school because I believe education is the key to ending the cruelty I see around me every day," she says.

AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE:

In 2001, the Taleban, the then ruling party of Afghanistan, issued a religious edict calling for the destruction of two-century old Buddha statues that were carved onto the side of a mountain. This edict also required the destruction of other statues because it was claimed that this was against Islamic principles and values. This led to a huge international response including one from then U.N. Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan. As the world looked on in horror, the Taleban's claims of upholding Islamic law led to tensions across the world. There were fears and ironically, attacks that followed upon Muslims as a response to the belief that Muslims and Islam were intolerant. Many media reports highlighted the Taleban's actions as being in accordance to Islam.

Again, critical media would have allowed for proper, measured responses that both distanced itself from the Taleban's extreme actions and Islam and Muslims. There were religious *fatwas* (rulings) that were issued locally within Afghanistan and across the globe that explicitly stated such actions were in fact, un-Islamic. While the article below does mention some of these things, the posturing and language of the article especially in its introductory passages do perpetuate stereotypes. Due to general media focus on the Taleban's actions and their continued statements that they were doing this in the name of Islam, it perpetuated misinformation and stereotypes about Islam and Muslims. In some instances such types of coverage led to spread fear and hatemongering. There were also religious rulings issued from Taleban clerics against such actions. Furthermore, the

combination of Islamic knowledge with the proper knowledge of critical media literacy could have at least included more voices, which situated such actions as counter to Islam and highlighted the responses across the Muslim world for the Buddhist artefacts to be preserved.

Opposition: Taleban starting to wreck age-old Buddhas

Bamiyan's Buddha images are widely acknowledged as some of the finest examples of early Buddhist art

March 2, 2001
Web posted at: 9:07 a.m. EST (1407 GMT)
http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/central/03/02/afghan.statues.02/index.html

NEW DELHI, India (CNN) -- An Indian-based Afghan opposition leader said Friday that Afghanistan's ruling Taleban has started to destroy two centuries-old Buddhas, despite worldwide pleas to refrain.

"I have received numerous reports from Afghanistan throughout the day about the starting of Taleban demolishing the statues, but I cannot say categorically that they are already demolishing them or not," said Abdullah Abdullah, a spokesman for the opposition Northern Alliance of Afghanistan.

Abdullah said the reports have come from two different sources.

Cultural authorities worldwide have urged the Muslim fundamentalist Taleban militia, which controls most of the central Asian republic, to spare two immense, 2,000-year-old images of the Buddha carved into a rock face near the central town of Bamiyan. The Taleban considers the statues graven images "insulting to Islam."

Governments, religious associations, and heritage groups around the world have also called on the Taleban to preserve the unique Buddhist figures, which soar 38 meters (125 feet) and 53 meters (174 feet) above Bamiyan. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has urged the Taleban to rethink destruction of the statues.

Religious edict

But Taleban spiritual leader Mullah Mohammad Omar called Monday for all such statues to be smashed, and the report of their demolition comes despite a last-minute appeal from Pakistan, the Taleban's closest ally, to spare the statues.

Abdullah said Pakistan's call for restraint came too late.

"They made that threat three days ago, four days ago and there was no statement from Pakistan," he said.

"All statues would be destroyed," said Taleban cultural minister Mullah Qudratullah Jamal, adding that "whatever means of destruction are needed to demolish the statues will be used."

Much of Afghanistan has been ravaged by years of civil war

The ruling was also directed at the remaining figures and religious artifacts left in Kabul's once famous museum.

The museum, once regarded as a treasure trove of Central Asia's pre-Islamic past, has been bombed and systematically looted during Afghanistan's years of civil war.

Museums in the southern city of Ghazni, the western city of Herat and at Farm Hadda near the main eastern town of Jalalabad have also thought to have been targeted.

Buddhist center

The Taleban want to remove any reminders of the centuries before Islam when Afghanistan was a center of Buddhist learning and pilgrimage.

The group's spiritual leaders say that Islam forbids the making of images, such as pictures and paintings of people.

The United Nations world heritage body UNESCO has denounced the action as "vandalism" and urged other Islamic nations to put pressure on the Taleban to halt the destruction.

On Thursday one of the world's premier art museums, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, offered to buy Afghan artifacts in a desperate bid to stop the ruling Taleban from smashing priceless historic statues.

Taleban forces are continuing to fight for control of all of Afghanistan's territory

"Let us come at our own cost and let us remove what we are able to remove," said Phillippe De Montebello, director of the Metropolitan Museum, a premier repository of art and artifacts.

The statue-smashing has scandalized Buddhists, Christians and Muslims around the world who have said it is not only destroying the history of civilization but it is damaging the cause of both Afghanistan and Islam.

Even traditional foes India and Pakistan have found themselves in agreement.

India, home in exile for Tibet's Buddhist spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, said it would try to stop the destruction which one Taleban official linked to the 1992 razing by Hindu extremists of a 16th century mosque in Ayodhya in northern India.

Meanwhile Pakistan, one of the Taleban's few foreign supporters, has added its voice to the condemnation, urging the group to preserve the "world's historical, cultural and religious heritage."

Egypt, another largely Islamic nation, said the edict was contrary to Islam because it respects other cultures "even if they include rituals that are against Islamic law."

Reuters contributed to this report.

SHOWCASING EXTREMISM:

One of the greatest challenges that Muslims in South/South East Asia have to contend with is media portrayals of being a hot-bed of extremism. Articles often spend time exploring the nature of such extremists/ extremist organizations and due to the sensationalist nature of the media, it often becomes a focus. In so doing, the extremist fringe of the Muslim community often becomes normalized, they are continually highlighted as being commonplace and the community is often cast as being ineffective at dealing with the problem. Again, all of these issues could be effectively responded to with the correct type of approach, analysis and response. Additionally, an continued issue is the construction of the Muslim community as a monolith. Indonesia is a region that holds both the world's largest Muslim population and while the majority are Sunni Muslims, there is quite a huge diversity that exists amongst the population. The article below is an example of showcasing extremism and can be used to highlight important issues with media analysis and responses.

INDONESIA'S MUSLIM MILITANTS

Friday47 GMT 09:47 UK
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/2333085.stm, 8 August, 2003, 08:

The Muslim militant group Jemaah Islamiah, which some foreign governments suspect played a part in the deadly bombing of a Bali nightclub, is one of several radical groups in Indonesia. Governments and some security analysts believe Jemaah Islamiah (JI) as the most likely Indonesian group to have planned the October 2002 Bali bombings, as well as more recent attacks.
The Indonesian Government has linked the group, which means "Islamic community", with Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network.
JI is a shadowy group believed to want a pan-Islamic state covering Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and the southern Philippines island of Mindanao.
The man believed to be the group's spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, has praised Osama Bin Laden as a "true Islamic warrior" but denies any links with him or with al-Qaeda. Mr Ba'asyir is currently on trial for plotting to overthrow the Jakarta Government and turn Indonesia into an Islamic state, for which he could be imprisoned for life.

Mr Ba'asyir says he is a simple preacher

The charges relate to a series of church bombings on Christmas Eve 2000, which killed 19 people. He has not been named as a suspect in the Bali bomb. One of his key associates is thought to be Riduan Isamuddin, also known as Hambali, who fought the Soviets in Afghanistan. Hambali, thought to be the brains behind the group's operations, is in hiding, with reports of his whereabouts ranging from Indonesia to Pakistan. Evidence to link JI to the Bali bomb is circumstantial. Analysts say it is the only group with the capacity to carry out such an attack, though some believe it would still have needed outside help.

The Indonesian authorities have arrested more than 30 people with links to JI since the Bali attacks. Malaysia and Singapore have arrested almost 100 people it says are linked to JI. Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI) The FPI, which has a reputation for raiding bars and nightclubs, announced in early November that it was suspending its activities indefinitely. However the group, which has several thousand members, said it was not disbanding. Unlike other groups it is not fighting for an Islamic state, but it does want to establish strict Sharia law. Its supporters are concerned with local issues, acting within their communities against what they see as being against Islamic law. Many members are young and believe that Muslims in Jakarta, and all over Indonesia, have erred from Islamic teachings. In 2001, the group threatened to attack Westerners in retaliation for US-led bombing of Afghanistan, but the threats were not carried out. This group emerged during the 1997 economic and financial crisis. Its leader Habib

Rizieq Shihab is on trial on charges of inciting his followers to make violent raids on various social establishments.
He could face up to seven years in jail.

