Second High Level Group Meeting

Doha, Qatar
26-28 February 2006

REPORT ON EDUCATION

Education and the Alliance of Civilizations

1. To bring the concept of an Alliance of Civilizations to practical fulfillment, education is a component that must be addressed at many levels. The most obvious aspect of education that must be considered are those efforts that replace ignorance of the Other with knowledge of the Other, promoting understanding and tolerance in place of misunderstanding and intolerance. Education is also a unifying concept among the strands of youth engagement, media, immigration and integration of diverse populations, and effective interaction among contemporary societies that the Alliance of Civilizations is tasked with analyzing. The complexity and connectedness of modern life requires a holistic attitude toward knowledge and awareness of the significance, dignity and responsibility of each individual in the overall context of humanity. It also requires educational security, in which regional, class, gender and age equity in educational opportunity become vital goals to promote constructive social engagement over violence. Knowledge acquisition for all is a vital objective because the actions of individuals everywhere can negatively or positively affect the collective situation locally, in the nation, the region and the world.

2. The preliminary report on education summarized here is intended to collect information and suggest approaches to educational activity and change that are deemed relevant to promoting the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations. Educational issues that require study in support of this project may be categorized in two major ways: those related to **(1) structural issues in education**, and **(2) educational issues related to curriculum, content and pedagogy**. Each bulleted item in the list below represents an avenue of inquiry in which substantive additional information must be gathered for the purpose of identifying problems that might be addressed by specific, practical proposals that build upon ongoing efforts in various local, national, and international arenas. Corresponding sections of the full report suggest a framework for discussion of the research plans that will carry forward the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations project, in addition to several examples of ongoing efforts in these areas. Under each section of the full report, explanations of programs and initiatives are accompanied by annotated citations that provide links and resources for further study. It is hoped that the deliberations and contributions of High Level Group members and the invited experts will correct any omissions, select areas for special emphasis, and provide guidance to the research as it progresses.

Structural Education Issues

3. The simplest but perhaps most intractable issue is **universal access to education**. Figures provided by UNESCO on literacy, school enrollment in primary, secondary and tertiary education demonstrate that a half-century of effort by many governments and agencies has not achieved universal access even to basic literacy. **Lack of access to adequate and appropriate education**, combined with unemployment and deficits in meeting basic needs, may contribute as much to the atmosphere of hostility as any more esoteric ideological and intellectual causes. In countries where access to basic education is nearly universal, less apparent issues may hinder access, such as language

barriers, uneven access to services reflecting divisions of class and ethnicity, and uneven access to secondary and tertiary educational opportunities. These inequities hamper effective social and economic interaction within and among societies. Structural issues in access to education at various levels may also involve cultural practices and prejudices of long standing. The most obvious issue is gender inequity in access to higher levels of education, but bias toward technical education may also forestall broader career choices that create imbalances in social development. Other inequities and workforce biases may have been built into national development planning decades ago, that affect admission to higher education to the present day.

4. **Higher education reform efforts** aim to expand access to tertiary education as an urgent support to development, providing a better fit between national and international job markets and available degree programs. Ongoing evaluation of the types of degrees and the length of time required to complete them may result in revamping programs, along with assessments of acceptance and completion ratios, and long-term studies of graduate career information. Innovative efforts include introducing more flexible training opportunities such as online learning rather than exclusively on-site classrooms, and adult lifelong learning opportunities. Improving the quality and breadth of general education as well as creating dynamic programs that accelerate specialization in needed fields.

Curriculum and Content Education Issues

5. The effort to improve **understanding through education about specific cultures, religions and heritages** is an important one. There are many good reasons to educate citizens about their own culture and history, and equally compelling reasons to teach about other groups living at home and abroad. How such content is incorporated into the curriculum in schools may become a matter of contention that defeats its purpose and pits groups against one another, or it may become the object of broad consensus in a society. Educational efforts for the purposes of disseminating fair, accurate and balanced information in the arena of formal schooling are discussed in terms of their historical context and progress through various models over the past few decades. The section outlines possible rationales for these programs and suggests criteria for diversity education that is aligned with academic goals on which broad agreement can be reached.

6. Education about the world in formal schooling is an important focus of any alliance for the purposes of cross-cultural understanding. The paper examines **the place of global education and its incorporation into social studies programs, and highlights a new of scholarly inquiry into world history** that is academically and pedagogically valuable, and at the same time offers a way beyond multiculturalism toward a human-centered study of world history that can be applied to and integrated into the social studies curriculum reform process on an international basis.

7. Discussing **the successful application of a civic framework for teaching <u>about</u> religion** introduces a topic of broad public consensus and implementation in the US, describes the civic guidelines for including religion in public education, and shows how it is already incorporated into academic standards, textbooks, teaching materials and teacher training of a wide scope. Relating it to the teaching of world history or

global education more broadly, the section discusses continuing efforts to apply this model for accurate, fair and balanced learning about the "deepest differences" among people sharing civil society in the world today.

8. **Education for civil society, or civic education** has received significant impetus in the past two decades, particularly in emerging democracies, and the effort has received further impetus since September 11, 2001. The report describes a widely appreciated methodological framework for civic education as well as outlining specific projects underway in many countries and pointing up some essential qualities that may enhance their success.

9. The **manner, purpose and scope of delivering religious education** in various societies is a critical issue related to this effort, but it is a highly complex issue that reflects a spectrum of purposes and settings in the educational arenas of various societies, and must be examined from a variety of perspectives that take into account both its respected cultural heritage and its contribution to contemporary societies. Religious education of various types may be, in other words, part of the problem, or part of the solution. The paper cites a wide variety of interfaith, confessional, scholarly and professional efforts to educate various groups about religion and within religious traditions. In an atmosphere of accusations and counter-accusations, only substantive research can point toward constructive, cooperative reform in religious education.

10. **Educational reform efforts aim to improve relationship of the learner to the educational experience by altering its methodology**. All levels of educational reform are seeking **ways to support the learning process through technology**, including international partnerships, both public and private. There is an emerging consensus that authoritarian education systems may produce adequate test scores, and may achieve their goals by moving high achievers into secondary and higher education, but more learner-centered systems may result in graduates who are better able to engage in lifetime learning and evaluate issues more effectively and independently, and they may succeed in making high achievers of a larger segment of society.

11. **Curriculum integration** approaches school subjects from several disciplinary perspectives, improving efficiency in covering the content objectives by reducing the disjointedness of schooling, and deepening understanding through related learning tasks. Both the division between humanities and sciences and artificial disciplinary boundaries have been challenged by interdisciplinary successes in research, requiring schools to rethink the methodology of fragmented learning. More subtle but crucial benefits to creating more holistic learning experiences for the next generation of students may also reduce imbalances and dislocations that may feed into personal alienation and block constructive social engagement.

Please refer to the full report for an overview of research resources and ongoing efforts in the areas highlighted above, each of which is accompanied by citations for locating further information. The outcome of discussions with the High Level Group and invited experts will be to sharpen the focus of this research and to suggest additional avenues which will enable the process of making substantive and practical recommendations.

FULL VERSION

Education and the Alliance of Civilizations

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Introduction

In identifying ways to bring the concept of an Alliance of Civilizations to practical fulfillment, education is a component that must be addressed at many levels. Education in an etymological sense means to bring a person out of a previous state, to lead the person toward a better state. In the context of the Alliance of Civilizations, the most obvious aspect of education that must be considered are those efforts that replace ignorance of the Other with knowledge of the Other, promoting understanding and tolerance in place of mis-understanding and intolerance. Education is also a unifying concept among the strands of youth engagement, media, immigration and integration of diverse populations, and effective interaction among contemporary societies that the Alliance of Civilizations is tasked with analyzing.

