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The *Journal of Transdisciplinary Peace Praxis (JTTP)* is a peer-reviewed, biannual, subscription-based, scholarly journal of contemplative cutting edge research and practice on subjects related to human social flourishing and peace.

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Editor-in-Chief's Welcome and Introduction

In the last issue of this journal, I wrote about the visceral feel of wasted potential, remembering the loss of a 15-year-old Palestinian cousin of my former student. I was, and am, appalled by how the world just moves on past such injustice. My own recent family losses reminded me of the collective pain and anguish of feeling like a story is closed to me now, and nobody seems to take notice. While I know that transdisciplinary scholarship cannot heal the grief of death and loss, I do believe that it can help build the knowledge necessary for life and peace. In grief there is hope, one cannot be without the other.

This issue of the *Journal of Transdisciplinary Peace Praxis (JTTP)* aims at this hope in realising that transdisciplinary peace is always a collective and collaborative endeavour. Our aspirations are, by the nature of reality, always already collective. We humans are all interdependent beings, we rely on each other even to remember and memorialise, just as we rely on each other to make peace. To do effective peace praxis requires an understanding of our dependence on others is required.

The start of 2025 has been a difficult one for me personally. I lost a sibling, and a favourite uncle just weeks apart as the New Year began. They cannot be replaced, but they will be remembered. As I wrote out my ideas on what to say as a eulogy to my only biological brother, I kept thinking this is not about me, it is about the amazing big brother that I lost. But, as I reflected further, I came to realise that it is about me; a piece of me has passed from this earth with his passing. A piece of my story is now only in the past tense; a remembrance, the present and future parts of my story with my brother have been abruptly closed off. But just because my story... the collective story... becomes closed off by death, that does not mean stories and storytelling have also ended. Stories are what make us human. Stories of, and relationships with, those passed, can, and do, continue to grow and breathe in our hearts and minds. This gives me hope that life has some enduring meaning. Despite the grief of loss, the hope of fond memories leads us on towards peace.

It is with such a heavy heart that I welcome you to our thirteenth (XIII; Vol. 7, No. 1) issue of the *Journal of Transdisciplinary Peace Praxis (JTTP)*. I continue to believe that the theory and practice of transdisciplinary peace is, not only, desperately needed but also a means of honouring the knowledge of those long passed from this earth.

The first article in this thirteenth issue tells the story of one American University's approach to renaming university property after a past namesake's beliefs have come to light. In 'Renaming with Purpose: One University's Approach

to *Reconciling with Its History*' authors Ruchti, Thomas, Donkor, Evans, Mercy & Isaac work to articulate a critically reasoned renaming process after a former professor is found to be an avowed eugenicist. The collaborative interdisciplinary assessment of the university's path forward is a perfect fit for the *JTPP* as it aims at policy and praxis-based social change.

Following this initial praxis-based committee report-cum-paper, the second piece in the thirteenth issue takes on a more macro view of the world. David Hornung writes in 'Weaponised Automation: Social Services in a Militarised World' about how neoliberalism and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are revolutionising the social work profession. Hornung aims to 'challenge the notion that the greatest concern autonomous weapons systems present to the world are the presence of trained human beings overseeing the deployment of these weapons systems' (p.39). Spelling out how 'social workers in places like Allegheny County have first-hand experience' of 'automated systems with human-in-the-loop capabilities' (p.49) having detrimental effect on clients and society. This second piece brings diffuse disciplines together to raise important questions about the future of automation and human interactions.

The third paper takes us to the African continent. Kebede Bekere's 'Religion-Induced Cultural Violence: The Case of Cultural Violence Committed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Against the Oromo People (1878-1974)' takes on an historical case study of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) to enlighten us about cultural violence within religious institutions. Exploring the drivers of cultural violence and mapping them onto the EOC's role in nation building in Ethiopia, the piece provides an insightful reading of the complexity of conflict in this war-torn northeast corner of Africa.

The next two pieces in this issue delve into cultural issues on the Indian subcontinent. Nambiar, Ragnathan, Sood & Wei's 'Approaching Peace Education through History Textbooks in India' provides an important critique of national education policy through analysis of textbooks. The piece 'traces the pathways that Peace Education has undergone in the Indian Peninsula' (p.74) and deepens our understanding of the diverse universe of peace education curriculums around the world. Nambiar et al provide a clarion call for further research on peace education and the need for people to be educated about peace and not just war.

Staying in India, Reverend Paul Pudussery and Rema Devi A tell a story, in the fifth article, of families with expatriate husbands in the Persian Gulf, as many do in South India. 'Stress Among Wives in a High-Stress Society: A Comparative Study' provides a detailed study of the stressful realities in transnational families.

All the articles in this issue take an in-depth look into a unique corner of our human experiences, flip it around and inspect it from many angles.

We round out the thirteenth issue with an extended book review by Jane Duran. In reviewing 'Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West' written by late Benazir Bhutto, Duran's analysis is a meditation on the political philosophy of human rights and peace in society. Given the tragic history of the Bhutto's in Pakistan, Duran brings Benazir's sharp voice for women's rights and modernist nationalism into focus. Although unorthodox, Duran's review unearths important questions about what it means to reconcile and build solidarity across difference.

Last, but not least, I urge readers to explore the Kaleidoscope section of this issue to engage with current topics in peace journalism.

While academic language as a medium often falls short of creative expression in conveying the lived emotional realities of peace, I hope this issue gives you some new ways of thinking about things anew. Research will always be inadequate to express the pain and suffering that loss and grief met against us all, still transdisciplinary scholarship is one artistic opportunity for creative healing.

I believe what we need most now is healing from the stress and grief of our human footprint on this earth. I hope readers will enjoy the pieces in this lucky thirteenth issue. As always, thanks to the Peace and Justice Studies Association's (PJSA), a bi-national social justice organisation that supports the work of the *JTPP*. As an affiliated journal of the PJSA, we continue to encourage the engagement of PJSA membership through both readership and manuscript submission to our always open call for papers, found at <https://jtpp.uk/call-for-papers/>.

Please continue to support us by reading this issue and encouraging your friends and colleagues to subscribe to the *JTPP* (<https://jtpp.uk/subscription-plan/>)!

Send us your feedback! We want to hear from you!

With much metta,



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February 2025

Renaming with Purpose: One University's Approach to Reconciling with Its History

Simon E Ruchti, David Thomas, Martha Donkor,
Carolyn D Evans, Karen Mercy & Demetrius Isaac

ABSTRACT

In the winter of 2023, the president of our university asked us to convene a committee to review the namesake of our university's science centre. We were tasked with conducting a thorough investigation and making a recommendation regarding the removal of the building's namesake in light of recently discovered information linking him to the eugenics movement. Because of the tension on our campus around the science centre name and the backlash in the United States against de-naming or renaming monuments, we determined it was necessary to have an unassailably thorough and transparent process. It was critical that we produce a model document clearly articulating and defending our decision, making clear the process by which we made it. To this end, we consider the purpose of monuments as historical markers and statements of values. Integral to our analysis is the exploration of the history of eugenics and its impact on our decision. We believe the document we produced can serve as a template for others to use in their own investigations of namesakes. What follows is our final report, recommending that the name of our science centre be changed, and we offer it as a template for others investigating the names and legacies memorialised on dedicated spaces.

KEYWORDS

Memorials, Renaming, Eugenics, Campus History, Higher Education

PREFACE

Being committed to creating safe and empowering spaces for all, we must begin to examine how these spaces are experienced by those who encounter them. Thus, we must investigate not only the spaces but also the names that grace them. As we do so, we will likely find some of our namesakes do not engender the values we espouse. Once these discoveries are made, it is crucial we act to remove those names. To this end, we want to share our own experience with a namesake

change that was well-received and accepted by our campus community despite anticipated resistance.