The Islamic Defenders' Front has held anti-US demonstrations

Although it has been accused of raiding nightclubs, analysts do not think the FPI was involved in the Bali attack. Nor have they used explosives before. Darul Islam Darul Islam, which means "abode of Islam", sent volunteers to Afghanistan to help fight the US, but any links with al-Qaeda would be difficult to prove.

Darul Islam has been in Indonesia since the 1930s or 1940s, long before al-Qaeda was established. It emerged in the aftermath of Indonesia's successful guerrilla war against the Dutch, and has fought for an Islamic state, but only within Indonesian boundaries. It was also prominent in the 1950s, when it led rebellions in Aceh, South Sulawesi and West Java.
Laskar Jihad The paramilitary group became known for fighting a "holy war" against Christians in the Moluccan islands and central Sulawesi.
From 2000, the group, which was based in Yogyakarta in southern Java, sent thousands of men to go to the troubled regions to lead Muslim villagers against their neighbours.
Soon after the Bali bombing, the group announced it was disbanding. But it has denied its decision was linked to the bomb.
Its commander, Jafar Umar Thalib, is on trial accused of inciting religious violence, so analysts say the decision to disband could be an attempt to avoid a prison sentence.
The group says its mission is to forge a spiritual form of jihad through preaching, not fighting. It runs a school and hospital near Ambon, in the Moluccas.
Mr Thalib fought with the Afghan Mujahideen against occupying Soviet forces. He denies any links with al-Qaeda but met Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan in 1987.
Analysts say Laskar Jihad has a domestic agenda and does not have convincing links with international networks. It does have informal ties with some Muslim politicians, however.
In May 2002 Vice-President Hamzah Haz, who leads Indonesia's largest Muslim political party, the United Development Party (PPP), controversially visited Mr Thalib in prison.
He said he was visiting only on a humanitarian basis and was not interfering in the case. Since then, several Islamic figures have also visited, but not formally on behalf of the parties. Some analysts believe Laskar Jihad was set up with the backing of elements in the Indonesian military.

Militant Activity

12 October 2002 - Bomb at a nightclub kills about 200 people
2002 - Series of raids on nightclubs by the Islamic Defenders' Front
2001 - Laskar Jihad militants start leading attacks against Christians
2000 - Laskar Jihad militants arrive to help Muslims fight Christians

USEFUL TIPS FOR INSTRUCTORS TO EMPLOY PEACEFUL APPROACHES TO MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION

In developing a culture of peace, educators have both a great opportunity and an immense responsibility. It is important to take the following into consideration:

- When teaching students how to be critical of media, a general sample of images both from local and western media should be used. Highlighting only inflammatory images or pieces will only perpetuate anger and hatred and is antithetical to peace education.
- Be cautious when discussing issues so as to avoid the creation of an "us" vs. "them". Collectively, we can agree to disagree, respect each other's rights yet advocate for our beliefs and/or positions on issues.

CRITICAL MEDIA LITERACY: IDEAS &ACTIVITIES

- Integrate already existing media curricula and insert Islamic themes. (An example of this is in North America where there may be Media literacy components to the curriculum). This ensures that teachers do not see this as an "add-on" and can make the learning and teaching in a class more meaningful.
- Deconstruct media through role-plays by replicating media, both Muslim and non-Muslim.
- Teach and train students to advocate, to write, to be able to have the agency to write even a letter to editor, expose and empower them to this kind of activity and environment.
- Utilize the "survey" technique by giving students the assignment to track and record how images of Muslims and/or Islam are portrayed in the media. Specifically, when teaching how to understand bias – have students do an analysis and survey of words and phrases such as "Islamist, Muslim fundamentalist, Muslim terrorist, jihad, how many times does the *adhan* sound in media clips, what times is it happening, what roles did the Muslims have in issues being highlighted, how were women portrayed, when are the words "Allah" and "Muhammad" used. (this list can be more comprehensive, these are some suggestions).
- Reflecting orally and in writing after activities is where real learning is consolidated. **Ensure that de-briefings and discussions occur afterwards**
- Create skits to help students express how they perceive issues or how those issues are being presented in the media. During the de-briefings, get them to transform those feelings into tangible actions. Create a piece of media- writing, audio, visual, internet based, music, video among other forms of media.
- Teach and encourage accountability and encourage students to take action to make a difference. Develop a resource tank of positive media, theatre productions; pull the positive images for use in the classroom setting.

For education to be truly transformational, issues must not simply be highlighted or addressed - students must be empowered to understand their power and agency and to access that in a tangible manner to make a difference in situations they believe are unfair or inaccurate. In this way, they can begin to move from being victims to actors with the capability of making change in their immediate environments, community/ies and the world.

ACTIVITY 1: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MEDIA COVERAGE OF MUSLIMS

After the formal presentation, test student's knowledge by putting the theoretical framework that they learnt during presentation in a practical framework by using this activity.

OBJECTIVE: To critically analyze media's coverage of conflicts involving Muslims

TIME: 45 Minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Different media pieces about conflicts involving Muslims, board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

Give students a news story involving Muslims/Islam and conflict and ask students to analyze the news story by asking the following questions:

- How would you cover the same situation differently?
- How could your alternative coverage assist in the promotion of a peaceful resolution?
- Initiate a whole class discussion
- Later split students into groups to work on their role plays that illustrate an alternative way of covering these issues

Activities such as these allow students to realize that their input can help to shape and inform coverage of issues and aid towards the promotion of peace. An issue that may be raised is: *Isn't coverage of news issues with a desire to create peace not a bias itself? Does moving towards peace mean that some information NOT be reported?* Is the bias of peace a worthwhile initiative and how do we balance this with accurate coverage of multiple perspectives? Can accurate coverage of these multiple dialogues or perspectives be used as a tool to enhance peaceful dialogue? This may require further discussion among class.

ACTIVITY 2: CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH MEDIA

This activity will provide an informed platform for students to engage with media and develop peaceful constructs using an Islamic framework. It is designed to change the nature of engagement of students from re-active to proactive; it engages students' personal identities and narratives; and provides a platform for students to see themselves as media creators as opposed to passive recipients.

OBJECTIVE: To promote critical and proactive engagement with the media

TIME: 30 Minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Any of the suggested or required reading mentioned in the reading section *(reading by Edward Said can be utilized for this activity*), board or flipchart to write words, and markers

METHOD:

- Have students separate into groups of 4
- Give them suggested readings
- Ask them to divide readings among themselves
- Later they should read and present the readings to each other

Lead a discussion with a set of guided questions, what is your opinion about Islam/ Muslims, media and representation of issues? How can knowledge of an Islamic framework, assist us in developing peaceful media narratives? Are you aware of any situation where an Islamic framework was applied?

REFLECTION WRAP-UP

Review key definitions, ideas and assign task. For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. What were the strongest lessons learned. How would the session affect your daily exposure to media, would you be able to view media more critically with varied perspectives? How do you think an Islamic framework can facilitate your media literacy skills? After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Have students choose an area of concern for them (preferably something from a local context). Ask them to create a piece of media that they feel provides a more balanced approach to the issue by de-bunking stereotypes or including information from the Islamic framework to promote or encourage movements towards a peaceful

approach/outcome to the situation. Once assignments have been reviewed and assessed, students should be encouraged to post to online spaces such as:

- www.youtube.com
- www.islamonline.net
- www.aljazeera

REQUIRED READINGS

- Esposito, John. The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*?* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Said, Edward. Covering Islam*:* How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World London: Vintage, 1997.

X. Islam, Politics & Governance

By Muhadi Sugiono

CHAPTER X: ISLAM, POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

This chapter elaborates on the issue of religion and politics as well as the governance of the two realms in the Islamic societies. It is designed to inform students about the relation between politics and religion within the teachings of Islam. Throughout the lesson several interactive activities are introduced and case study approach is employed to impart knowledge on governance and politics in Southeast Asia with special reference to Malaysia and Indonesia. In the end we will be discussing the Islamic perspective on the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims both in terms of state-society relations within the boundaries of a state and in terms of global politics.