The complexity and connectedness of modern life requires more of education for understanding than mere instruction for cross-cultural understanding. It requires a holistic attitude toward knowledge and awareness of the significance, dignity and responsibility of each individual in the overall context of humanity. It requires what might be called educational security, in which regional, class, gender and age equity in educational opportunity become vital goals to promote constructive social engagement over violence. Knowledge acquisition must also be considered as a vital goal for all, because the actions of individuals everywhere can negatively or positively affect the collective situation locally, in the nation, the region and the world. The current cartoon crisis provides an excellent example of ways in which myriad individual decisions and actions can impact global society in far-reaching ways. Educational issues that require study in support of this project may be categorized in two major ways: those related to structural issues in education, and those related to substance, or content and its delivery.

Overview of Structural and Content Issues

The simplest but perhaps most intractable issue is **universal access to education**. Figures provided by UNESCO on literacy, school enrollment in primary, secondary and tertiary education demonstrate that a half-century of effort by many governments and agencies has not achieved universal access even to basic literacy.

Lack of access to adequate and appropriate education, combined with unemployment and deficits in meeting basic needs, may contribute as much to the atmosphere of hostility as any more esoteric ideological and intellectual causes. In countries where access to basic education is nearly universal, less apparent issues may hinder access, such as language barriers, uneven access to services reflecting divisions of class and ethnicity, and uneven access to secondary and tertiary educational opportunities. These inequities hamper effective social and economic interaction within and among societies.

Structural issues in access to education at various levels may also involve cultural practices and prejudices of long standing. The most obvious issue is gender inequity in access to higher levels of education, but bias toward technical education may also forestall broader career choices that create imbalances in social development. Other inequities and workforce biases may have been built into national development planning decades ago, that affect admission to higher education to the present day.

Issues concerning the content of education—the curriculum and the methodology employed for its delivery are the most obvious focus for a program to bridge cultural and religious divides, but **improving the quality and quantity of information provided through education** involves a more complex, long-term process.

The effort to improve **understanding through education about specific cultures, religions and heritages** is only a small part of that effort, though a very important one. Before educational efforts can change the way people view others and their culture, it is necessary to challenge the way they view themselves and their own cultural context. There are many good reasons to educate citizens about their own culture and history, and equally compelling reasons to teach about other groups living at home and abroad. How such content is incorporated into the curriculum in schools may become a matter of contention that defeats its purpose and pits groups against one another, or it may become the object of broad consensus in a society. Educational efforts for the purposes of disseminating fair, accurate and balanced information will need to be carried out in the arena of formal schooling for the very young, for intermediate and advanced students, and informal education efforts for members of the public, as members of civil society at large, and as professionals with responsibilities for specialized types of interaction with other societies. Initiatives involving youth will touch those who may still be involved in formal education, or those who have completed their schooling.

Educational in-service and pre-service training for professionals include efforts aimed at improving the cultural and religious knowledge of government officials and civil servants, elected officeholders, corporate executives and managers, and must also include religious leaders and educators of the young. In-service and pre-service teacher education involves both teachers of diverse and homogeneous populations in public or private schools, or those specifically tasked with teaching history, geography or other subjects that require them to convey knowledge about historical and contemporary cultures and religions.

The **manner, purpose and scope of delivering religious education** in various societies is a critical issue related to this effort, but it is a highly complex issue that reflects a spectrum of purposes and settings in the educational arenas of various societies, and must be examined from a variety of perspectives that take into account both its respected cultural heritage and its contribution to contemporary societies. Religious education of various types may be, in other words, part of the problem, or part of the solution.

Education for participation in civil society has both national and global implications, and combined with youth programs, has tremendous potential as a very active type of education that intersects with service learning and can contribute directly to social well-being. It is not limited to youth, but may include adults as well as younger children.

Higher education reform efforts aim to increase the usefulness of tertiary education in terms of development of the country, providing a better fit between the national and international job market and available degree programs. Ongoing evaluation of the types of degrees and the length of time required to complete them may result in revamping programs, along with assessments of acceptance and completion ratios, and long-term studies of graduate career information. Innovative efforts include introducing more flexible training opportunities such as online learning rather than exclusively on-site classrooms, and adult lifelong learning opportunities. Improving the quality and breadth of

general education as well as creating dynamic programs that accellerate specialization in needed fields. The tasks are daunting ones that require creative implementation that builds on, but is not restricted by, existing structures.

A subtler issue is **the relationship to the educational experience provided as a result of the methodology** used. Authoritarian education systems may produce adequate test scores, and they may achieve their goals of funneling high achievers in this type of learning into secondary and higher education, but more learner-centered systems may result in graduates who are better able to engage in lifetime learning and evaluate issues more effectively and independently, and they may succeed in making high achievers of a larger segment of society. From the standpoint of the content of the educational experience, **curriculum integration** can make education more meaningful by approaching subjects from several disciplinary perspectives, improving efficiency in covering the content objectives by reducing the disjointedness of schooling, and by deepening understanding through time on related learning tasks. Schools structural obedience to the false dichotomy between humanities and sciences, as well as excessive respect for artificial disciplinary boundaries has been challenged by interdisciplinary successes in research, requiring schools to rethink the basic methodology of fragmented learning. More subtle but crucial benefits to creating more holistic learning experiences for the next generation of students may also reduce imbalances and dislocations that feed into alienation and block constructive social engagement.

The following is a summary of areas of educational activity and change that are deemed relevant to promoting the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations. Each section outlines an avenue of inquiry in which substantive information must be gathered for the purpose of identifying problems that might be addressed by specific, practical proposals that build upon ongoing efforts in various local, national, and international arenas. The present report is a framework for discussion of the research plans that will carry forward the goals of the Alliance of Civilizations project. It is hoped that the deliberations and contributions of High Level Group members and the invited experts will correct any omissions, select areas for special emphasis, and provide guidance to the research as it progresses.

Structural Issues in Education for Alliance of Civilizations

Access to primary, secondary, vocational and higher education is a basic public good that is universally recognized, and has a high priority among the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Achievement of mass literacy among the populations of all societies is a dream that could only be realized in modern times. It is a difficult challenge whose main assumption is that nearly everyone is not only able to learn, but obligated to do so—obligated to themselves, to their families and to their society or nation. Religiously speaking, the quest for knowledge is both a right and an individual as well as collective duty. From a worldly or secular perspective, there is certainly no disagreement over the need to place education as a top priority, and obstacles to advancement must be identified and overcome.

Access to Educational Opportunities

Providing the means for universal access to education remains a challenge for the wealthiest nations in terms of fairly allocating resources for this public good among segments of their populations. Providing universal access to education by the governments of the poorest nations often seems an insurmountable challenge in the face of basic needs for nutrition, housing, and health care that are unmet; geographic and infrastructural inequalities hinder equal access to their populations.[1] In several world regions where Muslims form the majority and significant minorities, average figures for literacy range between 68% and 75%, with figures for female literacy that hover near 50%. In the most developed regions of the world, official literacy figures near 100% conceal higher rates of functional illiteracy among some segments of society and uneven distribution of educational resources among localities, which point up inequities between rural and urban populations, unequally served geographic regions, and between upper and lower class neighborhoods in the cities, which may correlate to ethnic enclaves. Beyond the need to ensure basic literacy, however, it is becoming increasingly clear that nations whose populations are not more broadly educated will lack the means to meet the challenges of internal development or external competition, and will fall even farther behind. Providing access to the highest level of education each citizen can achieve is a matter of national well-being and even survival. Existing educational facilities and traditional assumptions will not be adequate to meeting these needs.

Infrastructure

The structural reasons for these inequities may be fairly simple but have proven intractable. Research in a cross-section of countries with lower literacy rates indicates that rural areas are inadequately served with primary schools, and those that exist may be too distant, too poorly equipped with teachers and learning supplies, or two crowded. Girls may not be attending for such reasons as lack of toilet facilities, security, or transportation. The curriculum is not perceived to serve the needs of the students, nor does such education develop competitive candidates for well-paying jobs. While rural children may have alternative work in the local economy, poor urban children may have few alternatives for work that would sustain a viable future, but low attendance and rates of completion indicate the need for an overhaul.[2] Child labor competes with school, and it may be necessary to find alternative ways of scheduling school to increase the likelihood of children attending, in addition to safety issues. It is worth recalling that agricultural labor patterns still influence the school schedule in industrialized countries, though only because tradition has replaced the original reasons for doing so.