In the Fall of 2021, a student researcher, Aaron Stoyack, at West Chester University of PA (WCU), discovered that our campus science centre was named after a eugenicist, Samuel Christian Schmucker (SCS). After further research, he published this information in the student paper, *The Quad* (Stoyack). In the fall of 2022, students organised to have the name removed from the building; however, they met resistance, and the debate spilt onto social media. There, those against keeping the name accused SCS of being a eugenicist and the university of giving tacit support to eugenics by keeping the name. While a supporter of keeping the SCS name made accusations of censorship and erasing history. They argued that SCS wasn't really a eugenicist and, even if he was, eugenics in-and-

of-itself isn't all that bad. That winter, the Office of the President developed a process for changing a campus namesake and convened a committee to consider whether the name of the Schmucker Science Center should be removed and changed. We are at that committee.

We determined that it was critical to produce a model document, clearly articulating and defending our process and decision. We feel that the document we produced and have provided here can serve as a template for others in their own inquiries into the namesakes on their campuses. In what follows, we provide our final report, recommending that the name of our science centre be changed, and offer it as a template for other efforts to investigate the names on dedicated spaces.

Because of the tension on our campus around the science centre name and the backlash in the United States at the time against denaming and renaming monuments, the committee determined it would be necessary for us to have an unassailably thorough and transparent process. By the end of the spring semester (2023), it became clear that the committee would recommend the name be removed from our science centre and that other campus buildings should be examined as well. We determined that it was critical to produce a model document, clearly articulating and defending our process and decision. We feel that the document we produced and have provided here can serve as a template for others in their own inquiries into the namesakes on their campuses. In what follows, we provide our final report, recommending that the name of our science centre be changed, and offer it as a template for other efforts to investigate the names on dedicated spaces.¹

THE PURPOSE OF MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS, AND NAMESAKES

Monuments, memorials, and namesakes serve a variety of purposes. In some cases, they simply aim to remember and honour a valued member of a community or to mark the significance of an event. While each has a generally distinct purpose, the overall aim is to honour an important memory. Memorialisation helps to highlight people and moments in history that a community does not want to see fade from memory. These markers of the past, however, also serve to establish *how* we are to remember these things (Bruggeman, 2019). In this sense, namesakes do not so much preserve history but indicate an interpretation of it, and that interpretation is defined by those with the power to memorialise. The memorial establishes the narrative the memorialisers wish to share and may ignore the historical information that might threaten that narrative (John, 2019; Linenthal & Rose, 2011: 13; Loewen, 2000: 16-20; Marcus & Woodward, 2020). The learning of history happens, not from looking at the symbol (the monument or building name), but when one learns about the complexity of what has been memorialised (John, 2019; Marcus & Woodward, 2020). In the sense that people rarely seem prompted by the symbol to learn more about the memorialised (thus why many in our campus community were so shocked and offended to learn about SCS), it seems more accurate to suggest that memorialisation serves more to symbolise our collective values than to act as a testament to accurate historical representation (John, 2019). We memorialise to assert what we think is important, publicly and without shame. We commemorate a person through a statue or a building name because that person has performed deeds that society thinks are good. That person, and by extension their symbol of memorialisation, in turn, stands as a symbol of our values to others. This namesake tells the rest of the world: This is the best of us. This is who we aim to be.

Of course, this leads us to an important question: who constitutes the 'we', the 'collective', whose values are being memorialised? In the case of the Samuel

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Christian Schmucker Science Center, we are referring, in one sense, to the students who petitioned for him to be the namesake. He was a beloved professor and remained so to his former students, it seems, long after his death. He informed and represented the values they associate with the school. So, like, all forms of monuments, the namesake of our science centre represents the values of SCS and the students he taught. They had been, from all accounts, profoundly influenced by his teaching. He had, as we will explain later, seen his teaching as his religious and moral calling. He worked to impart his values to his students. In the 1960s, when West Chester University memorialised him by putting his name on a science complex, the institution embraced SCS's values and, as memorialisation is intended to do, they proclaimed his values as theirs, publicly and without shame. By maintaining SCS as the namesake of our science centre, the university signals, loudly and without shame, that its values align with SCS, that he is the best of us and who we aim to be.

Some might argue that keeping the name does not say who we are, but who we were, and to change the name of the building is to erase history. We counter that the opposite is true. By changing the name, we are looking more carefully at history. Thanks to the rigorous work done by alumnus Aaron Stoyack and his professor, Brent Ruswick (History), we have come to know more about SCS and the history of WCU and 19th century American politics and science that we would have known otherwise. As Ruswick noted in his statement to the committee,

Far from canceling history, our students are recovering and creating history, and doing so in a manner that epitomizes our university's highest values. This ought to be a moment of pride and celebration for our students and the humanities education offered by our History Department (Ruswick, 2023: 6).

We wish to note, as well, that other history scholars, including those of the American History Association, have made similar points in response to other memorialisation controversies (AHA Statement, 2017; Stroud & Henson, 2019; Marcus & Woodward, 2020). Our knowledge of history grows constantly, social values evolve, and our understanding of—and relationship to—our memorials must as well. This is what it means to *do* history.

Removing a statue or other form of memorialisation does run the risk of inhibiting critical conversations about our histories and their often-hidden impacts on our lives today. As Alan Marcus and Walter Woodward (2020) write:

Expired monuments are a lesson: They teach that people can be tragically wrong about something even when that belief once had widespread

Weaponised Automation Social Services in a Militarised World

David Hornung

ABSTRACT

The increasing use, development, and investment by governments around the world in developing battlefield ready weapons that rely completely on automated technology has been the concern of peace activists and scholars. However, it is the often-accepted semi-autonomous weapons that are already in use that pose the greatest risk to individual safety and human rights. These technologies should be the focus of the United States peace movements advocacy as we enter a time of increasing automation in all sectors of society and the economy. Examples from the field of social work regarding how semi-autonomous systems, even with well-established human oversight, can go wrong and violate the rights of innocent civilians is explored. Policy recommendations to help focus the United States peace movements efforts in this are also offered.

KEYWORDS

Militarisation, Welfare, Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Drone Warfare, Social Services, Welfare State

INTRODUCTION

On 21 October 2022 a group composed of 70 states made an official statement to the United Nations General Assembly regarding the use of Automated Weapon Systems (AWS). The statement, delivered by a representative of the 70 concerned countries, addressed the need for international cooperation regarding the regulation and use of autonomous weapon systems that are either partially controlled by a human being (Semi-autonomous) and those weapon systems that require no human oversight to surveil, engage, and kill enemies on the battlefield (Fully Autonomous). The statement recognised the ‘urgent need’ for the international community to adopt rules and measures on autonomous weapons and emphasised ‘the necessity for human beings to exert appropriate control, judgement and involvement in relation to the use of weapons systems.’ (ADR, 2024)

The role of the ‘human’ in the use of these weapons has been the concern of many international advocacy groups and human rights activists. The International Red

Regardless of how much control is given to human agents, the functioning of automated systems is subject to the pressures of bureaucratic timelines and the drive to 'be first to the market' by weapons manufactures. Along with the growing reliance on technological decision making over the use of human reason, automated weapons systems are subject to political and market forces that often cause a shift in the values, uses, and purposes that spurred the creation of these deadly technologies.

Cross (2024), Human Rights Watch (2024), and 33 states from Latin America and the Caribbean (COMMUNIQUÉ of THE LATIN, 2023) have all released statements calling for greater international cooperation over the use and deployment of automated weapons systems. While there are disagreements over what constitutes 'autonomous' weapon systems from 'fully autonomous weapons systems' there is shared agreement that these technologies must always be administered and programmed by trained human beings (ADR, 2024).

Scholars of semi-automated and fully automated technological systems label the importance of having humans oversee all functions of these technologies as having a 'human-in-the-loop' (De-Arteaga, Fogliato, Chouldechova, 2020). The ideal automated technological system will always have a trained human being prepared to 'override' any procedure, manoeuvre, or determination the automated system might make. Human control, under the 'human-in-the-loop' framework, is to ensure that human beings are the arbiter of carrying out actions, not automated technologies.