SESSION I: RELIGION, ISLAM AND POLITICS

LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand Islamic perspective on the relationship between politics and religion
- To investigate the roots of power in Islam in relation to politics
- To understand the dynamics of the relationship between the Muslim and non-Muslim world
- To understand different perspectives on the relation between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds
- To understand Muslim politics in different political settings
- To understand the dynamic of Muslim politics in different cultural settings
- To explore the political systems informed by Islam in Southeast Asia

KEY CONCEPTS

- Relationship between politics and religion
- Nature of power
- Islamic government
- Muslim and non-Muslim world
- 9/11 and its impact on Muslim world
- Politics in Southeast Asia

TEACHING AIDS: DVD Power Point, computer (laptop), projector, screen, board, marker, worksheets, reading materials and flip charts

TIME FRAME: Approximately three (3) hours

FACILITATION STRATEGIES: Along with a formal presentation of the topic, the facilitator will employ cooperative education methods. The timeframe for activities and discussions is open to the teacher's discretion to allow for the issues to be addressed in a proper manner. The teacher will motivate students to participate in the discussion, disseminating information on the topic in an informal way while maintaining respect for what is a sensitive topic.

ESTABLISHING A CODE OF CONDUCT

Clarifying basic ground rules is very important as a code of conduct for students. Ask the students to formulate the rules (e.g., no smoking, no interrupting, honesty, etc.) some ground rules are negotiable; others are essential and should be given by the teacher when the group does not bring them up. Those ground rules are:

- Listening without interruptions to recitations from the Qur'an
- Being attentive in class and to all speakers
- Being open-minded (we don't all have to agree, we can agree to disagree)
- Being tolerant and respectful
- A pluralistic attitude
- Gender sensitivity
- A respect for diversity

WARM UP ACTIVITY

Recite Qur'anic verses related to the quality of leadership, or Hadith addressing the topics of governance, leadership and democracy.

OBJECTIVE: To explore Islamic concepts relating to leadership and governance

TIME: 20 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Holy Qur'an, Books on Hadith, board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

- Once the teacher has shared few Qur'anic verses and Hadith related to the topic, initiate a guided discussion on following questions
- Who is a good leader?
- What qualities are expressed in Qur'an and Hadith for being a leader?
- Do you want to be a leader?

- Do you think you have leadership qualities?
- Can you pin point these qualities?

This discussion must be carried out in an informal style, preparing students for the formal presentation of the topic. Instructor should motivate the students to participate in the discussion, by creating and open and welcoming space. Do not negate student's ideas and opinions; rather encourage them to share more ideas.

Now we will proceed to the formal presentation stage, the presentation stage should be used to introduce material to students in a formal way. Many concepts will be new and although students will have read articles that relate to the topic, they may have question and confusion about these issues. This is the time to provide a solid paradigm and clear their doubts. Utilize newspaper articles dealing with political activities or events related to the distribution of power such as election, for example, in different countries where Muslims participate. The newspaper articles should come from both sides (Muslim and non-Muslim world) reflecting positive and negative impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

PRESENTATION

The relation between politics and religion has been subject to contention since the beginning of the human history. The questions related to the roles played by God and by the government have been debated in all civilizations. There are wide varieties of answers to the questions ranging from the withdrawal of religion from politics and *vice versa* to the engagement of religion into politics and political action.[*] In Europe, the cradle of Western civilization, modernization has brought with it a final solution to this issue. [†] Through the process of secularization, Western civilization abandoned the concept of Divine Power of the government (the King) within which God was believed to grant the legitimacy of the King to rule and to be obeyed by his people.[‡] As a result, secularism, which separates politics from religion, is now constitutive to the Western civilization.[§] Such a separation of religion from politics, however, does not seem to be the option for other civilizations. No separation of religion and politics takes place outside the Western civilization. In many societies such as in Latin America and some parts of Asia, for

[*] See Will Durant, *The Age of Faith: A History of Medieval Civilization -Christian, Islamic, and Judaic - from Constantine to Dante A.D. 325-1300* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950) or Wallace K. Ferguson, *Europe in Transition, 1300-1520* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962).

[†] Shepard Bancroft Clough and Charles Woolsey Cole, *Economic History of Europe* (Boston: D. C. Heath, Boston, 1952), p. 3; Arlene W. Saxonhouse, 'Thematic Essay: Roman Political and Social Thought,' Microsoft® Encarta® 2006 [DVD] (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2005); David A. Smith, et al., 'Europe,' Microsoft® Encarta® 2006 [DVD] (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2005).

[‡] S.R. Epstein, Freedom and Growth : The Rise of States and Markets in Europe 1300-1750 (London: Routledge, 2000); John F. Wilson, 'Church and State,' Microsoft® Encarta® 2006 [DVD] (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2005).

[§] Peter Riesenberg, Citizenship in the Western Tradition: Plato to Rousseau (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Robert Romani, National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France 1750-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Bryan S. Turner, 'Outline of a Theory of Human Rights,' in Bryan S. Turner, ed, Citizenship and Social Theory (London: Sage Publishing, 1993).

example, the doctrine of liberation theology keeps religion in politics as manifested in the political action. Secularization never took place in the Islamic world either. In fact, a separation of religion and politics has never been an important issue in Islam because Muslims believe in the unity of those two realms.[*] The questions related to the role of religion and politics are, therefore, more practical than normative, i.e., how the unity of the two realms should be put into practice. The debate among Muslims about the need for Sharia Law or an Islamic state clearly reflects the disagreement among Muslims in responding to this question.

THE NATURE OF HUMAN BEING:

A distinctive character of Islam is the centrality of God.[†] Muslims believe that a human being was created by God ─ Allah the Almighty, to serve Him.[‡] More specifically, a human being was created by God to be *the khilafah fil ardh.*[§] The word '*khalifah*' itself means 'mandatory' or 'deputy.'[**] According to Ibnu Jarir, the interpretation of this verse is that God created human beings to act as His deputy on Earth. Therefore, a human being is obliged to enforce His Law and to rule all His other creations justly and fairly.[††] A human being is given the rights to explore and inhabit the Earth. A human being is also allowed to manage the plentiful resources, richness, and potential provided by the Earth in accordance to his duty as God's deputy.[‡‡]

Such understanding leads to the belief of inseparability of all aspects of life and human personality. There is no separate and autonomous category of religious and worldly. They constitute two sides of the same coin. This means that all activities that human beings perform have an element of worship or transcendent dimension and are oriented to God.'[§§] This is also true in relations to politics. As such, statesmanship is also considered to have a religious aspect and is, therefore, sacred for Muslims.

[*] Salim Ali Al Bahnasawi, Wawasan Sistem Politik Islam (Asy Syari'ah al Muftara 'Alaiha) (Jakarta: Pustaka Al Kautsar, 1996), p. 23-41.

[†] Esposito, John L., Islam and Politics (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), p. 1.

[‡] Al-Qur'an, Surah 051 (Adh-Dhariyat [The Winnowing winds]): 56.

[§] Al-Qur'an, Surah 002 (Al-Baqara [The Cow]): 30.

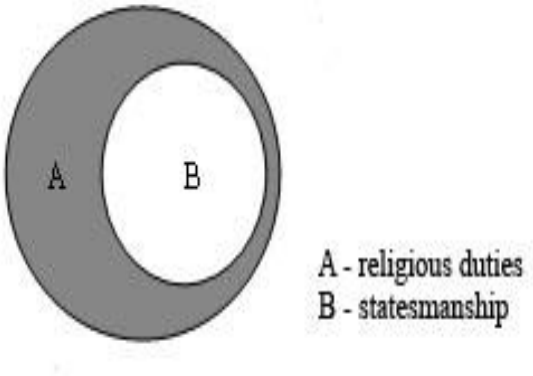
[**] Another interpretation refers 'Khalifah' as 'a band of people who periodically settle, build and govern a place'. See Ibnu Katsir, Tafsir Ibnu Katsir 1, 2nd edition, (Surabaya: PT. Bina Ilmu, 1987), p. 80.

[††] Ibnu Jarir in ibid, p 81.

[‡‡] Sayyid Quthb, Tafsir Fi-Zhilalil Qur'an vol 1, (Jakarta: Robbani Press, 2000), p. 106.

[§§] Al Maududi, Abul A'la, *Towards Understanding Islam*, translated and edited by Khurshid Ahmed (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1970).

DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW MUSLIMS ASSOCIATE RELIGION AND POLITICS:



As can be seen in the diagram, B is an integral part of A. The two cannot be separated. There is no complete A without taking B into account or, similarly, every activity that belongs to B automatically also belongs to A. As such, Muslims do not have the concept of separation between religion and politics. While Western modern political teachings tend to strictly separate the state and religion, as expressed in such doctrine as 'give unto the King what belongs to him, and give unto God what is His,' no such compartmentalization of realms exist in the Islamic teachings. For Muslims, Islam runs the state and the state enforces Islam. It is failure to conduct political affairs without a religious spirit which, they believe, has bred corruption, immorality, conflicts and despair in society.

DEBATES ON ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT:

Islam has brought with it the concept and the practice of Islamic government. Muhammad (*pbuh*), the Prophet of Islam, led the first Islamic state, established in the 7th century in Arabia. He was obviously not only a religious leader but also the head of state. The practice of Islamic government lasted for almost fifteen centuries and ended only with the fall of the Caliphate in 1924. While sharing the view of the importance of governance in Islam, Muslims disagree on how to re-establish the Islamic government. There are at least four different positions on the issue.

First, there are Muslims who stress the Islamization of government *through* social, cultural and educational practices. According to this perspective, the establishment of Islamic values as the essence of the government is more important than formalization of Islamic symbols in the government. Islamic values in the social and cultural practices should be reflected in the daily activities of Muslims. As such, without having to experience a direct Islamization, Islamic values will automatically also become part of the Muslims' political activities. In other words, the application of *sharia* will be protected not by legal constitution but by social values and cultural wisdom.

Second, other Muslims stress the importance of the Islamization of government through an institutional approach, by adopting Islamic symbols and regulations in the government. Those adopting this position believe that the institutionalization of Islam is important in ensuring the practice of *sharia* and the well-being of the *umma*. According to this perspective, no social, cultural, or educational processes will benefit the people as long as the government is un-Islamic.

The *third* position also stresses on Islamization of government rather than that of society, but rejects its involvement in the secular political process such as democracy. For Muslims with this position, democracy as a secular process is considered by nature as *thaghut* (non-Islamic) and, therefore, must be rejected at any cost. As such, based on this belief, the group seeks to promote Islamic political education in the society and peaceful revolution to convert un-Islamic state into Islamic one.

Finally, the last group of Muslims seeks the balance between social, cultural and political efforts in engaging Islam in politics. According to this group, social and cultural efforts at the societal level will improve the comprehension of the *umma* about Islamic values and principles. Those efforts will in turn provide a strong foundation for the emergence of Islamic society. At the same time, they will ensure that Islamic political parties achieve significant votes in the political process. This group also advocates Islamization through political efforts, by using parliament to deliver legal constitution in tone with the *sharia*. These political efforts will both protect the *sharia* and, in turn, enforce the social and cultural process of Islamization at the societal level.[*] Consider the following explanation:

LIBERAL ISLAM:
Apart from the four positions above, a quite different position regarding the relations between Islam and politics is adopted by what is so called liberal Islam. According to liberal Islam, there is no such thing as Islamic politics. The first idea of a liberal Islam was put forward by Ali Badurrazaq in his writing *Al Islam wa Ushulul Hukmi* (Islam and the Principles of Law) in 1925, a year after the demise of Ottoman Caliphate. In his writing, Badurrazaq rejected the Caliphate and the notion of political Islam and supported the separation between Islam as religion and mundane political activities. This brought the first wave of political secularism in Islamic world. This Islamic secularism is now enjoying increased support in many Islamic countries.

NATURE OF ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT:

Some practical issues emerge from the debates about Islamic government.

The *first* issue is related to the nature of the Islamic government. At issue is the question whether or not an Islamic government is a theocratic government. While many argue and fear that an Islamic government will undoubtedly be theocratic, Muslims supporting Islamic government disagree. Hasan al Banna and Abul A'la al Maududi are two influential Muslims scholars who reject the association of Islamic government and theocracy.

According to Al Banna, Islamic government must be built in the social context designed by God. The government's duties are to serve the people and to enforce the *sharia*. The

[*] Anis Matta, *Menikmati Demokrasi : Strategi Dakwah Meraih Kemenangan* (*Enjoy the Democracy : Promoting Da'wah to Victory*), (Jakarta: Pustaka Saksi, 2002).

government has to welcome public aspiration and uphold *musyawarah* (dialogue) with its people. Consequently, the government is not absolute and the leader is not flawless. Al Banna argues further that the only way for an Islamic government to be truly Islamic is to uphold these principles. An abuse of power, therefore, cannot theoretically take place in the Islamic government as, according to Al Banna, the government officials and leaders are *shidiq* (honest) and *amanah* (responsible). They reflect an obligation that Islamic leaders and government officials' obligation both to the people and to God.[*] These two obligations work simultaneously and mutually reinforcing and prevent or, at least, reduce the possibility for power abuse.

Al Maududi's arguments are parallel to those of Al Banna. For Al Maududi, an Islamic government is a government that acknowledges God as the Creator and Owner of the universe. The government itself is the deputy of God and, hence, the terminology used is *khilafah*. This government is open to everyone. As God does not delegate His sovereignty to any individual or group including *ulama*, it is the people who exercise His sovereignty on earth. No single person or single group of people can rule the caliphate absolutely and forbids others from accessing it. Thus, the caliphate cannot be a tyranny, monarchy or theocracy which can exclusively exercise the authority or interpret God's command and order.[†] In addition, the leader of the government must have certain traits. He or she must understand the philosophy of a caliphate as mentioned above. She or he must also be *adil* (just), *'alim* (wise and knowledgeable) and *amanah* (responsible). Finally, the leaders must be accountable to the people and bound by the *shariah.*[‡]

Reflecting the understandings of Islamic government as put forward in the works of Al Banna and Al Maududi and the contemporary governance, an Islamic government is a civil government, governed by the *sharia* and responds to the people.

[*] Hasan Al Banna, *Risalah Pergerakan 1* (*Majmu'ah Rasail Al Imam Asy Syahid Hasan Al Banna vol 1*) (Solo: Era Intermedia, 2006, p.297-316.

[†] Undoubtedly, there are also Muslims who seek to support for the emergence of theocratic government. They would like to see that Muslims adopt institutions that existed in the early days of Islam. But, for many, this is simply impractical and does not work in the modern era within which the society of early days of Islam simply does not exist any longer.

[‡] Abul A'la Al Maududi, *Khalifah dan Kerajaan (Al Khalifah wa Al Mulk)* (Bandung: Mizan, 1996), p. 45-91.

CALIPHATE IN ISLAM:

The term Caliph is civilian in character. Looking back in the history of *Khalifah ar Rasyidah*, the first caliph, Abu Bakr, rejected the title of *Khalifah Allah* or Representative of Allah, which embodied spiritual value. He chose instead the title of *Khalifah ar Rasulullah* or Representative of the Prophet, which embodied social value. The second caliph, Umar ibn al Khattab, chose the title of *Amirul Mukminin*, or the Leader of the Faithful, another socially embodied title.

The caliph is the figurehead of an Islamic societal structure. But, the caliph is subject to all religious and civil duties as other Muslims are. The caliph is the manager of Muslims and, therefore, all Muslims should defer to him. But, he himself defers to the *sharia*, the counsel of *ulama*, the opinion of the people and the court of law. His is the highest position in Islamic government but all his actions are always guided by the *sharia*, counseled by the *ulama* and scrutinized by the people. He himself is not above ordinary man. His words are not absolute, nor are his actions beyond reproach.

The caliphate is simultaneously a social and political structure in which Muslims gather to practice *sharia*. It is part of Islamic practices because its constitution is based on *sharia*. The caliphate is also mandatory for Muslims because it protects and takes care of Muslims' well being and the teachings of Islam. But, a caliph is neither holy nor flawless, because he remains a human.

RELATIONS BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND POLITICAL POWER:

The *second* practical issue concerns the relations between Muslims and political power. This relation may manifest in several forms: Muslims within an Islamic state, an Islamic state and non-Muslims minority, and Muslims as minorities in the non-Muslim world.

In the teachings of Islam, all citizens are equal in front of the laws under Islamic government. All Muslims, regardless of their social standings, wealth or birth, are subject to *sharia*. Many critics of Islamic politics point out that *sharia* denies human rights. This accusation is based on the assumption that *sharia* classifies people based on religion, that *sharia* grants no equal rights for women, and that it imposes death penalty for *ridda* (apostasy). All those, it is argued, prove that *sharia* guarantees no religious freedom.[*] The balance between human rights and human obligations is very important in deciding the balance between government and society. It is this very balance between rights and obligations which, according to those Muslim scholars, is simply lacking in the Western conception of human rights.