It is possible to envision closing the access gap by means of a combination of high and low-tech measures. In remote areas, satellite communication may be used to bring educational programming for adults, and classroom remote hook-ups for school-age children. Locally recruited teachers may provide support to local students, who would not need to be as highly trained as the teachers broadcasting the remote programs. In rural

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[1] See UNESCO Institute for Statistics International Literacy Day 2005 Fact Sheet, retrieved on 2/10/06 at http://www.uis.unesco.org/file_download.php?URL_ID=6264&filename=11287105911UIS_factsheet_06_EN.pdf&filetype=application%2Fpdf&filesize=38892&name=UIS_factsheet_06_EN.pdf&location=user-S/

[2] For example, International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: Reforming the Education Sector," Asia Report # 84, Islamabad/Brussels, 7 October 2004.

areas of the US, such computerized or televised classroom resources are used to compensate for teacher shortages in rural communities and to provide enhanced quality programs to students scattered in remote areas.[3] With existing technology, two-way communication between geographically remote students and teachers is possible, including online submission of student work, teacher-provided instructional materials, and feedback. Such programs can contribute to closing the access gap in primary education, but they may also be applied to increasing access to secondary school education, improving adult literacy, and many types of training. Attempting to meet the challenge of universal education opportunity through bricks-and-mortar development alone within a critically urgent development timeframe, nor is it likely to result in a sufficient quality of instruction at any level.

Language

In the developed countries, where immigrant populations present linguistic challenges to the education system, programs to improve access to the language of the host country must be implemented as an issue of access. In the United States and most other developed countries, instruction in the dominant language for speakers of other languages is legislatively mandated for public education, with interim measures also provided. As a matter of global economic competitiveness, increased efforts are being made to encourage American students to study foreign languages and learn about the world.[4] For adult learners, many religious institutions and community adult education programs provide at least basic instruction in English, and public extension programs and community colleges have remedial English programs that prepare pre-college students to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). In Europe, the language education issue is more complex. Simultaneously, Europeans strive to preserve their heritage languages, bind Europe together across linguistic lines, become fluent in globally important languages, as well as linguistically integrate the many immigrant populations in their countries. It is a tall order, and innovative programs such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) with bilingual instruction or more in content areas seek to accomplish active language learning across the curriculum.[5] Among the linguistic issues that affect access as well as causing economic hardship and discord between states and minority populations, the suppression or elevation of certain languages through the education system is a source of great bitterness that also reinforces inequities and contributes to the intractability of long-simmering conflicts.

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[3] For example, a consortium of public schools in South Dakota have developed a virtual school program to provide access to excellent educational opportunities in underserved areas of the western state, retrieved on 2/11/06 at http://www.sddial.org/ilc/vschool/ . Home schooling organizations have also linked students to online learning in private initiatives. Public and private schools alike routinely utilize online learning opportunities such as links to ongoing scientific and other activities, such as the Jason Project at http://www.jasonproject.org/ .

[4] The education department of the Asia Society formed The National Coalition on Asia and International Education in the Schools as a broad-based, informal coalition of leadership groups that share a deep interest in promoting the close ties between international affairs, cross-cultural understanding, economic development and education reform, of which language instruction is a major goal; retrieved on 2/11/06 at, http://www.internationaled.org/national.htm .

[5] See Eurydice: The Information Network on Education in Europe, " Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe," retrieved on 2/10/06 at http://www.eurydice.org/accueil_menu/en/frameset_menu.html

Access to higher learning and vocational training

There is as yet no global consensus on the right to higher education, and statistics show that in both developed and developing countries, education beyond compulsory schooling—or post-secondary education in more developed countries—is a matter of diminishing percentages of attendees at each progressive level of schooling. The traditional education systems of most countries have been designed to act as progressively finer-screened filters that allow fewer and fewer students to slip through to the next higher level. Whether intentionally designed to do so or not, education systems have been effective at ensuring not only that a small percentage of students gains access to higher education, but also that those who do get through are sluiced into fields of study according to certain distributional principles. During periods of state-led development in developing countries, this was accomplished through exit examinations. Students were admitted into medical schools, for example, or art schools, based on the perceived needs of the economy and grades. Similarly, students who could not demonstrate high enough achievement during their early secondary years were not even permitted to move onto programs that would prepare them for university admittance. In the most benevolent of such systems, these students find vocational training opportunities awaiting their exits from school. In less fortunate circumstances, their publicly funded education simply ends.

The arrival of the digital age and globalization of economies is changing this calculus and creating calls for broader access to post-secondary educational opportunities. Students may no longer have to accept being shunted into careers based on their test scores and bureaucratic decisions. The need for digital literacy among ordinary workers and citizens, and the global demand for a more versatile and flexible workforce is engendering a re-thinking of higher education from the most traditionally elite institutions to reaching into all tiers of workforce development training. The Task Force on Higher Education convened by UNESCO and the World Bank published its report *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2000)[6], making recommendations emphasizing the necessity of providing funding, improving governance, and reforming the educational focus of higher education in the developing countries. Putting the shoe on the other foot, economic dislocation and contraction of the middle classes in developed countries are also placing strains on the ability of qualified students to obtain access to higher education opportunities, and vocational education is experiencing lags in providing training appropriate to the changing nature of the workplace and changes in demand across important sectors of their economies.

In western Europe, figures for higher education measured in 1995 range between 35% and 50% or more of the population recorded as enrolled in higher education. North Africa and the Arab countries range between 5% and 35%, with the majority of countries in the MENA at 15% to 35%. In South Asia, the figures are lower, between 15% and below 5% (Pakistan and Afghanistan) with all but southern Sub-Saharan Africa below 5%. Most of eastern Europe is on a par with the wealthier Arab countries.[7]

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[6] The report can be retrieved at http://www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download_report.htm .
[7] *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2000), pp.12-13.

Structural Issues and the Clash of Cultures

Historically, conflicts arise from multiple causes, and while historians may spend their careers sorting out the factors that fed into them, the process of avoiding conflict requires more rapid attention to potential elements feeding into conflict. The sense of insecurity that pervades both Western, developed nations and developing, Muslim countries is only informed by a sense of cultural malaise in response to other factors. People who fear for their economic and national survival, who fear unthinkable global Armageddon, whether from war or ecological catastrophe, will look to other groups in their midst or beyond and see in them the realization of their fears. Education about those groups can only go so far to address conflict. The root causes of the malaise may be more reliably traceable to the perception of threats to their existence or way of life. People who take to the streets with violence against a drawing appearing in a faraway newspaper cannot be assumed by informed observers to be reacting purely to such an incident in the absence of other issues that are perceived as threatening. By the same token, the public in Western countries may be wishing away those strangers in their midst out of more deeply felt threats to their future. To the extent that improved education is considered part of the solution, improving access to education at all levels—both in developing and developed countries—is a necessary condition for resolving the more fundamental issues that often appear in the mask of cultural conflict. It is certainly not the more educated segments of society that take to the streets in violent protest, though certainly some of the intellectual fathers of these incidents on both sides may certainly be counted among the privileged and educated elites.

Content Issues in Education for Alliance of Civilizations

The following section discusses existing and proposed models for diversity education, particularly in the context of already existing curriculum space for teaching world history and geography, which are nearly universally provided in the public or private school systems of most nations, though the amount of instruction may not be sufficient. This section describes the historical case study of multiculturalism as it developed in US schools over the past few decades, and a model to make the process of inclusive and academically sound global education less controversial as well as more historically accurate and pedagogically effective. The next section concerns various approaches to including religion in the curriculum of school and other educational programs, including the academic study of religion in world history, national history and geography, as well as preliminary discussion of religious education in its confessional as well as interfaith dimensions. The final aspects of education discussed in this preliminary report are civic education and service learning.