This paper is going to challenge the notion that the greatest concern autonomous

weapons systems present to the world are the presence of trained human beings overseeing the deployment of these weapons systems. Regardless of how much control is given to human agents, the functioning of automated systems is subject to the pressures of bureaucratic timelines and the drive to 'be first to the market' by weapons manufactures. Along with the growing reliance on technological decision making over the use of human reason, automated weapons systems are subject to political and market forces that often cause a shift in the values, uses, and purposes that spurred the creation of these deadly technologies.

Some examples from the field of social work is offered to contextualise this debate over the importance of human oversight with automated technologies. In numerous localities across the United States, social workers have been asked to use

automated technology in their work assessing and obtaining social welfare benefits for their clients. Examples of abuse resulting from the incorporation and reliance of automated systems in the departments of social service from the states of Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania will be examined. These examples all offer insight into what can happen when important decisions are made using semi-autonomous technology that is overseen and advised by professional trained humans (Glaberson, 2019).

The paper ends with some policy suggestions for the peace movement to advocate for. As more states look to implement these weapons, the danger they pose to human rights is also discussed, while providing suggestions on how the peace movement can work ‘across causes’ to international agreement over the regulation of these weapon systems.

AUTOMATED WEAPON SYSTEMS (AWS)

Countries around the globe are spending vast resources to be the first to develop automated weapons systems that use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Human-in-the-Loop technologies. Human Rights Watch (2023) in a study found:

Australia, China, India, Iran, Israel, South Korea, Russia, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States are heavily investing in the military applications of artificial intelligence and related technologies to develop air, land, and sea-based automated weapons.

This ‘arms race’ will make understanding the uses of automated weapons systems and the potential dangers they pose to the human rights of civilian populations very important.

There are no internationally agreed upon definitions as to what constitutes a semi-autonomous weapon system from a fully autonomous weapon system. The United States Government refers to all weapons systems that use elements of

In numerous localities across the United States, social workers have been asked to use automated technology in their work assessing and obtaining social welfare benefits for their clients. Examples of abuse resulting from the incorporation and reliance of automated systems in the departments of social service from the states of Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania will be examined. These examples all offer insight into what can happen when important decisions are made using semi-autonomous technology that is overseen and advised by professional trained humans.

automation as Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS). LAWS are defined by the United States Government as ‘a special class of weapon systems that use sensor suites and computer algorithms to independently identify and target and employ an on board weapon system to engage and destroy the target without manual human control of the system’ (Congressional Research Service, 2024). These ‘fully autonomous’ weapons require no human control to deploy weapons, surveil enemy targets, and engage those targets. In popular culture these are what Human Rights Watch refers to as ‘killer robots’ (2024).

Thankfully, the United States Government has confirmed that as of 2019 no ‘fully autonomous Weapon Systems’ have been successfully tested or used on the battlefield (Congressional Research Service, 2023). What has been developed and used successfully on the battlefield are ‘Semi-Autonomous Weapon Systems’. Department of Defense distinguishes these weapon systems from fully autonomous systems by their design ‘which does not automatically select and engage individual targets or specific target groups that have not been previously selected by an authorized human’ (DOD DIRECTIVE, 2023). Human oversight, and the ability to override and control what an autonomous weapon system does when used in battle are what differentiate semi-autonomous weapon systems from fully autonomous systems.

Historically, the United States has employed weapons with some form of automation since World War II (Work, 2021). The United States used the Mark 24 Mine, referred to as ‘fido’ in the Pacific. This early technology used sound to detect enemy submarines in the Pacific. If a vessel big enough and capable to reach the depths of the ocean, these mines would explode. These autonomous weapons would fire on enemy combatants indiscriminately; however, they were placed strategically by humans.

Drones are an example of semi-autonomous weapons that are currently used on battlefields throughout the globe. Military Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV’s) also referred to popularly as ‘drones’ have become the premier tool used to pursue, surveil, and now kill enemy combatants in the United States war on terror (Lubin, 2021). These weapons are preferred by military leaders for their ability to ‘destroy specific targets, spread terror, and weaken the resolve of soldiers and civilians. Due to their success as precision weapons, drones are potent, difficult to stop, and cost-effective’. In an economic environment where austerity defines budgetary formation, and state governments continue to look for technology to replace traditionally staffed sectors of the bureaucracy, drones are an enticing weapon to use in modern warfare.

The typical drone used by the United State military is operated remotely, by a trained military officer, who carries out reconnaissance of potential enemies or can engage in direct strikes on enemy targets using hellfire missiles (Joshi & Stein,

Religion-Induced Cultural Violence

The Case of Cultural Violence Committed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Against the Oromo People (1878-1974)

Kebede Bekere

ABSTRACT

Religion is good when it liberates people by helping them to know themselves and use their potential to be the people they want to be. It becomes an ugly manifestation of evil when it is used as an instrument to suppress, exploit, and degrade certain groups of people. This article argues that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) is a showcase of how the State used religion as a weapon to commit cultural violence against a group of people in Ethiopia. EOC supported the legitimacy of the Amhara political, economic, and cultural supremacy for more than a century. The Church tried to justify the inequality, injustice, and suppression caused by the Amhara empire by preaching that God ordained them to rule and the people to submit. The Church existed to serve the interests of the Amhara authorities and religious elites. The Church was intentionally blinded to see the sufferings of the people due to the direct and structural acts of violence of the Amhara imperial regime. The paper explained that the denial of the Church of committing cultural violence sustained the legacy of historical harm. Healing the past wrongs done by the Church would help it to remain relevant to all regardless of their ethnic backgrounds.

KEYWORDS

Cultural violence, Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Oromo, Religious-based violence, Church violence, Religion, Historical trauma

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are the product of their past. What happened in the past can help people move forward to realise their potential or hinder their forward movement by capturing their minds, emotions, and energy. Past historical atrocities hurt individuals as well as groups.

Johan Galtung defined cultural violence as ‘aspects of culture...that can

be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence' (Galtung, 1990: 291). He stated that religion, ideology, language, education, symbols, and other aspects of culture can be used to cause harm to people.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is an ancient Christian church introduced in Ethiopia in the 4th century by Frumentius, a Phoenician who happened to be in Abyssinia after his ship was wrecked (Ponodath, 2024). The Christian religion entered the country and was accepted by King Ezana of the Axumite kingdom. It became the religion of the royal family. It soon became a state religion. The EOC remained the state religion until the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 (Tadesse, 2024). The State and the Church worked together to satisfy their mutual interests. The 1955 Constitution demanded that the Church mention the emperor's name in all religious services, indicating an intertwined relationship between the EOC and the imperial regime, in which the emperor was the head of the Church (Shenk, 1994).

Many scholars discussed the contributions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to shaping the worldview of the people of Ethiopia, the unity of the country (Ponodath, 2024), the defence against foreign invasion by encouraging patriotism (Chang, 2022), the introduction of its educational system (Yigezu & Mendisu, 2024), and the preservation of tangible and intangible heritages (Demissie, 2024). However, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has a dark side that was not explored and discussed in academia in detail. This paper focuses on one of the atrocities committed by the EOC, the cultural violence the Church perpetrated on the Oromo in Ethiopia in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The aim is to investigate the cultural violence committed and invite the Church to address the past wrongdoings to remain relevant to all people regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, be a model of repentance by making a public apology, and amend essential policies and structures enhance the efforts to resolve the ethnic violence between Amhara and Oromo in some parts of the country.

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Cultural Violence Committed by EOC

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was not a missionary church. The Church's growth has happened primarily on natural growth. The children born from Orthodox followers are baptised to be Christians. Another strategy the Church used to expand was the coercive conversion of people to Orthodox Christianity. EOC was introduced to Oromia, the land of the Oromo people in the south of Abyssinia, following the territorial expansion of the Abyssinian kings. Orthodox Christianity was the religion of the Tigrean and Amhara. The Amhara and the Tigrean did not take any initiative to preach to other people and nations in the neighbouring areas. At the turn of the 20th century, Menelik, the King of Shewa, declared war on the other kings of Abyssinia and defeated them. Then, he wanted more territories in the south of Abyssinia.