[*] Norani Othman, ed., *Shari'a Law and the Modern Nation State. A Malaysian Symposium* (Kuala Lumpur: SIS Forum, 1994).

FIVE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM:

According to Al Qaradhawi, there are five basic human rights that every citizen should enjoy (*adh dharuriyyat al khams*). These five rights are; the right of the protection to practice one's religion, the protection of their soul , the protection of freedom of thought, the protection of family and bloodlines and the protection of property and wealth.

As to the obligations of Muslim, *Al Maududi* writes that every Muslim has to obey the *sharia* and the constitutional laws, to obey the government as long as the government obeys the *sharia*, to promote good deeds in the society, and to defend the Islamic state using every means possible, including being soldiers when the state is in danger.[*] Al Maududi argues that the act of monitoring the government and preventing it from abusing *sharia* is both a right and obligation for the citizens.[†] With regard to the non-Muslims and other minorities, the *sharia* should guarantee the fulfillment of their human rights and conversely demands the fulfillment of human obligations. There are several rules to this issue[‡]:

SHARIA AND RIGHTS OF NON MUSLIMS IN MUSLIM STATES:

- *First*, all non-Muslim have the rights as citizens of Islamic state, as long as they pay the agreed due (*jizyah*) and do not commit any treachery.
- *Second*, all non-Muslim citizens can keep on practicing their religious teachings and do not have to convert to Islam.
- *Third*, all non-Muslim citizens enjoy economic rights as all Muslims do. They have the right to cooperate, the right of ownership, inheritance, and all other rights. The only exception is that similar to Muslims, they cannot run business on interests (*riba*).
- *Fourth*, all non-Muslim citizens are eligible to use their own ethnic, religious or social laws during social meetings, such as tribal meetings, marriage, birth, and death of a family, etc. All Muslims should fulfill any social obligations to their non-Muslim neighbors as to their Muslim neighbors.
- *Fifth*, when a non-Muslim conducts a criminal act, he will be judged according to his religion's laws. This rule does not apply to the offenses ruled in the Qur'an (*hudud*). The *sharia* applies for these offenses.
- *Sixth*, all non-Muslim citizens are allowed to participate in government. They are also able to join or form any political party, as long as they commit to the principles of the government and the stability of the government.

[*] Abul A'la Al Maududi, *op cit*, 1996, p. 81-2.

[†] It is including basic rights under the pretext that monitoring government is included in conducting religion, while it is including in obligations under the pretext that citizens have to obey the *sharia* and ensure the government obeys it too.

[‡] Salim Ali Al Bahnasawi, *op cit*, 1996, p.227-8.

According to *Al Qaradhawi*, there is no reason to accuse of discrimination under *sharia*. After paying the *jizyah*, non-Muslims will be treated as citizens, equal to their Muslims counterpart. All rights and obligations will be shared equally between all citizens, regardless of their religion. The only differences are on *aqidah* and *ibadah*. Non-Muslim citizens will not be subjected to Islamic *aqidah* and *ibadah*, while Muslim citizens are.[*] The *jizyah* does not reflect discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims either. It is a symbol of exchange of oaths between non-Muslim citizens and the Muslims government: non-Muslim citizens promise to obey an Islamic government while the government promises to protect and serve them. As *Jizyah* is paid according to the wealth of the citizens, it is equivalent to Muslims' *zakat* (alms).[†]

Finally, while Muslims living in an Islamic state is an ideal, many Muslims live now in non-Muslim states. Not only are they governed by non-Muslim governments, but they also tend to be a minority in these states. In such a case, Al Qaradhawi suggests that the Muslims form a legal association. This will function both as centre for public policy regarding Muslims activities and as a mediator between Muslims and the government. Al Qaradhawi gives example of Muslims in Europe who formed the European Verdicts and Research Association (*Al Majlis Al Urubi li Al Ifta wa Al Buhuts*). This association has the task to solve problems concerning European Muslims and deals with European Muslims' activities, societies, and governments. This association also deals with public issues and opinions regarding Islam and its teaching such as the case of the cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) and hijab issue.

Al Qaradhawi writes that under the normal circumstances, the rule of thumb for a Muslim minority living in a non-Muslim state, should be to obey the law of the land as part of their contract of entry or citizenship in the particular state and also respect or fulfill other' rights, regardless of their religion. He also suggests that Muslims be a model of Islamic teaching in the society, to maintain his/her beliefs, religious practices and identities, and to eliminate the cause of conflict within the society.[‡] Under critical or dangerous circumstances, Muslims might take several precautions. The fundamental principles are *adh dharurat tubihu al mahdzurat* (critical circumstances permit something that is generally prohibited). But, there are also limitations to what is allowed in critical circumstances (*ma ubiha li adh dharurat yuqaddaru bi qadariha*).[§]

INDONESIA – MAJORITY MUSLIMS UNDER A NON-ISLAMIC STATE:

For many, Indonesia is a paradox. It is a country with the biggest Muslims population in the world, but does not have an Islamic government. Instead of adopting Islam and *sharia* as the basic principle, Indonesia is based on *Pancasila* or Five Principles, within which the first principle is the affirmation of one God. Based on this principle, Indonesia recognizes six religions the practices and followers of which are protected by the

[*] Yusuf Al Qaradhawi, *op cit*, 2006, p. 47-66.
[†] The term '*zakat*', however, is not appropriate for non-Muslims as it is one of the five basic principles of Islam and, therefore, closely related to religious rituals in Islam. *Ibid*, p. 36-41.
[‡] *Ibid*, p. 315-6.
[§] *Ibid*, p. 214-5.

constitution. Those six religions are Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

The Indonesian political system was very repressive before political change took place in 1998. Life was also not easy for many Muslims. The government was very suspicious of Islamic activism. The government tried to control and curb many Islamic movements. Only one Islamic political party was eligible to participate in the election. At the same time, it also demanded that every social and political organization had to adopt *Pancasila* as their basic principle. The regime change following political turbulence has brought about substantial changes in terms of a more open political system. It opened up the space to more political activism, including Islamic social and political organization. Muslims took the new opportunities to express themselves more publicly. One of the most obvious results was the proliferation of Islamic organizations and parties. As can be seen, 49 political parties participated in the first general election after the fall of the dictator regime. Twenty of them were Islamic political parties.[*]

Islamic politics has been a contentious issue for Indonesian Muslims. On the one hand, Islam is the majority religion. With its approximately 150 million Muslims citizens, Indonesia constitutes the biggest Muslim country in the world. Thus, the potential of Islamic politics is remarkable. On the other hand, the suspicious nature of previous regimes hampered the development of Islamic politics and governance. But, the political change towards a more open political system in Indonesia has showed the reality of the fragmentation among Muslims in Indonesia. The fragmentation among Islamic activists was so serious that it prevented Islamic movements and organizations, including Islamic political parties, from cooperating with one another. First emerging in 1955, this fragmentation continued into the general election in 1999 and even in 2004. As a result, there has been no united front for Islamic activists to develop Islamic politics in Indonesia more significantly.

There are many political practices in Indonesia that many Muslims characterize as un-Islamic. Many Muslim scholars complained that although Muslims practice *sharia* freely in private, there is virtually none in public sphere. Corruption ran rampant and exhausted the resources in Indonesia. At the same time, prices are high and unemployment rates are increasing. This wide gap in economic welfare provides a cauldron for many social conflicts and dissent groups. The economic pressure would often result in violent acts in the society, from acts of domestic violence committed by a husband to his wife, the murder of children by their parents, to the increase of criminal acts, such as robbery and kidnappings. Social frustration can also take the form of radicalization of the poor, giving birth to vertical conflicts between the state and the people, or to the rise of terrorist groups. There are, therefore, calls for the implementation of *sharia* in Indonesia. As Salim Segaf[†] notes:

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[*] Kamaruddin, "The Cycle of Loses for Islamic Parties," *Golden Age of Muslims in Indonesia*, Sabili, No.9/X, 2003, p. 89.

[†] Salim Segaf Al Jufri, et al., *Penerapan Syariah Islam di Indonesia : Peluang dan Tantangan* (*The Implementation of Sharia in Indonesia : Opportunities and Challenges*) (Jakarta: Globalmedia, 2004), p. 18-22.