Diversity Education or Global Education

Educating students around the world about the vast diversity of human history and contemporary society is a task that began with the sense of wonder aroused by encounters that made people aware of that diversity. The history of societies learning about one another has been a contradictory one, since increasing knowledge has not precluded violent confrontation, conquest, or even destruction. Deepening knowledge among some members of societies which have come in contact with one another has not eliminated ignorance

among the vast bulk who have no direct experience of the Other. It is ironic that one of the means to broader and deeper understanding other cultures in Western societies was the very conquest of those societies. Hostility and aggression have co-existed with episodes and individual cases of deep and appreciative understanding. The contradiction between the need to gain public support for conquest or territorial consolidation, and by extension for countering the resistance to conquest, against the impulse toward recognizing the brotherhood of the Other has been a feature of historical interaction among cultures. These contradictions have been more pervasive and public during the past five hundred years since the advent of printing coincided with the European age of discovery.

The above caveat is stated to avoid the notion that there was ever a time when altruistic education about the Other was untainted by ongoing conflict. One can also, however, locate repeated examples in history of diverse peoples living side-by-side in prosperity and relatively peaceful interaction, whether in the great multicultural empires from ancient Persia to medieval Islam, or in multi-cultural, multi-religious zones of interaction such as the Indian Ocean Basin reaching back almost two millennia before the Portuguese entry into the Indian Ocean. Through forging of informal relationships, intercultural trade, inter-racial and intercultural marriage, a great deal of formal and informal interaction and syncretic development in religion took place without any state-led efforts at multicultural education of the sort that are deemed essential today.

The modern nation-state, with its sharply defined borders and the demands placed on citizens to support the ethos of the state, its political system and its reputation for commanding the means to provide for the general good, has absorbed into itself diverse groups of people who must together fulfill the demands of citizenship. Themselves the product of global encounters, these states have increasingly found themselves populated by racially, ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse groups of human beings who must live cheek by jowl and share the nation-state's fortunes. Since prosperity cannot be achieved when members of society are in a constant state of hatred and conflict with one another, it has seemed fitting for national public education systems, aided by the goodwill of cosmopolitan, compassionate individuals, to teach members of society to recognize one another as brothers in a common cause.

Discrimination, whether tacitly or directly supported by laws and policies, has resulted in movements for redress and social justice that must be accompanied by educational efforts to overcome prejudice. Civil rights education in the United States with regard to race is but one example in the modern world which has only achieved partial success in a century. Education about the Holocaust in Europe provides another dramatic example, and one which has been effectively carried to the world stage through media, legislation, and institutional efforts on a wide scale. Education for effective interaction with societies beyond the nation-state has also been recognized as beneficial to the prosperity of the nation, even while these are viewed as competitors or even enemies at times. In our own times, the phenomenon of multinational employment and global procurement of needs and wants has contributed to formation of a consensus that citizens need to know about the world. The notion that enfranchised citizens should be educated to aid in national foreign policy decision-making is a factor that powerful governments may not exactly emphasize, but advocates of political empowerment of citizens keep bringing into the conversation. In short, teaching about the world is an essential civic enterprise for

our times, everywhere in the world, to increase the likelihood of peace, and to foster cooperation to solve daunting problems that affect everyone.

Curriculum: space for study of the nation and the world

Among the items on the Alliance of Civilizations research agenda for education is a survey of curriculum in history and social science in the US, Europe, and Muslim countries, and the world in general. How many years study of national history (in addition to local, regional, state or provincial history) are provided and how much opportunity do students have to learn about the world? It makes a great difference in the attitudes of educated citizens and their ability to assess information from the international arena whether or not they have been exposed to an overview of world history and geography. If this information is not provided in a comprehensive a manner, citizens can be expected to confront the effects of globalization with a myopic, if not xenophobic, attitude. A more generous perspective comes from knowing, on the other hand, about our shared human heritage of cultural and scientific achievement, and about the challenges we face in modern times, as well as common human values. Attitudes of victimization can be tempered by knowledge of the context in which colonialism took root, what went before it, and about the struggles to overcome and move it. Ideally, learning about human history and geography would be accompanied by study of the arts and literature, everyday life, as well as economics and civics. Formal history study need not amount to dull, triumphalist accounts of political, military, and dynastic history alone. A multidisciplinary approach, coupled with inquiry rather than rote learning, is envisioned in many places where education reform is taking place today. Unfortunately, efforts to jump-start educational reform often over-emphasize improving students' achievement in math, science and language at the expense of humanities education. If human beings are expected to interact more constructively in social settings, study of human societies is indispensable.

Diversity education: from remediation to academic excellence

The United States after World War II provides an example of how education about the world developed in a large, multi-ethnic nation. In the 1950s, social studies education (which includes history, geography, economics, civics and other social sciences) consisted mainly of primary and elementary study of the local community and the state, as well as US history and western civilization courses, which by the 1960s were embedded into a sequence of three repetitions of national history, and one or two of world history, whose coverage emphasized European history (or Western civilization), as and a survey of the modern world. After World War I, teaching of social studies had taken on a more contemporary focus whose purpose was to cultivate positive social and civic interaction, and address contemporary world problems, replacing traditional history and geography to some extent.[8] A major critique of this approach is its lack of rigor and insufficient attention to historical background. Over the past decade, the movement to write academic standards for each state, detailed accounts of what students are taught in social studies (today more

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[8] Nash, Crabtree and Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1997) describes the historical development of history, geography and social science education during the twentieth century in the US. For an alternative view, see the report in full text online by James Leming et al, *Where Did Social Studies Go Wrong?* (Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2003) retrieved at http://www.edexcellence.net/institute/publication/publication.cfm?id=317 .

focused on history, geography, civics and economics). The state have allocated between two and four years for study of the world. Academics are also pushing for more globally contextualized US history courses. Alternations of national history with content about the world, in addition to local or provincial history, make up the social science curriculum of most modern countries, but it is important to assess the extent to which students are exposed to the broader global picture through national curricula.[9] The issue of global vs. national balance in curriculum is not the same as the issue of diversity education at any level of schooling. Global education represents exposure or the lack of exposure to an enormous chunk of human reality, vs. a usually remedial intent to teach about diversity in students' local or national environment. Imparting systematic knowledge about the world as a whole is a valid focus of modern education, and a vital civic enterprise at home and abroad.

While many nations feature central government control over the curriculum and textbooks, or direct commissioning of these books, in the US both commercially produced textbooks adopted by the states and teacher- or district-chosen supplementary materials have expanded the repertoire of curriculum materials. Teachers have enjoyed considerable autonomy in choice of materials. If companies wish to sell textbooks to the states, they must pass through an adoption process. Beyond basic alignment to the curriculum, however, there is considerable latitude for creativity in images, text and features, and competition among the half-dozen corporations' offerings is fierce. Supplementary materials, on the other hand, are widely available at professional conferences and online. Teachers in US public and private schools purchase such materials both from state-approved lists and out of their own pockets. Organizations that produce supplementary materials range from government institutions such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, national libraries and museums around the globe, and educational advocacy groups of many stripes. The materials range in quality from excellent to unacceptable, and teacher professionalism and discretion are important. Parents and administrators sometimes raise objections, and lawsuits concerning supplementary materials have occurred as well.

Historically, the United States experience with diversity education in public schools began as a corrective to unbalanced teaching about American history to an audience that included African Americans, immigrants and their children, in addition to the majority "white" population. Some urban communities in the US are today called "majority minority," meaning that no group has more than a demographic plurality. Demands for inclusion have partly driven multicultural education, but educators have supported these demands at all levels. In world cultures and civilizations curriculum, the corrective drive came from advocates of international or global education responding to Cold War competition from the Soviet Union, and from immigrant and indigenous groups who wished to find representations of their cultures in the curriculum and textbooks. They argued, and continue to insist, that the account of western civilization has been incomplete because it neglects broad regions of the world, and inaccurate in assigning most of the credit for human progress to European achievements. Between the 1960s and 1990s, coverage of US history came to include not only a great deal more content on non-white

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[9] Eurydice Network Databases, "Eurybase 2005: Eurydice Database on Education Systems in Europe," descriptive information on school systems by country, retrieved on 2/13/06 at http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset_eurybase.html .