Menelik II conducted a major expansion into the hearts of Oromia at the end of the 20th century. In some parts of Oromia, the military forces of the emperor faced fierce resistance. However, he crushed the resistance using modern firearms he purchased from European powers (Darkwah, 1975). There were hundreds of thousands of Oromo people died fighting against the invaders/expansionists. The defeated people suffered humiliation and were subjected to serving the emperor's soldiers and officials. The mutilation of the right arms of men and the breasts of women in Arsi by the soldiers of Menelik was to humiliate the survivors and send a warning message to others who thought of resisting the invading army (Hassen, 2002).

In some parts of Oromia such as Wollega and Jimma, Menelik II won over the local rulers through diplomatic means. Abba Jifar of Jimma negotiated with Menelik and prevented the direct attack on his people. He agreed to pay tribute and assist Menelik in occupying other places south of Jimma. In return, Menelik gave him local autonomy (Gemed, 2002). Wollega also followed a similar pattern (Jegnie, 2024). The governors agreed to accept the emperor's terms mainly embracing the culture of Amhara and being loyal to the emperor. Following the victories, the Amhara from the north came and settled in the lands previously owned by the Oromo (Marcus, 1975). The difference between those defeated by force and those who peacefully surrendered was suffering from physical violence by the former. Both groups went through a painful *Amharisation* process.

Apart from the direct violence using firearms to kill people and displace them from their lands, the emperor used acculturation to sustain the superiority of the Amhara's political system and culture. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, an ideological wing of the Amhara empire (Hassen, 2009), played a key role in assimilating the Oromo into the Amhara culture, which was foreign to their worldviews, practices, traditions, and lifestyle. While living on their land, they were

to adopt the culture of the invaders—the people of the rifles. State policy enforced the adoption of the invaders' culture, intending to harm the Oromo to maintain the Amhara's superiority.

The cultural violence against the Oromo was massive and devastating. The Amhara considered themselves superior to the Oromo in character and values. They portrayed themselves as honest, brave, religious, and ambitious people. On the contrary, they portrayed the Oromo as lazy, dirty, and primitive (Hassen, 2002). The Amhara who regarded themselves as civilised came to Oromia to teach civilisation to the Oromo—to teach them how to farm, worship, cook, dress, and obey law and order (Marcus, 1975). They were blinded to the fact that the Oromo had their traditional religion and worship practices and an age-old indigenous democratic system of governance, the *Gada* system.

Following the occupation of Oromia by the emperor, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church sent priests to convert the people to Orthodox Christianity because the Oromo people were considered heathen who needed to hear God's word from the Amhara. The Oromo had religious beliefs and practices (Kelbessa, 2022). Converting people to Orthodox Christianity was one aspect of the assimilation process. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church used the power it obtained from the State to impose Christianity on the Oromo (Eide, 2000). The people did not choose to be Orthodox Christians, but they were forced to accept to survive. They were forced to abandon their indigenous religion which was treated as inferior, satanic, and acts of worshipping the creatures rather than the creator (Aga, 2010). The indigenous beliefs and practices were banned (Ta'a, 2012). To assimilate, the Oromo disassociated themselves from their indigenous religion in public to avoid the punishment that came for refusing it. They kept their traditional beliefs and practices secret and *became* Orthodox Christians in public.

EOC used religious teachings to legitimise the Amhara's dominance and rule. To subdue the Oromo to the Amhara political system, the EOC tried to manipulate the Oromo to obey the Amhara political elites without questioning

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Approaching Peace Education through History Textbooks in India

Diya Nambiar, Aaryan Ragnathan, Vivaan Sood & Allen Wei

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the foundational and overlapping concepts, issues, and debates that form the basis of conceptualising peace education. Further, it maps the historical trajectory of peace education, specifically in the Indian context and globally. Beginning from religious and moral education aiming to promote peace to more organised and direct approaches led by different United Nations (UN) bodies have been traced. The paper then focuses on reviewing different policy documents in education released in India over time as a case in point. The paper traces the pathways that peace education has undergone in the Indian Peninsula, the journey from moral education to education for peace and towards peace education. Further, in light of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP, 2020), the paper analyses four history textbooks for major boards taught in Indian schools and maps them with the goals and aims of teaching social science and history as mentioned in the policy. A comparative analysis of these textbooks on aspects such as the promotion of peaceful values and behaviours, understanding and respecting diversity, human rights and social justice, global citizenship, interconnectedness, the role of dialogue and socio-emotional skills have also been presented. Finally, the paper identifies and suggests plausible future directions, such as curriculum revision, a more strengthened teacher education, and others, that peace education advocates, keeping in mind the latest policies vis-à-vis the needs of contemporary times, both nationally and globally.

KEYWORDS

Peace, Education for Peace, Culture of Peace, History Textbooks, Textbook Analysis

BACKGROUND

The conceptualisation of the idea gained impetus for the lead author, Ms Diya Nambiar, during one of her history classes, in which the discussions focused on the wars and armed conflicts in current global politics. This initiated a discussion

on genocides and armed conflicts. The discussion moved towards the preparedness and sensitivity events such as genocides and mass killings in the name of amassing power and political supremacy and how we can nudge nations to resolve conflicts without violence. The most obvious and plausible answer seemed to be peace education and peace initiatives. However, it was interesting to note that during the discussion of possible strategies to resolve conflicts, it was revealed that each student had a different narrative of the same event that was chosen to argue a point. It was safe to deduce that each student/participant had been taught a different narrative of the same event, even though the goals were more or less the same. While all aimed at promoting peace, some focused on inclusion, others on conflict resolution, and some others on sensitivity, citizenship, and nationalism. All values were aimed at upholding peace education. However, peace and peace education was rarely talked about directly which seemed a bit peculiar given the relevance of peace education observable in contemporary times.

This variation of narratives inspired the lead author to organise a symposium titled '*Peace Education: Concepts, Debates and Future Directions*', which aimed at understanding peace, peace education, and various concepts that revolve around and hold major implications for the discourse of peace and peace education. Soon, she put out a call for the same within her student network with the following themes:

- ◆ Understanding Peace Education,
- ◆ Objectives of Peace Education,
- ◆ History of Peace Education,
- ◆ Approaches and Strategies to Peace Education,
- ◆ Peace Education in Classrooms and the Role of Textbooks in Peace Education.

A range of students showed interest and sent in their entries from across the globe. Inspired by her passions, Ms Nambiar shortlisted four entries after working out the timeline, mediating time zones and finalising a schedule that worked best for participants from different countries. The goal was to develop a better understanding of peace education and gauge its current standing in schools and school education.

The symposium also had space for a brief meet and greet session for networking at the end. During the meet and greet, participants from different countries shared classroom experiences related to peace education, genocides, and armed conflicts. They realised that their narratives and experiences were highly varied. They wondered if the reason was their national contexts, pedagogy, or something else. The discussions revealed that some textbooks referred to were common in more than one country. This sparked the idea of developing a

paper containing textual analysis of history textbooks of different curriculum boards in a country and mapping their scope with the goals and objectives of peace education mandated globally and nationally. It was also exciting to explore whether the global and national mandates for peace education through various policies aligned with each other or not. Further, the nature and intensity of this alignment merits inquiry. This paper presents a consolidated report of this exploratory symposium initiated and conducted independently by the authors.