SHARIA IN INDONESIA:

Salim Segaf al Jufri, one of the strong advocates of the *sharia*, argues that human being consists of three elements: mind, body, and soul. While the development of their intellectual and physical capacity is quite impressive, Indonesians have serious problems with regard to their soul. All those problems such as bribery, abuse of power, and injustice come from the corruption of the soul. Accordingly, al Jufri and fellow *sharia* advocates argue further, the only cure to those problems is through the development of the soul. It is within this context, they believe, that the implementation of *sharia* will also rehabilitate the imperfection of the Muslim's souls.

However, political reality in Indonesia does not seem to support the possibility of the implementation of *sharia*. During the two elections after the political change in 1998, Islamic political parties did not gain significant votes. Islamic political parties altogether only gained 37.61% from the total votes in the 1999 election. Their votes increased only slightly into 38.95% in the 2004 election. Included in this number was the votes gained by two nationalist parties which are based on two biggest Muslim's social organizations in Indonesia: PKB (National Awakening Party) and PAN (National Mandate Party).[*] But, while there is no Islamic government and Islamic politics is not strongly reflected in the political process in Indonesia, but Islamic civil society depicts a rather different condition. By using social and cultural institutions, Islamic civil society managed to prevail in Indonesia. A dynamic and vibrant Islamic civil society does exist. This can easily be seen during the critical situations following the natural disaster such as the earthquake that took place on May 27th, 2006 in Yogyakarta.

The earthquake measured 5.9 on the Richter scale. It killed thousands of people and destroyed hundreds of thousands of buildings, including houses, schools, and government offices. The government was temporary paralyzed, not only because most of its officials and their families became the victims of the earthquake, but also because no contingency plans were ever set up to handle this kind of situation. This was the largest disaster to strike Yogyakarta in decades and the government was not ready to deal with its aftermath.

While the government was still paralysed and no substantial action was taken, Islamic civil society played an important role to help the victims. The local community leaders organized their people and formed an emergency chain-of-command. They assigned all survivors tasks appropriate to their skills. Older children had the tasks of observing their younger siblings; women were given task of managing emergency kitchen while men built additional emergency shelters. The headquarters were local mosques or whatever structures were left intact. This emergency order also applied in the distribution of food and other needs.

[*] While the main constituents of the PKB are the members of *Nahdhatul 'Ulama,* PAN's main constituents are the members of *Muhammadiyyah*.

On the second day after the disaster, mosques and Islamic organizations in the districts that were safe from the earthquake had managed to organize their people. In the morning of the second day after the earthquake, emergency kitchens were established all across Yogyakarta. At noon, hundreds of thousands of food packages were distributed to the victims in Bantul. Many Moslem communities also provided blankets, clothes and other private needs for the victims. The two biggest Muslim communities ─ *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdhatul 'Ulama* ─ along with Muslims charity organizations (*amil zakat*) also organized health care and temporal residences. By the time the government was able to perform its functions the well-being of the victims had relatively been taken care of.

For those supporting Islamic government, Islamic communities' response to the emergency situation clearly reflects Islamic governance at work. The act of organizing the people after the earthquake was the realization of the Islamic concept of caliphatic duty. The village elder or the head of the local mosque was not thinking about power or social standings when mobilizing his people. He was thinking about the survival and the well-being of his people. The people also recognized his role because they understood that he was taking care of them, not exploiting them for some short-term benefits. The local leaders acted as a caliph would do in the same situation.

The use of mosques and other Islamic institutions as rallying points for both the victims and the benefactors also showed the proper role of these institutions according to Islamic governance. These religious institutions did what their religious tenets exactly command, i.e., helping the leader to establish social orders for Muslims. The sanctity of the institution transformed itself into a communal usefulness; this is what embodied the government of Islam.

The act of distributing food, blankets and others from those communities suffering less shows the realization of Islamic concept of *takaful* (burden sharing). While they were themselves also victims of the earthquake, Muslims in other districts of Yogyakarta shared the burden of those in Bantul. They felt responsible for easing the pain of those victims who had suffered the most. In their limited conditions, Muslims in Yogyakarta reached out and helped their brethren in need.

MALAYSIA: AUTHORITARIAN, DEMOCRATIC OR ISLAMIC RULE?

Malaysia is an example of modern Islamic government in Southeast Asia. Malaysia consists of approximately 23 million people, 48% of whom are Muslims, 24% are Buddhist and Hindu, and about 8% of whom are Christians.[*] Islam is the official religion of the country but freedom of religion is guaranteed in the constitution. The head of state of Malaysia is a sultan with title *Yang Dipertuan Agong* and the head of the government is a prime minister. Unlike other sultans, Malaysia's *Yang Dipertuan Agong* is not hereditary. The position is rotated between nine sultans, each of whom rules in one of the federated states for a term of five years. The Prime Minister is the leader of majority

[*] Richard Ulack, 'Malaysia,' *Microsoft® Encarta®* 2006 [DVD] (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2005).

party or coalition of parties in the House of Representatives and appointed by the head of state[*].

Looking at economic aspect, Malaysia is one of few outstanding countries. From the mid-1970s to mid-1990s Malaysia had one of the world's fastest-growing economies, mainly due to its rapid industrialization. In the late 1980s industry replaced agriculture as the largest contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP). The service sectors, especially tourism, also drove economic growth. The nation's economy expanded an average of 5.9% annually in the period 1990–2003. In 2003 Malaysia's GDP was $103.7 billion in 2003. Industry, including mining and construction, accounted for 49% of the GDP, services 42% and agriculture, forestry, and fishing, 10%.[†]

Malaysia has been adamant in promoting Islamic values in its government. After UMNO's resolution on defending the "purity of Islam" in 1981, the religious branch of state bureaucracy was expanded as never before. New policies were introduced to safeguard Islam and the people. Even the Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981-1986) explicitly declared that Islam would play a major role in the development of Malaysia.

Criticism comes from two different directions: the Liberals and from the Islamist groups. The Liberals claimed that the Islamization in Malaysia is no more than political propaganda for ousting opposition parties, including the Islamist PAS, from politics dominated by UMNO.[‡] They also pointed out that Malaysia has moved closer to non-liberal status in the liberal-authoritarian continuum. All the significant political institutions, that is, the judiciary, the press, the Malay rulers and even Islam, were systematically enervated by the centralization of executive power.[§] The government of Malaysia was also accused of using authoritarian tools such as Internal Security Act (ISA) to curb any opposition. ISA has been used to detain not only communist or rebel groups but also political oppositions of and dissident factions within *Barisan National* parties[**].

Criticism from other direction was put forward by the Islamist opposition party, PAS. PAS accused UMNO as courting capitalist and materialist paradigm and using Islamic symbols to disguise it. Malaysia, according to the critics, has deviated from the ideal values of Islamic government: protection of Islamic faith and people and eternal salvation. This criticism was based mainly on the government's obsessive desire for economic growth but ignored the rights of indigenous people to their land and their own path of development. State-led growth, according to the critics, has been very destructive

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[*] Clark D. Neher and Ross Marlay, *Democracy and Development in Southeast Asia : The Winds of Change* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1995), p.96-102.

[†] Richard Ulack, *op cit,* 2005.

[‡] Vidhu Verma, "Debating Rights in Malaysia: Contradictions and Challenges," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Volume: 32, Issue: 1, 2002.

[§] In-Won Hwang, "Authoritarianism and UMNO's Factional Conflicts," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Volume: 32, Issue: 2, 2002.

[**] Harold Crouch, 'Malaysia : Neither authoritarian nor democratic,' in Kevin Hewison, Richard Robison and Gary Rodan, eds., *Southeast Asia in the 1990s* (Sydney, NSW: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd, 1993), p.138.

to traditional communities and their values. Even though the path of growth taken by Malaysian government was different from Western individualism, there is no doubt that family and spiritual values have been undermined by individualism, materialism and modernization.[*]

Assessing the relations of government, politics and religion in Malaysia, critics argue that political elites in Malaysia seemed to have been trapped in the abuse of power. The government was tempted to enforce its reign by using violence and other authoritarian means and this is, as the Islamists in Malaysia said, very un-Islamic. While no one can deny the amazing growth and development of Malaysia, critics argue further, no one can ignore the fact either that the basic principles of Islamic government, such as serving the people and protecting *sharia,* are simply absent in Malaysia.