Americans, but in world history and geography courses, the number of non-Western cultures or civilizations (a contested designation) covered in the courses and commercially produced textbooks increased dramatically. Not only were more cultures mentioned, but multiple chapters on major civilizations such as those in India and China followed their chronological development from ancient to modern times. By the late 1980s, critics had begun to claim that the narrative of Western civilization was getting lost in this broadened narrative of world history. Contrary to the critics' claims, however, European history still holds a dominant position, nearly monopolizing coverage of the period after 1500 C.E. As subsequent revisions of world history programs added still more cultures and regions (such as Islam, Africa, pre-Columbian America, Southeast Asia, and the Far East and Central Asia), critics expressed fear that students would no longer be able to appreciate the unique contribution of western civilization to the world. By the same token, advocates of multiculturalism were unsatisfied because the coverage of non-Western cultures often seemed shallow and formulaic.

In the social studies battles of the Culture Wars, no one was satisfied. The perception of a fragmented curriculum because of multicultural inclusions offers an instructive study of the problems inherent in determining what students should study about the world, and why. The model of multicultural education described above represents a corrective and transition from the exclusivist model that preceded it. The barrage of criticism on both sides of the multiculturalism debate indicates that it cannot be viewed as a stable model with a future. Multiculturalism as a purely additive model becomes a zero-sum game for curriculum time, official attention and scarce education resources. Multiculturalism as a transformative model, in which students would learn various versions of history from multicultural perspectives, is too complex and contested to be viable.

There is no agreed rationale that justifies a certain amount or distribution of multicultural content in a given school, district, state or national curriculum. If the rationale is based on allowing students to "see themselves" in study of the world as a motivation to learn more effectively, then critics might ask why it is necessary for others to see them there at the same time. Multicultural arguments maintain that demographic diversity in a given community indicates the need to live in tolerance together by learning about one another's cultures. That rationale is valid to a point, but does not address two major issues: first, should demographically homogeneous classrooms learn less about other cultures? If not, what academic rationale can be marshaled for learning about world cultures and diverse communities at home? Surely the best reason to study about other cultures is because (1) they make up most of the world population, and (2) study of world history does not make sense without and understanding of regions outside the Mediterranean Basin and Europe. Not even European history makes sense without them.

Apart from study of the world and the nation, Germany and some other countries practice an alternative model for diversity education, one in which students are allowed to receive instruction in their native language, including study of their heritage and history. It would be difficult, however, to provide coverage of all ethnic and linguistic populations that reside in Germany, and certainly not in an average urban community in the US, for example. It only works where the number of groups is small and concentrated in certain schools. On the other hand, providing cultural exposure to each group in isolation does not meet the challenge of effective cross-cultural understanding. It is merely a different type of

additive model, one that must sharply limit the number of students and the number of groups it could serve, and one that would vary widely in coverage across the German or other national landscape.

Wars over social studies education have devolved into a contest between those who think that the unity of society and integrity of culture can only be ensured by focusing students' attention on the dominant or host culture in the particular nation-state, and those who believe that the only way to guarantee effective social participation across society is to provide significant amounts of content on each constituent group present in society. To the extent that conflicts between groups have defined the national past, making room for multiple perspectives becomes that much more contentious. As the number of groups to be represented increases, the sense that the curriculum is being divided into ever finer slices results in high-volume protest, both by those still left out, and by those who feel that the national narrative is getting lost. Locked in a zero-sum game, no one is satisfied with the outcome. Since it is not likely that critics could prevail upon the public education system to return to a pre-multiculturalist, unitary focus on the shared heritage of a dominant culture, there is a pronounced need for a more effective model of diversity education. An integrative, rather than additive model is needed, that employs a narrative representing the diversity of the human experience, but one that is based on a sound academic rationale. Current historical scholarship offers such a sound rationale as a foundation for inclusion: if a topic or region is included, it is because the period, or world history as a whole, cannot be adequately understood without its inclusion. Alternatively, the historical study of a particular topic might be less than historically decisive, but its uniqueness or local significance recommends it for study of how the human story gets discovered and told. Such a model would enhance the coverage of all cultures it covers simultaneously, contributing to broad understanding of the diversity of human history and its common human achievements. World history education has not kept pace with historical scholarship, partly because the rationales used to demand more thorough coverage were not academic ones. It is clear, however, that historians' views of world history have steadily increased the breadth of coverage and understanding of the roles played by major civilizations and other societies. (See Appendix, Figure 1.) Until recently, the gap between scholarship and history education had not translated advances in research and theory into a teachable model for world history. The challenge involved both structure and content.

What Went Wrong with History Education?

Historians had generally organized survey courses, and even to some extent the field of historical inquiry, around discrete civilizations, considered in linear sequence. The original narrative of world history that emerged during the past century or so traced the roots of Western civilization from its Biblical and Classical roots through the medieval, pre-modern and modern periods. In time, this sequence was expanded to include non-Western civilizations such as existed in India, China, pre-Columbian America, Africa and Southwest Asia. To this day the bifurcation between "Western" and "non-Western" cultures persists in curriculum discussions which concentrate on the calibration of how much content on each should be in the course. A related problem emerged because the organizing principle for the course was "the civilization"; unless a regional society could be classified as a civilization, it could find no place in the course. Debates over the worthiness of African, Southeast Asian, Australian, or Polynesian societies to bear this title

led to acrimonious debates. Another serious problem was the difficulty of arranging coverage of civilizations in the textbook's table of contents. A roughly chronological organization was chosen, in which the Western civilization sequence remained intact, while insertion of non-Western civilizations was more random. The narrative of European history reached the Middle Ages in some textbooks, when the abrupt insertion of the sole chapter on African history took students back in time to thousands of years B.C.E. A linear sequence gave young students the impression, however, that the sequence in which the chapters were presented was the sequence in which history took place. Anomalies such as covering the Crusades before students learned about Islam, or covering the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople before the Turkic migrations made for a rough ride through world history. Interestingly, the most chronologically consistent, detailed, and cohesive coverage in these textbooks and courses has been the narrative of Western civilization. As for the non-West, while it was gradually included, it was not effectively or accurately included. Pedagogically, the practice of teaching chronology through a linear sequence of discrete civilizations was faulty at best. There was, furthermore, little room for teaching interactions among civilizations that existed during the same time period. (See Appendix, Figure 2).

The most significant flaw in this linear, self-contained coverage of civilizations was its disregard for chronological accuracy and geographic comprehensiveness—in short—it made for poor teaching of historical skills. It also has the effect of raising the prominence of Western civilization over that of all other groups. This was perhaps not intentional, but stemmed from the fact that the default standard for teaching about the world emerged through a gradual, corrective, additive process that did not fully integrate the rest of the world's cultures and civilizations into the narrative. It has made for poor pedagogy and poor diversity education, because the model satisfies neither critics nor advocates of multiculturalism, nor those historians and geographers who are interested in effective teaching of those disciplines.