INTRODUCTION

With a global landscape overflowing with news of bombings, wars, genocides, and all forms of violence, peace education is not only relevant but imperative for international society. In our attempts to build a more civilised and violence-free world, peace education seems to be a natural solution. However, a difference in conception of peace questions credibility, relevance, and effectiveness of 'Peace Education'. Some scholars, such as James (1910), Palaima (2003), and MacGinty (2006), argue that peace is an illusionary concept, and we tend to perceive the preparatory period between two wars as peace. Building on such an understanding of peace, it is further argued that peace education is nothing more than a political agenda that should not have any space in curriculums or any other aspects of schooling. Peace education is, hence, rejected as a potential academic discipline (Cox et al, 1984). For them, peace is an illusory concept; there is no such thing as peace.

Nevertheless, proponents and believers of peace the world over, even though they differ in their conceptions, have found it a worthy pursuit. While some of them advocate for indirect ways to achieve peace, such as developing reflection, ethno-empathy, and tolerance, some others look

Nevertheless, proponents and believers of peace the world over, even though they differ in their conceptions, have found it a worthy pursuit. While some of them advocate for indirect ways to achieve peace, such as developing reflection, ethno-empathy, and tolerance, some others look at peace as a human right. In contrast, many others perceive more direct ways to further peace education, such as teaching about peace, the enemy/other, conflict and its history, the processes involved and the consequences of war and peace.

at peace as a human right. In contrast, many others perceive more direct ways to further peace education, such as teaching about peace, the enemy/other, conflict and its history, the processes involved and the consequences of war and peace. Consequently, in the year 1998, the United Nations released a declaration for promotion of a culture of peace, which aimed at fostering values such as respect for human rights, adopting sustainable approaches to socio-economic development, equality, democracy, tolerance, disarmament, and free flow of information. The UN hoped this would happen through an educational system and practice that employs and encourages approaches and an atmosphere free of violence and war.

When peace education is brought into the purview of education, the debate concerning whom and where it should be offered emerges. One obvious answer to this question is that since it is for all, schools should be the primary site for disseminating peace education. This position is further strengthened by the

There has been a dearth of quality initiatives to analyse and conceptualise the idea of peace (Gur-Ze'ev, 2010). Ben-Porath (2003) and Gur-Ze'ev (2001) further argue that there have been no substantial attempts to analyse and understand the reciprocity of the concepts of peace and education. Salomon (2002) maps the general underlying conception of peace education as either an attempt towards a perspectival shift or developing a certain skill set that promotes non-violent conflict resolution or human rights (largely in third-world countries).

belief that for any change to be sustained, the intervention must begin at the youngest age possible.

While the argument has some merit, it severely undermines and overlooks the centrality of power among the adults in society (Swartz & Levett, 1989). The society is more influenced by adults than children. Consequently, there is a huge disagreement on how the issues and problems surrounding peace education are described, what solutions are sought, and the site for offering peace education. Attempts to answer this question require a clear definition of peace education, which is amiss in the discourse. A lack of clear definition is reflected in various approaches towards peace education across various regions of the world. Peace education covers a very broad range of approaches, such as classroom cooperative learning, dialogic learning (Maoz, 2011), anti-bullying awareness programmes (Hakvoort, 2011) or direct education for peace. Consequently, researchers have felt the need for a clear definition or conceptualisation of peace education and have argued for the same (Salomon & Cairns, 2010). Defining peace

education will pave the road ahead and answer all these questions. Furthermore, defining peace education would also require an engagement with the range of family concepts and related concepts such as pacifism, violence, counter-violence, power, freedom, and emancipation.

There has been a dearth of quality initiatives to analyse and conceptualise the idea of peace (Gur-Ze'ev, 2010). Ben-Porath (2003) and Gur-Ze'ev (2001) further argue that there have been no substantial attempts to analyse and understand the reciprocity of the concepts of peace and education. Salomon (2002) maps the general underlying conception of peace education as either an attempt towards a perspectival shift or developing a certain skill set that promotes non-violent conflict resolution or human rights (largely in third-world countries). Cooper (2005) argues that differences in definitions of peace education by authors such as Staub (2003), Thompson & Pasto (2003) and Harris (2004) have led to a 'nebulous and wide conceptualisation' of the same.

Consequently, peace education in schools ranges from programmes aimed at eradicating violence to teaching about war and peace, fostering a healthy sense of self and developing democratic and liberal values. All said attempts to qualify as peace education. The broadest conception of peace and, consequently, peace education shifts the focus from a mere absence of direct violence and talks of negative peace (the absence of organised violence) to positive peace (fostering harmonious coexistence between different groups) (Galtung, 1969). Nevertheless, the one thing that undercuts all these varied conceptions and brings them together is the assumption and suggestion that peace education is desirable.

THE HISTORY OF PEACE EDUCATION

From indigenous tribes to modern societies, there have always been traditions and procedures to settle and resolve disputes. During the indigenous ages, these methods and procedures were transmitted from generation to generation in the name of traditions (Gregor, 1996). Anthropological inquiries have claimed to observe at least 47 societies in the world that are comparatively peaceful (Bonta, 1993). However, these attempts at maintaining peace in society only qualify for informal peace education. There is no said pedagogy, no explicated goals other than to keep people and groups safe and happy, and no written maintenance of records around the same. Peace education took a more formal form by maintaining and transmitting ideas in a written format through religions. The preaching of the lord 'Buddha, Baha'u'llah, Christ, Muhammad, Moses, and Lao-Tzu' was provided to spread peace, and sometimes with specific discussions about maintaining and practising peace (Gur-Ze'ev, 2010). However, with time, the nature of conflicts became complex, and so did the resolution methods.

Stress Among Wives in a High-Stress Society

A Comparative Study

Rev Paul Pudussery & Rema Devi A

ABSTRACT

Marriage is an enduring relationship between an adult male and an adult female based on religious-socio-legal sanction which is considered as social duty towards the family and the society. Stress is a stimulus or external force acting on an organism and the response may change physiological and psychological functions.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of prolonged absence of husbands and the stress experienced by their wives i.e., wives of expatriate husbands and to compare with the stress experienced by the wives of returnees and wives who are staying with their husbands.

In this descriptive research, survey method and random sampling are used. Personal Data Sheet and Stress Rating Scale with three sub-scales are used for the data collection. Quantitative analysis of the collected data is done by statistically to find out the stress levels among wives according to their marital living status. Thereafter compared the mean scores of stress of wives with different marital living status based on different socio-demographic variables selected. The mean scores of all wives with different marital living status possess comparatively same stress. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of stress of wives with different marital living status based on all socio-demographic variables considered. There exists no significant difference in components of stress such as physical stress, psychological stress, and behavioural stress of wives with their marital living status.

KEYWORDS

Stress, Marital Status, Components of Stress, Coping and Management of Stress

INTRODUCTION

Man is a 'social animal' and 'stress' is a universal human experience. Stress can be defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. It is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Vickers (1979: 33-34) defines stress as '... the occurrence of Physiological and

psychological or behavioral symptoms which imply impaired physical or mental health.’ The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to overall well-being. Stress affects both body and mind and a little bit of stress is good which can help us to perform daily life activities. Too much stress may cause physical and mental health problems.

Stress makes it hard for us to relax and can come with a range of emotions, including anxiety and irritability and may find it difficult to concentrate. We may experience headaches or other body pains, a stomach upset or trouble in sleeping. We may find loss of appetite or overeat than usual. Chronic stress can worsen pre-existing health problems and may increase alcoholic consumption, use of tobacco or other substances. In addition to observable short-term effects, stress contributes to the development of severe chronic diseases, such as heart diseases, vascular diseases, and cancer.

Some sources of social stress are social isolation, unhappy or difficult marriage or partnership, anxiety resulting from a significant change in one’s life like death of spouse, retirement, change in life status, socio-economic disadvantage, as well as age, race, or sex discrimination. If one is stressed, one might feel: irritable, angry, impatient or wound up, overburdened or overwhelmed, anxious, nervous or afraid.

Stressful situations may also cause or exacerbate mental health conditions mostly anxiety and depression, which require access to health care. When we suffer from a mental health problem or condition, it may be because of the symptoms of stress have become persistent and have started affecting our daily functioning, including the occupation.