With the absence of basic principles of Islamic government, Muslim critics say that it is understandable why Malaysia could not diminish conflicts resulting from power struggle and political abuses. One of the major conflicts in Malaysia was the frontal disagreement between Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi and his former mentor, Mahathir Muhammad. Other conflicts also arose between UMNO and its prominent rival, PAS. In addition, conflicts at the societal level also emerge between the Malay, the Chinese, and the Indians of Malaysia. Though the conflicts have not turned into violence, the danger is apparent. Al Qaradhawi argues for the necessity and the principles of dialogue between religions and civilizations.[†] A dialogue between Islam and other religions is a must. However the dialogue must be based not only on the acknowledgement and respect of differences in faith, rituals, and identities, but also on the spirit of cooperation and tolerance. For Al Qaradahawi, the area of cooperation between Islam and other religions, especially those of the Book, can be as inclusive as cooperation in facing atheism and permissiveness, in promoting justice and eradication of oppression, in promoting tolerance among religious believers.[‡]

WESTERN SCHOLARS AND ISLAM:

Huntington brought back the significance of religion for the conflict-based character of world politics in his seminal work *The Clash of Civilizations*.[§] This book is based on realist assumption that international politics is an anarchic system where every state is trapped in it without any possibility for exit. Following the end of Cold War, ideologies are of importance no more. The greatest distinction between people is not ideological, economic or political, but cultural.[**] People define and re-define themselves in terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs and institutions. Huntington then

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[*] Farish A. Noor, "Blood, Sweat and Jihad: The Radicalization of the Political Discourse of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) from 1982 Onwards", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Volume: 25, Issue: 2, 2003.

[†] *Ibid,* 2006, p.263-278.

[‡] The religions of the Book are Christianity and Judaism. Between the two religions, Al Qaradhawi notes, Christianity has closer relations to Islam than Judaism has.

[§] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Touchstone Books, New York, 1996.

[**] *ibid,* p.21.

divided the world into several major civilizations, which are the West, Latin America, African, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist and Japanese.[*] Cultural commonalities and differences shape the interests, antagonisms, and associations of states. Following the anarchic nature of international politics, these civilizations can only choose between two opposite alternatives: to emulate or to balance the current hegemonic power, that is, the Western civilization, or otherwise to be crushed.[†]

According to Huntington, the Sinic and Islamic civilizations are those who pose the greatest threat to Western civilization.[‡] While the potential threat of the Sinic civilization is its economic strength[§], the West is also threatened by the Islamic civilizations potential population bomb.[**] In contemporary world politics, the perception of an Islamic threat in the Western world seems to be more dominant than threats coming from other civilizations.

PERCEPTION OF ISLAM IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD POLITICS:

An important factor to this fear is undoubtedly the negative view of Islam as a religion of the sword that glorifies military virtues. For the critics of Islam, Islamic teachings and Muslims' beliefs contain few prohibitions on violence, or a concept of non-violence is simply absent from Muslim doctrines and practices. Also, in contrast to Confucians, Buddhists, Hindus, Western Christians, and Orthodox Christians, Muslim countries are seen as having problems in dealing with their non-Muslims minorities.

The Clash of Civilizations has been a key source of debates. Scholars from both the Western and Muslims countries challenge Huntington's arguments, especially on his idea of the clash between the West and Islam. Karen Armstrong, one of the most notable Western scholars clearly disagrees with Huntington. Unlike Huntington who views the relations between the West and Islam as exclusively conflictual, Armstrong views the relations as dynamic. It can be conflictual, as the history of Crusades showed us, but it can also be cooperative. The most important factor in determining the nature of relations between the West and Islam is the willingness between people in both sides to understand each other. Thus, in contrast to Huntington, Armstrong tries to build a bridge of understanding between the West and Islam.[††]

[*] *ibid*, p.28-29.
[†] *ibid*, p. 29.
[‡] *ibid*, p. 20. Detailed in chapter 8-11, p.183-300.
[§] *ibid*, p. 103-109.
[**] *ibid*, p. 263-264.
[††] See, for instance, her work on the Prophet Muhammad in Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad : A Biography of the Prophet* (San Francisco, Ca. : Harper San Francisco, 1992).

MUSLIM SCHOLARS AND THE WEST:

On the Muslim's side, Muslim scholars also find that confrontation between the West and Islam is not advisable. Al Banna writes that Islam would not disturb its relations with the West. *Aqidah* and *sharia* ensure that the relations between Islam and the West remain pleasant as long as the West is fair and honest.[*] According to Iqbal, Muslim states will always open a diplomatic relations with goodwill, honesty, politeness, and peaceful means[†]. Al Bahnasawi writes that Islamic states will honour any agreements and diplomatic relations with other countries, unless they are conducting aggression into Muslim territories.[‡]

Efforts to build mutual dialogues between Islam and outside world did not only take place in the academics fields. Former Prime Minister of Turkey, Necmetin Erbakan, for example, called for a dialog among civilizations during his speech in Jakarta, 1996. The call was positively responded to by both Anwar Ibrahim and B.J. Habibie, two respected statesmen from Malaysia and Indonesia.[§] All those positive efforts, however, were hampered by the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. The attack and the response to the attack seem to prove the conflictual nature of the relations between Islam and the West. As if *the Clash of Civilizations* became a self-fulfilling prophecy, relations between the West and Islam fell into trouble once again.

Despite the unfortunate development, it is imperative for Muslims to continue building better understanding and cooperation with other civilizations. While Huntington says that Muslims are not tolerant toward others, Al Qaradhawi points out that tolerance is one of the basic principles in Islam.

According to Al Qaradhawi, Islam acknowledges differences both within Islam and with other religions. It also seeks to promote cooperation and tolerance. One of the most obvious examples of tolerance in Islam is that Islam allows Muslim men to marry Jewish or Christian women. This means that Islam opened the opportunity for People of the Book to integrate themselves into Muslim families.[**]

Al Qaradhawi argues for the necessity and the principles of dialogue between religions and civilizations.[††] A dialogue between Islam and other religions is a must. However the dialogue must be based not only on the acknowledgement and respect of differences in faith, rituals, and identities, but also on the spirit of cooperation and tolerance. For Al Qaradahawi, the area of cooperation between Islam and other religions, especially those of the Book, can be as inclusive as cooperation in facing atheism and permissiveness, in

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[*] Hasan Al Banna, *op cit*, 2006, p. 112.
[†] Afzal Iqbal, *Diplomasi Islam* (*Diplomacy in Early Islam*), (Jakarta, Pustaka Al Kautsar, 2000), p. 79-116.
[‡] Salim Ali Al Bahnasawi, *op cit*, 1996, p. 277.
[§] Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat (The Face of Western Civilization)* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2005), p. 131-2.
[**] Yusuf Al Qaradhawi, *op cit*, 2006, p. 206-9.
[††] *Ibid*, 2006, p.263-278.

promoting justice and eradication of oppression, in promoting tolerance among religious believers.[*]

ISLAM AFTER 9/11:

Interest in Islam has been growing significantly in the recent years. Especially following the September 11th attacks, more and more people sought to find the explanation of such a terrorist act in the Islamic teachings. Many believed that Islamic teachings promote hatred towards others and justify the use of violent acts to achieve one's goals. As such, it is very unfortunate that misunderstandings rather than understandings of Islam motivate such interest in Islam.

Islam is founded upon some fundamental principles. Those seeking to better understand Islam must necessarily start from these principles. These fundamental principles, however, are subject to different interpretations among the Muslims. Consequently, while the September 11th attacks have undoubtedly created a destructive image of Islam, it cannot be seen as a representative picture of Islam; there is simply *no* single picture of Islam.

Focusing on the Islamic teachings on the relations between politics and religion, this section argues that Islamic governance is not dissimilar to the idealized democratic system of governance. While many believe that divine source of legitimacy in Islam leads to theocratic Islamic government, a better understanding of Islamic fundamental principles proves otherwise. Instead of privileging an individual or a group to interpret the commands of God, Islam assigns every single individual as the vicegerent of God on earth. In other words, the people exercise the sovereignty of God on earth.

Such a positive picture of Islam can go further as far as the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims are concerned. Islamic teachings provide comprehensive principles guiding the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in different power relationships. Under the guiding principles, a true Islamic state will necessarily serve and protect its citizens regardless of their religious affiliations. At the same time, they also enable Muslims as a minority in non-Muslim countries to be good citizens and to live harmoniously and peacefully with their fellow citizens.