An Inclusive Model for Teaching About the World

An alternative model for teaching world history has emerged over the past fifteen years, and it has begun to be implemented in US public and private schools. The search for a new model also involved returning history and geography to the dominant position in social studies programs in the US. It also involved re-structuring both national history courses and world history/geography courses. This model emerged from professional historians' research in world history and teaching collegiate survey courses in world history. The new world history model emerged with the expansion of historical research beyond professional historians' traditionally narrow specializations, when it began to address larger questions of world-historical significance. The need for a new teaching model grew with the expansion of this field.[10] World history scholars have long questioned the historical validity of civilizations as the most prominent unit of inquiry, and searched

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[10] Three recent books provide an overview of scholarly developments in world history: Edmund Burke III, ed., Marshall G.S. Hodgson's *Rethinking World History: Essays on Europe, Islam and World History* (Cambridge University Press, 1993); Ross E. Dunn, *The New World History: A Teacher's Companion* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000); and Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), in addition to dozens of monographs exploring specific issues in world history, and a growing body of collegiate and pre-collegiate world history textbooks on this model.

for another organizing principle. World history scholarship itself expanded into various frameworks of inquiry at different scales of time and space. For purposes of structuring world history survey courses, however, the new unit of organization that emerged was the global era (see diagram). The survey course was periodized into generally eight or nine eras – progressively shorter in length as the course moved toward the present. These eras were characterized by certain themes of world historical importance, such as the emergence of agricultural and pastoral societies, classical civilizations, intensified hemispheric interactions, and the emergence of the first global age, for example.

This new structure for world survey courses is highly significant as a civic framework for teaching about the world, one that is academically rigorous for the study of history, and pedagogically valid for acquisition of historical thinking skills. From a global civic perspective, it provides a neutral, human-centered framework for the study of history in schools, one which is both elegantly simple and geographically as well as chronologically comprehensive. It does not place one civilization over the others, nor does it require classification of any society covered under the dubious category of "civilization" or something other than that. Within this framework of global eras, topics in the standard curriculum can be effectively integrated into teaching units based on coverage of individual societies, civilizations, major historical processes such as migrations, trade, and environmental change. Processes that cannot be understood within the narrow framework of a single culture or territorial civilization, such as the spread of religions, can be studied in their broadest geographic and chronological context. Human achievements, a hallmark of the drive to recognize diverse cultural contributions to history, can be covered in the context of interactions among cultures over time. Based on historical evidence of diffusion, achievements such as writing, printing, or scientific knowledge in astronomy, mathematics and medicine, for example, may be traced to the multiple cultures that contributed to its development and transfer at different times. This contrasts with the contentious process of assigning such achievements exclusively to one civilization or another. The narrative of exchange among cultures provides a more historically accurate framework for understanding how major advancements have been made in increments over time, and how they were disseminated through the process of cultural encounters of many kinds. Such diversity education is driven not by politics, but by the presentation of historical evidence.

World historical scholarship is undergoing a worldwide renaissance, one that is reframing questions, examining human and natural history at larger scales, as well as uncovering interactions at a fine level of detail, adding depth to the story of scientific and technological transfers over time and space, and lending these narratives a complexity that is not only much more inclusive, but which invites the curiosity that engenders lifelong learning as well as cultivating academic skills. World history scholarship has informed the writing of intermediate and secondary curriculum, and has brought with it, an new collaboration between world historians and geographers and teachers in primary, elementary and secondary education. It is unusual for such a scholarly movement to find its way into the schools in a relatively short period of time, but it can be documented that the process is well underway. Two indicators of this progress are publication of the *National Standards for History*,[11] and introduction of an Advanced Placement (AP) world

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[11] The National Standards for World History can be viewed in full text version at the National Center for History in the Schools at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) at a web site that includes teaching resoureces and other links at http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/world-standards5-12.html .

history course, which grants college credit through a College Board testing program. In the late 1990s, the College Board worked with historians to develop the new AP world history program that was modeled on the which experienced the most rapid growth in enrollment that the College Board had ever seen.[12] During the years after publication of the *National Standards for History*, a plurality of states adopted standards for history that incorporate either the same chronological framework of world eras, or a modified version of it. This is particularly significant in view of the harsh criticism to which the National Standards for US History were subjected in the media. With this more inclusive and human-centered model for teaching young students about the world in the process of being implemented through the development of teaching resources and classroom praxis, it should be considered for dissemination in schools worldwide.

Application of the World History Model to International Education

It has been shown how contentious battles over curricular inclusion of cultural content can be. Political pressure or demographic diversity alone does not offer an uncontroversial rationale. If one could argue, in contrast, that a the new world history model ought to replace the civilization-centered model of decades past because it is more historically accurate, more geographically comprehensive, and more pedagogically effective in terms of skill development and critical thinking, then the obstacles to its implementation should be fewer. As has been shown above, the contentiousness of designing diversity education programs around multicultural demands and constituency politics is neither historically nor demographically valid as a criteria for curriculum design. Decades ago, introduction of western civilizations courses in the guise of world history proceeded as part of the dissemination of colonial education systems such as the British and the French. The typical answer to the dominance of European-centered history courses has been the demand to replace them with alternatively centrist curricula. Afrocentrism, Islamocentrism, and Sinocentrism are historical alternatives that reflect a competitive model of education about the world. Such models, being exclusivist, cannot even be combined into an additive model. On the other hand, the dominant role of sequential and repetitive national history courses in most nation-states' social studies curricula perpetuates the myopic education of succeeding generations. Teaching about the nation in a thorough manner need not be displaced by sound and inclusive teaching about the world. To the contrary, courses in middle and secondary grades that teach students about the interconnectedness of human cultures—based on overwhelming and fascinating evidence from historical research across the globe—can provide a fuller picture of each individual culture, and of the world as a whole.

Teacher training and curriculum development are important components of introducing sound, inclusive education about global history. The most important dividend in establishing an effective curriculum development process for each nation's curriculum reform effort, however, is the collaboration between scholars of history—who stand to learn a great deal about pedagogy—and teachers of children in primary, elementary and

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[12] See http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/sub_worldhist.html?worldhist for the course description and advisory board members.

secondary grades—who stand to learn a great deal about the fascinating content of history, and spread their infectious enthusiasm to their colleagues and students.[13]

Teaching about religion and civic guidelines for its academic study

Teaching about religions in human history is a topic that benefits greatly from the new world history's framework of global eras. In the traditional model, religions have been viewed narrowly as a function of one civilization or another. This is a side-effect of the outdated manner of viewing world history through the lens of civilizations alone. Historically, the major world religions cannot be encompassed by study of their association with the rise and fall of civilizations, their territorial empires, or their dynastic histories. The spread of world religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism along the trade routes of Asia, the spread of Judaism through migration across a significant area of the eastern, then the western hemispheres, and the spread of Christianity and Islam into Europe, Asia and Africa, continuing to the Americas after 1500, is a process of tremendous world-historical significance and interest that cannot be encompassed in any case by focusing solely on territorial empires and their successor states and associated cultural hearths. The world history model described above allows classroom study of societies and the spaces between them, of places, persons and artifacts (such as architecture, books, artwork and influences) as well as human practices (pilgrimage, study and its dissemination) that offer evidence of continuous interactions among societies.

Among the areas where consensus may be located among educators and public education policy circles is the fact that religion is a significant topic of study, both for understanding the history and culture of the nation and the world. It is, in short, an agreed part of history. To return to the United States as a case study, his was not always a matter of easy consensus. During the 1950s, religion was not a subject to be discussed with ease in the schools. The US Constitution clearly lays out, in the "establishment clause" of the First Amendment (Bill of Rights), *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…"* This was sometimes understood to mean that schools had to avoid the topic, and certainly could not empower teachers to discuss it in class. During the same era, however, in enclaves across the US, school prayer took place quite as a matter of course, and it was most often denominational, not ecumenical, in nature. Schools held Christmas pageants and celebrated or commemorated Christian religious holidays as a matter of course. Civil liberties organizations elevated courst cases brought by parents who objected to this de facto establishment of religion in the school, and over the course of decades, these cases clarified both constitutionally appropriate involvement of religion in the curriculum, and appropriate roles for private, voluntary religious practice and accommodations to private, voluntary religious practice in the schools.