Marriage is an institution which can be studied from various lenses—sociological, economic, psychological, legal and from public administration lens and it is necessary to see the institution in these perspectives (Busby, 2000). In the earlier periods the intensity of stress in the families was low because of the traditional and authoritarian network of the families. The transition from modernism to post-modernism poses new challenges and concerns. Recently, the influence of post-modern lifestyle along with the socio-cultural changes

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Family being the basic or the first unit of the society, particularly, the women in families bear the negative effect of stress. A major share of the husband's role will be shifted to the other members of the family, especially to his 'wife'. Individuals as well as family members may be the victims of stress situations in daily life. In the family circle, women are most affected, especially, when the male head of the family is away from their home.

has paved the way for stress related issues in every aspect of the family life and social life. The term 'stress' refers to the situations that pose demands, constraints, and opportunities.

Family being the basic or the first unit of the society, particularly, the women in families bear the negative effect of stress. A major share of the husband's role will be shifted to the other members of the family, especially to his 'wife'. Individuals as well as family members may be the victims of stress situations in daily life. In the family circle, women are most affected, especially, when the male head of the family is away from their home.

'Migration is a product of discrete and unconnected factors in the sending and the receiving countries, but of historical connections between the countries. It is not fortuitous, it is systematic' (Cheng & Bonacich, 1984). Migration has caused thousands of married women in Kerala, India to live alone

without their husbands. Almost all families in Kerala had been affected by gulf migration. It has deeply and visibly affected every aspect of life including economic, social, political, cultural, and even religious aspects of the Malayalee in Kerala (Zacharia et al, 2003: 2).

The available statistics shows that one out of every eight married women has her husband working abroad. In this circumstance, marriage may be reduced to two-and-a-half months of joy in every two years for the wives and the children hardly get to know their fathers during this short period. A prolonged separation or absence in the early period of marriage seriously curtails the marital life of many young couples. Despite the financial advantages for the left behind families, absence of the father for the children and husband for the wives lead to major psychological problems.

Sujatha Ganguly (2006: 1-13) stresses that the household structures matter in the lives of the left-behind women due to migration. The lives of left-behind women differ widely depending on the type of the household structure they live in—she adds. Women in the non-nuclear households do not have much decision-making power than those who are in nuclear household, who take their own decision or take it collectively with their husbands.

According to a study on Kerala migration Zacharia, Mathew and Rajan (2001),

these left-behind women are hardly equipped to cope up with the situation of separation. With the passing of years, the impact of separation seems to have become worse. In addition to the increased household chores and child care responsibilities, the wives of expatriate husbands are subjected to prolonged hard work, loneliness, and frequent economic crisis. Male migration not only brings positive effects on the left-behind families but also the negative impacts especially on their wives. It is observed that patriarchal control over household resources either by husbands and father-in-law would depend upon women's living arrangement in the left-behind communities.

Munira Beebi (2012) in her comparative study conducted in patrilocal systems and matrilocal systems in Muslim community in Kannur and Kozhikode regions of Malabar of Kerala, where exists two residential patterns highlight the impact of Gulf Migration on left-behind women. Male migration forces the women to take a lot of added responsibilities and challenges which leads to mental stress and emotional difficulties. This study observed that women in matrilocal families enjoys more freedom and flexibility than women in patrilocal families and migration improved the personality and self-confidence in the respondents. It is also found that the women in nuclear family enjoy more privilege than women in the joint family. A multi-dimensional interview schedule which contains 141 questions under nine headings along with an opinionnaire i.e., a structured questionnaire is used to gather the data.

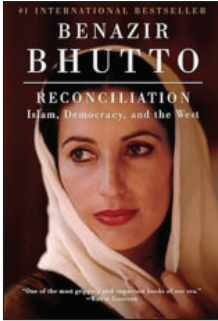
Several studies showed that left-behind women suffer from a series of physical, psychological, behavioural, and social problems induced by separation. Research findings have also shown that women in the migrant households are facing various tensions, pressures, conflicts, and anxieties. There are several cases of accusations of infidelity and extra marital relationships also. Misunderstandings on the part of husbands abroad is yet another pain for these wives. The burden and burn out of these women will be doubled when they begin to work (employed) or start a career of their own. The dual role as working women and a caretaker at home, that too without even a moral support, makes these women depressed and more helpless.

Irudaya Rajan and Balasubrahmanyam Pattath (2021), in Observance of International Migrants Day, 18 December, state that Return Emigration is an optional yet natural consequence of emigration, especially when the prospectus of the destination country is limited.

While labour policies for international migrants in their host countries are well documented—and show the raw deal for many of them, especially low-skilled workers—the repatriation exercises carried out during COVID-19 by origin countries revealed more opportunities for improvement. The contagious nature of the crisis necessitated quick policy responses like border closures and

Book Review

Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West



By BENAZIR BHUTTO

pp.352, HarperCollins, 2008, PB
\$18.00

Reviewed by
JANE DURAN

ABSTRACT

Benazir Bhutto's *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West* (2008) is examined for its relevance to political philosophy taken as a whole, and especially the more recent endeavours that focus on peace and exercising rights within societies. Bhutto tries to make the case that Islam and contemporary democracy are not incompatible with each other, despite what Huntington and some others have seemed to imply. Shedding light on differing types of Islam, and addressing the standards for anything that might be deemed to be a democracy, Bhutto provides several examples of the intersection of democracy and Islam. In addition to her political analysis, Bhutto does not shy away from analysing material taken from current Muslim societies, and showing how a number of forces are at work. She is also adept at characterising what the West perceives as salient differences among various forms of Islam, and illustrating that the alleged or purported differences may not be as important as some have believed—Bhutto names five types of Islam, and acquaints the reader with the fact that some exist only on the Saudi Arabian Peninsula. It is concluded that Bhutto gives us a nascent peace-oriented political view, and that her work is worth reading because of the insights she provides on Islamic cultures. The work of Huntington (1993), Rawls (1972) and others is cited.

KEYWORDS

Politics, Islam, Women's Rights, Fundamentalism

INTRODUCTION

Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, is the author of an intriguing

work that sheds new light on contemporary issues of statecraft and policy.¹ Her work *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West* is noteworthy for a number of political theses, but perhaps makes its strongest statement in her overview of Islam and its relationship with the West. Bhutto makes key distinctions, and sets out important notions. The work is well-placed to assist us in our current endeavours to relieve tensions between the West and Muslim societies.

Much of the commentary on the place of religion, religious artefacts and other manifestations of belief systems in Western cultures has to do with the presence of Muslims in a society, and Bhutto is not only sympathetic and understanding of Eurocentric views with regard to Islam in given societies, but she is well-versed in a number of theoretical matters. Questions surrounding the notion of the state, the roles of women in a state and how those roles might be constrained by religion, and so forth, are issues that Bhutto is prepared to discuss. Our notions of a post-enlightenment civil and peaceful society often seem to take precedence over other sorts of views, but not everyone agrees that this should be the case. The question then arises of whether it is possible to obtain a state that has a more focused view with regard to religion—and if that is the case, how that can be accomplished.

Bhutto examines a number of stances that are both associated with Islam itself by scholars in the field, and that—for better or for worse—are linked to what is taken to be Islamic thought by Westerners and others who may, on the whole, not have the requisite familiarity. She displays a wide range of scholarship, and is more than cognisant of most of the relevant political theory. As she says, we must learn more.

I

Writing with an overview that was to be cut tragically short, Bhutto begins one of the early chapters of the work as follows:

It is the tradition of Islam that has allowed me to battle for political and human rights, and this same tradition strengthens me today. Islam denounces inequality as the greatest form of injustice.²

Early portions of the book are devoted to a setting out of interpretations of Islam that are not only consistent with the Qu'ran, but that do damage to the pronouncements of some of the contemporary radical clerics who seem to feel that a 'jihad' is a war against unbelievers. What separates Bhutto's commentary from that of many is the precision of her argument, and her extensive use of

quotations from various *suras* within the Qu'ran. She is also extremely able at making that controversial line of argument that has been repeated again and again, but that has sometimes been misunderstood—the line of analysis that indicates that much of what takes place in contemporary Muslim societies has to do with local custom, and not actual Islamic views.