In summary, it is simply unsubstantiated to draw a negative picture of Islam without understanding properly its fundamental principles. In contrast to what many have believed, Islam provides large room for its followers to interpret those principles. At the same time, Islam also opens its door widely for dialogs with non-Muslims. The opportunity to dialogue offers the chance to change the false picture of Islam and prevent the clash of civilizations that Huntington describes.

[*] The religions of the Book are Christianity and Judaism. Between the two religions, Al Qaradhawi notes, Christianity has closer relations to Islam than Judaism has.

ACTIVITY 1: CASE STUDY

After the presentation students will have developed a basic understanding of the issues and challenges relating to Islam, democracy and governance. Through this activity they will be able to analyze the contemporary Islamic societies and issues of governance and politics within them.

OBJECTIVE: To analyze current trends within Muslim societies concerning governance, citizenship, democracy and leadership

TIME: 100 minutes

TEACHING AIDS: Newspaper articles, Internet access, Power Point, projector, board or flipchart to write words, and marker

METHOD:

STEP ONE

- Divide students in small groups of 4-5
- Find and use newspaper articles relevant to the following topics
- Islam and secularism
- On being Muslim and being a citizen
- Democratic Islamic government
- The relations between Muslim and non Muslim world

STEP TWO

- In the first 40 minutes, students discuss the articles within their small groups
- Later all groups have to report their discussion to the panel discussion
- Instructor should be the moderator

This discussion must be carried out in an informal style, letting students link the discussion with lecture that has been delivered earlier. Students should be able to identify trends and themes in Muslim countries. Discuss with students whether these trends are healthy and if not, what should be done? What is your role as a student to rectify any wrongs that are being done? You should motivate students to participate in the discussion, by creating an open and welcoming space. Do not negate students' ideas and opinions; rather, encourage them to share more ideas.

REFLECTION WRAP UP

Review key points and key definitions. For 10-15 minutes have students reflect in groups of 3-4 on learning during the module. Have a guided discussion on what proved to be the strongest lessons learned. What trends and issues emerged, and how do you conceptualize

them in your own local context. After 10-15 minutes lead a group discussion on the guiding questions, as well as any other thoughts the participants wish to share.

EVALUATION

Write a 1,000 word-essay on how an Islamic government can contribute to universal cooperation? Support your argument by making use of the lessons learnt during the presentation stage.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE AUTHORS

AMR ABDALLA

Dr. Amr Abdalla is Professor and Vice Rector at the University for Peace (UPEACE). Prior to joining UPEACE, Dr. Abdalla was a Senior Fellow with the Peace Operations Policy Program, School of Public Policy at George Mason University, and a Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences in Leesburg, Virginia. .

Dr. Abdalla's academic and professional careers are multi-disciplinary. He has been teaching graduate classes in conflict analysis and resolution, and has conducted training, research and evaluation of conflict resolution and peace building programs in several countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. He has been an active figure in promoting effective cross-cultural messages within the Islamic and Arabic-speaking communities in America through workshops, television, and radio presentations. He has also been actively involved in inter-faith dialogues in the United States. Dr. Abdalla pioneered the development of the first conflict resolution training manual for the Muslim communities in the United States titled *"...Say Peace."* He also founded Project LIGHT (Learning Islamic Guidance for Human Tolerance), a community peer-based anti-discrimination project funded by the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ).

Dr. Abdalla obtained a law degree in Egypt in 1977 where he practiced law as a prosecuting attorney from 1978 to 1987. He then emigrated to the U.S. where he obtained a Master's degree in Sociology and a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University.

ZAHID SHAHAB AHMED

Mr. Zahid Shahab Ahmed (M.A. Peace Education, UPEACE, Costa Rica , 2006 & M.A. University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan, 2003) is a PhD Scholar at the School of Humanities , University of New England , Australia . His doctoral research focuses on the issues of interstate conflict, regionalism and regional security in South Asia. He has worked on peacebuilding and human rights projects in South Asia, and has actively been researching and publishing on similar issues. He has co-authored a study titled *"Attitudes of Teachers in India and Pakistan: Texts and Contexts* (WISCOMP, New Delhi, 2007). In February 2007, Ahmed presented a research paper on *"Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment: lessons from Pakistan"* at the World Conference on Humanitarian Studies, the Netherlands.

SALEEM H. ALI

Saleem H. Ali is associate professor of environmental planning and Asian studies at the University of Vermont (USA) where he has also served as an associate dean for graduate education. He is on the adjunct faculty of the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University and is a senior fellow at the United Nations mandated University for Peace (Costa Rica). Apart from his numerous publications in environmental planning he has published widely on topics of international conflict and educational reform. His latest book is "Islam and Education: Conflict and Conformity in Pakistan's madrassas" (Oxford University Press, 2009). In addition to his academic writing, he is also a regular columnist for Pakistan's Daily Times and has had editorials published in The International Herald Tribune and The Boston Globe. Dr. Ali received his higher degrees at Tufts University (Sc.B), Yale University (M.E.S.) and MIT (Ph.D.). He completed his secondary schooling at Aitchison College in Lahore, Pakistan and also received training in Islamic scholarship through the ulama of the Jamia Ashrafia madrassah. Further details about his research can be found at: www.saleemali.net

JEEWAN CHANICKA

Jeewan Chanicka B.A.hon, B.Ed, M.Ed

Jeewan is a teacher, father, husband and life-long learner from Toronto, Canada. He has co-authored articles and demonstrated the use of participatory democracy frameworks for classroom and school-wide instruction.

Jeewan has conducted workshops in literacy, equity, character education, parent engagement, risk, resiliency, student and professional portfolios, curriculum integration and modeled instructional intelligence processes. In 2006, he was awarded an international award from the Canadian Education Partnership based in Washington D.C. Within the Islamic community, he has lectured and conducted workshops across North America on various issues of Islamic relevance: youth, domestic violence, family, self-esteem, conflict-resolution, and da`wah, among other issues. Jeewan has counseled both youth and adults in areas dealing with employment, housing, mental health, suicide, drugs, racism, physical and sexual abuse, immigration and integration issues, marriage, and family problems. His answers and articles can be found on www.islamonline.net and www.jeewanc.com.

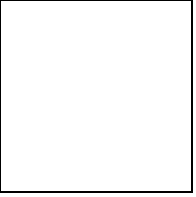
SYED SIKANDER MEHDI

Educated at Dhaka University, Bangladesh and Australian National University, Canberra, Syed Sikander Mehdi is a leading peace scholar from Pakistan and General Coordinator of Peace and Cultural Studies Project, Karachi. He is also on the Visiting Faculty of Peace Studies Program at the University of Jaume 1 in Spain and University of Innsbruck in Austria. Earlier he worked as Visiting Researcher at the Department of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University, Japan, as Japan Foundation Fellow at the Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Kyoto, Japan and Professor and Chairperson, Department of

International Relations, University of Karachi, Pakistan. His research and publications focus issues relating to human security, migration and peace, peace and nonviolence movements, peacebuilding in South Asia and Muslim societies, movement for Culture of Peace and Museums for Peace and peace and nonviolence in Islamic teaching and practice. His recent publications include ' Building Peace in Pakistan: Challenges and Prospects' in Ritsumeikan Heiwa Kenkyo: The Ritsumeikan Journal of Peace Studies (March 2009) and ' Building Peace on the India-Pakistan Border' in Museums for Peace: Past, Present and Future edited by Ikuro Anzai, Joyce Apsel and Syed Sikander Mehdi (October 2008).

SARA SAEED KHAN NIAZI

Sara Khan has an academic background in Gender and Peacebuilding. She is currently a faculty member at Center for Excellence in Gender Studies at Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, Pakistan. She has also written articles and has co-authored a book chapter on "*Rural Peacebuilding in Pakistan*" in "Learning to live together: Using Interactive Media for Respect and Understanding", published by Common Wealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada, (2009).

MUHADI SUGIONO

Muhadi Sugiono is a lecturer at the Department of International Relations and the Head of the Center for Security and Peace Studies at Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia. He is also Director of Yogyakarta Office of the Asia Pacific Center for the Responsibility to Protect. Among his major research interests are global governance, international political theory and peace studies. He is the author of Gramscian Critique of Development (1999). He is currently working on security issues and on the issues related to the concept of the Responsibility to Protect.