This two-tiered approach to the constitutionally permissible involvement of religion in secular, civic space has been developed and disseminated over the past five decades, and has resulted in development of policy, praxis, and precedent that is now deeply

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[13] An interesting effort to disseminate teaching materials and expertise is Teachers Across Borders (http://www.teachersacrossborders.org/index.htm), a non-profit organization founded by Heidi Roupp, former President of the World History Association (www.theWHA.org which is affiliated with the American Historical Association), a leading supporter of world history education and scholarship which is increasing its international reach through conferences and affiliates.

institutionalized in US public schools. The first tier of this new status quo is the development of constitutional guidelines for teaching about religion in the schools. These guidelines were the work of theologians in collaboration with constitutional lawyers, whose work was incorporated into a series of consensus documents signed by various religious, civic and educational organizations under the aegis of the First Amendment Center and its predecessors.[14] The second tier of the status quo on religion in public education is the issue of religious accommodation in the schools, which includes matters such as allowing students release time for religious holidays, the wearing of religiously mandated articles of clothing, provision of time and space for voluntary prayer, extracurricular religious clubs, and involving religious beliefs in graded schoolwork. Many school systems serving religiously diverse populations have produced model policies for such accommodation.[15] The excerpt below outlines the basic guidelines for content on religion in the context of "natural inclusion," meaning that study of religions may be included wherever it relates to a topic that is part of the required curriculum. Once included, the guidelines for discussion, classroom activities and readings (including primary sources such as scripture) are as follows:

Excerpt from Charles C. Haynes, *A Teacher's Guide to Religion in the Public Schools* (First Amendment Center, 1999), copies of which have been distributed to school principals and superintendents across the US by the US Department of Education under the Clinton administration, in addition to distribution through various civic, professional and educational activities.

"Encouraged by the new consensus, public schools are now beginning to include more teaching about religion in the curriculum. In the social studies especially, the question is no longer "Should I teach about religion?" but rather "How should I do it?" The answer to the "how" question begins with a clear understanding of the crucial difference between the teaching *of* religion (religious education or indoctrination) and teaching *about* religion. "Religion in the Public School Curriculum," the guidelines issued by 17 religious and educational organizations, summarizes the distinction this way:
- The school's approach to religion is *academic*, not *devotional*.
- The school strives for student *awareness* of religions, but does not press for student *acceptance* of any religion.
- The school sponsors *study* about religion, not the *practice* of religion.
- The school may *expose* students to a diversity of religious views, but may not *impose* any particular view.
- The school *educates* about all religions; it does not *promote* or *denigrate* religion.
- The school *informs* students about various beliefs; it does not seek to *conform* students to any particular belief."

These basic principles are elaborated in detailed resource guides produced by the First Amendment Center. The patient, compassionate, energetic and hands-on engagement of Charles Haynes and the First Amendment Center over more than two decades has resulted in broad dissemination and understanding of these guidelines and principles in the civic

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[14] An overview of the issues and milestones in this development may be obtained from First Amendment Center publications, which describe the history in detail, outline the arguments for inclusion , the status of their dissemination and implementation in the schools, and also describe and prescribe the guidelines themselves for teachers, administrators and parents on a range of issues including both content and accommodation to voluntary religious practice in the schools. These publications may be read in full online text under the heading "Religious Liberty" at http://www.fac.org/about.aspx?item=FAC_publications . The most comprehensive document of the group is Finding Common Ground, a resource guide on both teaching about religion and religious accommodation in the public schools, which also describes the history of the process and reproduces various milestone documents on First Amendment issues.

[15] One such model policy document of many across the US is from the Fairfax County Public School system in northern Virginia, "Guidelines for Religious Activities for Students," which includes policies on allowing clothing, release time, modifications for physical education attire and activities, and prayer. The document may be retrieved at http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/oec/relguide.htm .

and educational arena, which may be documented through the presence of school system policies, professional educational organizations' positions, and academic standards across the US.[16] Engagement of civic organizations, review of textbooks, teacher training projects, conflict resolution in communities where issues have arisen, and work with the legal community have all contributed to reaching constructive understanding on religion in public life in the US.

The work that remains to be done in education lies in two areas: (1) creating a "comfort zone" for teachers who engage students in learning about religion both by making knowledge and pedagogy on the subject available to them; (2) working with the companies and organizations that produce instructional resources on world religions to raise the level of accuracy and scholarship reflected in the textbooks. The essence of the matter in teaching about religion is portraying the beliefs, practices and traditions of these faiths as their adherents understand them. The key to accomplishing this feat, without making truth claims, is to use attributive statements (Christians believe that…) which create a wall of separation between the reader and the believer. By the same token, however, it is possible to engage with "our deepest differences" on an intimate and accurate basis through this simple mechanism. This also goes far toward solving the dilemma that arises when teachers or textbook writers rely on a model of academic secularism as if it were a neutral voice. Academic secularism, in the model of the guidelines, is itself a point of view or philosophy, and one which often does more to "explain away" religion with anthropological and sociological reductionism than it represents the historical and contemporary beliefs that have animated followers. Oftentimes, without the involvement of practitioners of the faiths in developing or reviewing these materials, what results is barely recognizable to its adherents. Coverage of Islam in textbooks has often involved laughable or pitiful renderings based one-sidedly on outdated Orientalist works, and until recently, the considerable advances in English-language scholarship had been ignored by textbook writing teams. The situation has gradually improved over the past decade or so, but has experienced further erosion since September 11, 2001. In the US today, there is considerable ongoing revision of the way Hinduism is taught in the textbooks, under the urging of some members of the Hindu community and some scholars, though the process has proven quite internally contentious. Between the guidelines described above and elaborated in various additional documents, and attention to sound teaching of history and recourse to good scholarship, these problems can be addressed with fairness and balance. It is important to recall that the average secondary teacher may be able to look out over the rows of desks and find five or six world faiths are represented in the students sitting there. A specialized segment of interfaith work in fact involves bringing guest speakers to classrooms and teacher training programs sponsored by public schools, private schools, professional organizations, and university outreach programs.[17]

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[16] See also Teaching About Religion in National and State Social Studies Standards, (Council on Islamic Education, First Amendment Center, 2000) and the position statements of the National Council for Social Studies at http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/religion/ and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development under "religion" in the ASCD position paper *What We Believe* retrieved at http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/newsandissues/What%20We%20Believe/WhatWeBelieve.pdf .

[17] Among the institutions involved in this effort are The Pluralism Project at Harvard University (www.pluralism.org), which now has affiliates in many states, and the Program in Religion and Secondary Education at Harvard and several other colleges that offer teacher certificate programs in religious studies;

Teaching Religion and Religious Education: a preliminary discussion

The issue of religious education within confessional traditions is one that lies at the heart of the effort to build bridges across cultural divides today. Teaching religion from a confessional perspective takes place in a variety of settings around the world, and is not – despite media portrayals since 9/11 – merely a problem of Muslim religious instruction. Nor does Muslim religious instruction present a uniform picture, any more than Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, or any other religious group's teaching of its own adherents and their offspring present a unified picture. Similarly, analysis of the "problem" of religious instruction must take these differences into account. Finally, the old adage that one can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar applies here, since persuasion is more likely to result in a positive outcome for change than attempts at coercion, no matter which of the world faiths is involved.

At this preliminary stage of the research effort for the Alliance of Civilizations, it will only be possible to describe some settings in which religious instruction occurs, to point out trends that might be documented with further research, and to suggest approaches that might move in the direction of the goal of mutual recognition by adherents of the world's faiths. It will remain for later stages of research to present a more comprehensive survey and to suggest recommendations.

The purpose of religious instruction from a confessional point of view is to reproduce basic or advanced knowledge of the beliefs, practices, traditions, moral principles, laws and values of the faith in a manner that attracts and retains its adherents within the faith. Depending upon where this instruction takes place, this may be a more or less daunting task. In cosmopolitan, secular settings, or in places where the majority of people follow a different faith, or no faith at all, such instruction will take on a different complexion than in a rural, religiously homogeneous setting in which the students are related to members of their faith by family and traditional bonds. In settings where ethnic or religious strife is ongoing or has left recent scars, religious instruction may take on an oppositional quality. It also makes a difference whether religious teachers are funded by private donations or state sponsorship, where instruction takes place in a public or private school, or in a house of worship. The relative prosperity and education level of the community in which and for which religious instruction takes place is also a factor; in the case of a minority faith whose adherents are comparatively poor in the midst of a wealthy community of believers in a different, majority faith, will set a different tone than one where the children of prospering immigrants, or converts from mainstream society conduct religious education classes. The surrounding political and social environment is a crucial factor, to the degree that it may be politically and culturally repressive, or tolerant enough that freedom of worship is secured by law, or merely by temporary and tenuous sufferance.