As a former leader of state, Bhutto understands that there is a feeling in many nations that Islam is somehow incompatible with modernity, or with the notion of a pacific contemporary life. If those values may be thought of (at least in the European and English-speaking countries) as somehow vaguely Rawlsian, Bhutto is enough of a political thinker and philosophically-oriented intellectual to know that a strong argument needs to be made by Muslims that an Islamic nation can indeed participate in an egalitarian polity.³ She is quick to point out that there is nothing inherently anti-knowledge or, indeed, anti-modernity in Islam; again, traditions have arisen in a number of states that have more to do with local custom.

Bhutto's political thought is, in a sense, mainstream Western in that she is for democracy and the various aspects of it that those in the so-called 'developed' world have come to expect.⁴ But one aspect of her commitment that might be thought to be somewhat unusual is that it is remarkably barebones in its nature—that is, Bhutto does not appear to be concerned about the complexities of democratic procedure, or, indeed, any of the redistributive foci of the various European cultures which, recently, have come under attack. These more philosophically-sophisticated questions are, in general, elided by Bhutto, and for good reason. The core conundrum with which she is presented, as she says, has to do with whether democracy and modernity are incompatible with Islam. Thus the point of what she does is to try to make the argument that they are not, and the construction of that argument is her biggest challenge.

Bhutto proceeds both by showing how democracy plays out in a number of Muslim-majority countries, and also by showing how it has fared in her native land of Pakistan. But along with her general commentaries on the importance of democracy, and of the merging of Islamic cultural values and democratic procedures, she is also concerned to provide views taken directly from contemporary Islamic scholars that seem to leave the door open for at least some modernising. Crucial to the strength of a democracy, as she repeatedly says and emphasises in the text, is respect for knowledge and knowledge-acquisition. Towards the end of her work she notes:

Muslim scholars and leaders have bemoaned the community's loss of power—political, intellectual, scientific and economic—since the colonial era... [Some] have proposed strategies for reconciling the Islamic world

with modern scientific ideas and with the modern economic, political, and social environment.⁵

These strategies are important to Bhutto because she believes that a more forward-looking polity is not really possible without greater education and advancement in other areas. As is the case with many commentators on matters in the developing world, part of Bhutto's thesis revolves around her assertion that colonialism had a great deal to do with fostering a lack of growth in Muslim nations—she sees this factor as crucial.

When we think of the long history of commentary on the burgeoning democratic practices in European societies, we can begin to see that at least some of Bhutto's motivation is historical. In other words, as someone educated in the relevant tradition, Benazir Bhutto is more than familiar with, for example, Mill's (1988) critique of the treatment of women, or the notions of distribution and equality that underlie much of Rawls's (1972) work. The question then becomes how she can use some of what she knows about political philosophy to drive the establishment of a greater degree of equality in Muslim-majority nations. Her argument will revolve around the notion, already partially articulated here, that there is nothing inherently anti-democratic in the Qu'ran or in most of the hadith associated with the Islamic tradition. Although this may be an oversimplification, she pushes it forward.

But what is meant by democratic practices is a difficult question that, beyond a certain anticipatory point, Bhutto apparently does not want to address. Consider the remarks made by Richard Miller in a journal article published on the possibility of merging some sort of Marxian view with the Rawlsian original position:

I shall be arguing that certain aspects of Marxism and not very hard-line ones would preclude the requisite agreement to uphold the difference principle throughout the circumstances of justice.⁶

Obviously, aspects of a redistributive overview might have a lot to do with being inconsistent with the difference principle. But there is a real and genuine sense in which at least some of parts of even more moderate Islam have a great deal of difficulty meshing with Western democracy, and this is a point that needs to be made. Bhutto emphasises the parts of the tradition that rely on *ijma*, or consensus, and this is, indeed, an emphasis that can be made if one wants to build up a type of argument. But the problem, as Bhutto knew, is that this particular strand of Islamic thinking is alive and well only in types of Islam and in some geographical areas—it appears to be barely functioning in others. Western-style democracy requires not only reasoning and consensus, but a value that is in short

supply in many parts of Europe and North America—a willingness to accept loss with comparatively little blame, and a desire to coexist with the other side. All of these characteristics, and more, are necessary for democracy to work. Rawlsian argument takes this into account; it is a necessary part of the whole picture.

II

If we can take a state as exemplary of effort in some ways, Bhutto's own Pakistan might fulfil the desiderata. She herself spends a great deal of time in her work on this very area. As she writes at the beginning of a chapter that is devoted almost entirely to the history of Pakistan and its political structures: '[O]ne billion Muslims around the world . . . look to Pakistan as a model of moderation, civility, progress and democracy.'⁷ As she contends, the history of the Partition of India (into what later became the nation-states of India and Pakistan) is, interestingly enough, itself a history of the use of democratic structures for certain sorts of ends. British rule in India and the subcontinent in general had meant that long before independence was achieved, the very democratic procedures that would later be called into question had already been used to establish some forms of home rule—the style of home rule that because it allowed freedom of assembly and the promulgation of ideas, gave rise to the voices that insisted on independence of the Muslim-majority areas at Partition. Bhutto herself notes how central the Anglo concepts were to the decisions made in the 1940's when she writes:

[In] 1940, the Muslim League called for an independent Pakistan composed of the Muslim majority areas of undivided India. The call for the independent state of Pakistan was made in the city of Lahore, the capital of the provincial parliament in Punjab. It is known as the Lahore Resolution.⁸

So it might be argued that democracy had a beginning in Pakistan that was far back in time—but it might also be argued that something was lost along the way. Part of the difficulty, as Bhutto indicates, was an unfair distribution of goods and services under Partition. This, of course, was not helpful in creating a peace-bound society. Pakistan received comparatively little in the way of educational institutions, or any of the sorts of benefits left over from colonialism that might actually have proven to be of help. With a disproportionate share of the military, one might think that Pakistan was under a heavy burden even to begin with.

A greater difficulty is that the very system of government instantiated by the British—modelled, of course, on the parliament of the UK and relying heavily on the notion of political discussion—was simultaneously suited and unsuited

to areas such as the East and West wings of the original post-Partition state (the East wing comprising what is today Bangladesh). In Europe itself, or in the United Kingdom, intense political discussion is usually accompanied by freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and at least minimal adherence to freedom of religion. But this is not the case for much of what was colonial India—even in India itself there are difficulties, and the notion of ‘discussion’ can take some unsettling turns. In Pakistan the problems with discussion have been exacerbated both by local tradition and the very Islamic notions that Bhutto at least to some extent wants to defend—Western-style democracy does not seem to sit well here. Given all of the foregoing, it is at best shaky and at worst untruthful to try to make the case that there is a model state in Islamic regions of the subcontinent for the instantiation of democracy.

If one were to try to examine the situation with Pakistan historically, Bhutto indicates that the very real tensions that developed between India and Pakistan almost immediately after Partition had a great deal to do with the decline, caused at least to some extent by lack of economic growth, of some democratic institutions in Pakistan itself. As she notes:

Pakistan was...handicapped in other key areas, which contributed to the failure to institutionalize democracy. First, the 1948 war with India made Pakistan feel vulnerable to the Indian threat. Consequently, a large portion of the budget was spent on defense to counter India's military. India's military, of course, was backed by a much larger population and economy. Between 1947 and 1950, approximately 70 percent of the Pakistani budget was spent on defense.⁹

It does not take professional training in the social sciences to discern that the lack of funding for schools, medical facilities and anything having to do with social welfare would, of course, affect the very areas related to the ‘four freedoms’ mentioned at an earlier point. Although Bhutto is reluctant to ascribe any of these alterations, post-independence, to religion, one would have to wonder what role was played by Pakistan's fears of a Hindu-oriented state when so many of those who came into the region—especially West Pakistan—were refugees from that same state. (The population increased enormously after Partition.) In fact, Bhutto writes that the thinking that religion is closely involved in these difficulties is, as she phrases it, ‘simplistic and flawed’. One would be tempted to disagree with her, especially given the overall importance of religion and religiously-based cultural activities in the region.

In recounting the history of difficulties that Pakistan encountered in attempting

to instantiate democracy in its early years, Bhutto is also candid about the problems involved in starting up the basic trappings of democratic states, such as a constitution, an array of public offices, voting activities and the economic platform that might sustain these services. As she recounts:

In 1962, a new constitution was promulgated for Pakistan...Ayub Khan believed that economic development would ultimately lead to democracy, or so he said...He claimed economic progress, with a GDP growing at 5.5 percent rate. However, the so-called fruits of this development did not trickle down to the poor masses.¹⁰

In other words, it is not enough for those in office to discuss growth and elections, or even to make some steps towards their instantiation. Greater efforts are needed, as she says, so that a coming 'down' to the poorer groups of goods and benefits yields a situation where these individuals can actually achieve literacy, vote, and then make changes through the various democratic offices. Interestingly enough, some of what Bhutto says with respect to the development of Pakistan is reminiscent of remarks made a century earlier by Harriet Taylor Mill (1998), who had been influenced by John Stuart Mill's thoughts on British colonialism in South Asia. Writing in the chapter titled 'On the Probable Futurity of the Laboring Classes', a part of Mill's *Principles* that is attributed by almost all (including Mill) to Harriet Taylor, she notes: 'The most striking instances of prosperity are in the case of those who have had nothing to rely on but their own slender means...'.¹¹ Democracy must begin somewhere, and clearly it is more than an array of institutions.

Although Bhutto does not indicate what societal changes would need to be made with respect to the status of women, she has given us much to think about in her work. *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West* is an important book that should be read by all concerned about contemporary societies and their future.

NOTES

- 1 Bhutto, Benazir, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West*, New York: HarperCollins, 2008
- 2 Ibid, p.17
- 3 Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972. Even Rawls himself later admitted, addressing the criticisms of Susan Moller Okin and others, that parts of his work neglected such issues as gender.
- 4 Bhutto makes this clear in Ch 3 of her work, 'Islam and Democracy', pp.81-156
- 5 Ibid, p.276

- 6 Miller, Richard, 'Rawls and Marxism', *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Winter 1974, pp.167-91; this citation: p.170
- 7 Bhutto, Benazir, *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West*, New York: HarperCollins, 2008, p.158
- 8 Ibid, p.164
- 9 Ibid, p.167
- 10 Ibid, pp.170-71
- 11 Mill, Harriet Taylor, *The Complete Works of Harriet Taylor Mill*, ed., Jo Ellen Jacobs, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, p.306

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Kaleidoscope

The wars of 2024 brought together rivals—but created new enemies

2024 has been one of the most eventful years since the World War II in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

The sudden toppling of Syria's President Assad, North Korean soldiers fighting for Russia. British and US missiles sent to Ukraine and fired at Russia, Iranian missiles shipped to Russia. US-armed Israeli air strikes in Lebanon and Gaza, Yemeni missiles fired at Israel.

It's a complex and confusing web of conflicts and it prompts the inevitable question: Are the world's battle lines becoming ever more interconnected?

Let's get one thing straight: this is not World War III, although President Putin does like to dangle that menace to scare the West away from sending more powerful weapons to Ukraine. But it's clear that many of the conflicts on our planet have an international dimension, so how do these lines join up?

(Read more on: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cm2ewemgjw1o>)

World's conflict zones increased by two-thirds in past three years, report reveals

Wars have spread and intensified, with far-reaching impacts on global economic growth and food security, according to latest Conflict Intensity Index (CII).

The proportion of the world engulfed by conflict has grown 65%—equivalent to nearly double the size of India—over the past three years, according to a new report.

Ukraine, Myanmar, the Middle East and a 'conflict corridor' around Africa's Sahel region have seen wars and unrest spread and intensify since 2021, according to the latest CII, published by risk analysts Verisk Maplecroft.

While there was a lull in the levels of conflict globally during the COVID-19 pandemic, experts say there has been a rising trend of violence for at least a decade, while many longstanding crises continue unabated.

(Read more on: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/nov/21/world-conflict-zones-increased-by-two-thirds-past-three-years-report-ukraine-myanmar-middle-east-africa>)

Worldwide climate continues to heat up

Humanity cannot say it did not know. Scientists have been warning for decades that our addiction to fossil fuels will change the climate, potentially permanently.

The facts back them up. The level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere continues to grow, and 2024 will go down as the hottest year on record. For the first time, the average global temperature was 1.5°C hotter than during pre-industrial times, a dangerous sign given that the 2015 Paris Agreement seeks to keep the world from breaching that level permanently. Some of the consequences of a changing climate are easy to see. The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that the first ten months of 2024 produced twenty-four weather-related natural disasters in the United States that inflicted at least \$1 billion in damage. Record drought has wracked northern South America, causing parts of the Amazon, the world's largest river system, to dry up. But many of the consequences of climate change are hard to see because they involve incremental changes, like the intrusion of ocean water into freshwater drinking sources, that will become obvious only with time. COP 29, the annual international conference on climate, made modest progress on helping developing countries to finance emissions reductions and climate adaptation, but not much else. Scientists made headway on a range of technologies designed to mitigate the effects of climate change and hasten the transition to a green economy. However, their successes may be a case of too little, too late.

(Read more on: <https://www.cfr.org/article/ten-most-significant-world-events-2024>)

Ghana's Supreme Court dismisses challenges to anti-LGBT bill

Ghana's Supreme Court has unanimously decided to dismiss two legal challenges to new anti-LGBT legislation that has been criticised by rights groups.

In early 2024, lawmakers passed a bill imposing three years in prison for people identifying as LGBT and five years for forming or funding LGBT groups.

Fear and uncertainty has gripped Ghana's LGBT community, already facing limited rights. The bill, considered one of Africa's most draconian anti-LGBT laws, has been condemned by the UN.

(Read more on: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crrw2r8epw8o>)

Marriage Equality around the World

There are currently 38 countries where same-sex marriage is legal: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the United States of America



and Uruguay. These countries have legalised marriage equality through both legislation and court decisions.

(Read more on: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/marriage-equality-around-the-world>)

Protest erupts against Trump administration plans to spike global humanitarian aid

Thousands gathered on Capitol Hill on 5 February 2025 to protest the Trump administration's bulldozing of US disaster aid and critical medical care in war-torn and poverty-stricken regions around the globe.

The future of American humanitarian efforts is unclear after US Agency for International Development employees were told to prepare for administrative leave and abandon global posts within a few weeks.

A throng of demonstrators near the US Senate office buildings carried signs reading 'Republicans, where are your spines?' and 'USAID makes America safe, strong and prosperous.'

(Read more on: <https://georgiarecorder.com/2025/02/05/dc/protest-erupts-in-d-c-against-trump-administration-plans-to-spike-global-humanitarian-aid/>)

Thousands of new species have been discovered by scientists in 2024 – here are some of the weirdest

From the depths of the Pacific Ocean to the mountains of Vietnam, thousands of weird and wonderful new plants, animals and fungi have been discovered all over the world this year: 2024. Whether they are creatures unearthed in a little explored corner of the globe, or a specimen lying hidden in a drawer of a museum, they give us an exciting glimpse of the precious variety of life on our planet.

The discoveries came amid growing frustration at the lack of progress being made on the international stage to halt unprecedented rates of destruction of the natural world. Human activities have increased the extinction of species to between 100-1,000 times faster than scientists say they would expect.

(Read more on: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20241224-the-new-plant-and-animal-species-discovered-in-2024>)

Curated by Abhijit Mazumder



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