It is necessary to place this spectrum of scenarios into play before formulating goals and objectives related to ideal forms of confessional religious instruction, or considering specific remedies that might otherwise be mistakenly applied as if one size could be made to fit all. Having laid out a wide range of scenarios, however, it might be possible to cite a few goals that would be desirable attributes of religious instruction in all

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programs for teachers are listed on the American Academy of Religion (AAR) teaching page at http://www.aarweb.org/teaching/ris/training.asp ; the Council on Islamic Education, Fountain Valley CA, (www.cie.org) provides information, training, and teaching resources on religion using a framework based on historical research, the First Amendment Center guidelines and academic standards.

settings, whether they be easily achievable or not. The first goal is that religious teachers – whether paid or volunteer, laypersons or trained leaders – be well educated in the tenets of their faith, and that they also possess a good grasp of general knowledge. One might also wish them to be blessed with wisdom, common sense and compassion for their students, not to mention an optimistic frame of mind. The second goal is that religious teachers possess a working knowledge of and respect for other faiths, informed as much by knowledge of shared values as of contrasting beliefs. Having described the variety of situations in which religious education takes place above, these two goals might seem nearly unattainable, but certainly worth working toward.

In considering ways to improve religious instruction among faith groups, it will be helpful to locate examples of best practices, trends and efforts among religious groups. It will not suffice to point the finger of accusation at any one group for intentionally teaching hatred and intolerance in the guise of affirming one's own faith. The existence of anti-religious or anti-clerical sentiment in general, and the undisputed presence of Islamophobia, anti-Semitism (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all being Semitic in origin, one must recall), and anti-Christian sentiment being recognized, these states of mind and discourse must have their roots to at least some degree in wrong-headed education or failed instruction.

One hope toward improving this situation lies in interfaith work, which is ongoing wherever reasonable and wise persons of faith live close to one another. In Western countries, interfaith councils exist in most major cities, and smaller initiatives, as well as interdenominational work, exist as well. The spread of such organizations and the interfaith cooperation taking place at the international level, set the tone for religious leadership in all of the faith groups that participate. The involvement of youth and schools in interfaith dialogues and community service activities will be reflected in the tone and content of educational activities as well.[18]

As in politics, sunshine may be the best purifier. Exposing the texts used to teach children about their religion should not be a matter of dark accusation against one group or the other, but a concerted effort by concerned religious leaders of all the faiths to re-examine the methods and materials used to teach the young about their own faith and the faith of others, and to assess whether they serve the interests of their students, their community and the cause of global understanding. Religious leaders, in interfaith conferences, ought to consider training teachers of religion about other faiths, and incorporating instruction about common values as well as respectful and accurate discussion of doctrinal differences.

The content of religious instruction has been a matter of ongoing discussion among members of the faith for some time. One reason for this is the extraordinary challenge to keeping youth in the fold of religion in the face of materialistic, hedonistic distractions of incessant commercialization to which all are subjected with increasing intensity. In contrast, religious instruction has often been accused of situational irrelevancy and excessive focus on the formalities of worship and rigid recitations of do's and don'ts (predominantly the latter, in the view of many young persons). Under pressure of

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[18] A large roster of interfaith organizations may be viewed at The International Interfaith Center, based in the UK, on the organization's resources web page at http://www.interfaith-center.org/resource.htm . The North American Interfaith Network http://www.nain.org/links/interfaith.htm has a similar resource list with some overlap. It also includes the popular online forum www.beliefnet.com .

competition for attention from non-religious forces, some religious teachers may be ill prepared to inspire, and may search for targets of blame, leveling shrill accusations against perceived enemies. Such negative, externalizing arguments may be thrown like frayed ropes trying to bridge across the breach with their followers. Intelligent appeals based on improved knowledge of the faith, in contrast, would emphasize positive actions and might cultivate the joining of hands within and across faith boundaries rather than the pointing of fingers.

As in so-called secular education, religious educators of various faiths, including Islam, have already been attempting to enlist improved methodologies of instruction, engaging students in inquiry and critical thinking rather than rote learning for decades and longer. Memorization has its place in the transmission of religious sources and scriptures, but there is an emerging consensus that students should grasp the meaning and delve into the interpretation of what they are memorizing. Evidence of this ongoing discussion among religious leaders of many faiths concerning the commitment and of their followers and the need to educate them may be found in changes in styles of preaching and worship services, social services and community outreach efforts reaching back to itinerant missionaries and preachers in Asia long ago among Buddhists and Sufis on the Silk Roads, and in the early United States with Methodist circuit riders, to cite two distant examples. Circuit riding today has reached all faiths over the Internet.

In the Muslim community, to cite one example among many, efforts have been ongoing for decades with the purpose of reforming religious education (often called Islamic Studies) in order to make it more relevant to the needs of modern youth, and to find a workable balance between traditional and innovative methods of instruction. Much of this work has taken place among Muslims who had emigrated to Western countries after World War II. Examples are the Islamic Foundation (www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/) established in 1973, Iqra' International Educational Foundation established in 1983, the International Board of Educational Research and Resources (IBERR) (www.iberr.org) established out of a series of international conferences between 1977 and 1987 to improve religious education, for the purposes of producing curriculum and instructional materials for Muslim youth. Today, a variety of online retailers have made an array of products for families and school programs easily available. Instructional materials in Islamic studies, history, heritage, Arabic language and entertainment-with-a-purpose are produced and marketed internationally. The existence of media distributors for over a decade attests to the demand for these products among Muslims as educational media, without making any claims of uniform quality of these resources, but certainly attesting to their open availability to anyone who would like to engage in researching their content.[19]

State-sponsored religious education and policy

Issues relating to religious education as a part of national curricula are very different from free-market, voluntary and non-profit institutional efforts among immigrant and indigenous or convert populations in Western countries. It is important to note that historically, religious education did not become a function for state control or sponsorship until the modern period. Prior to that, and with a transition period under colonial rule,

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[19] Among these distributors are Noorart (www.noorart.com), Astrolabe Islamic Media (www.astrolabe.com), and Sound Vision (www.soundvision.com), and the Muslim Students Association (MSA) has a compendium of Islamic booksellers at http://www.msa-natl.org/resources/Bookstores.htm l.

charitable religious foundations, or *waqf* (pl., *awqaf*) managed by ulama' (Muslim religious scholars) were the source of funding for schools and mosques from basic to advanced religious education.[20] With the founding of national education systems after independence, religious studies programs were created along with the rest of the curriculum in a charged atmosphere that included urgent calls for development with secular education systems as the spearhead, perceptions that religious traditionalism had been a factor in holding back Muslim social progress, the urgent task of shoring up national citizenship within sometimes uncomfortably drawn borders, while ensuring that the education system supported the regimes in power, or at least did not undermine them. Within this heady mixture, religious education content was distributed among various branches of knowledge and curricular core subjects, including Arabic language arts (readings from heritage literature), social studies (Islamic history), and formal religious studies (beliefs or '*aqida*, religious practice or *fiqh*, history of the Prophets, scriptural sources including hadith and Qur'anic memorization and explanation or *tafsir*).

While some research has been done on national curriculum content in Muslim countries, in addition to a considerable amount of media speculation and cherry-picking of individual cases since 9/11, much research work remains to be done before a fair assessment can be attempted, based on thorough study of instructional materials, teacher training and praxis, and curriculum policies. A sampling of analytical attention given to schoolbooks in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Pakistan, Indonesia and Egypt demonstrates the breadth of issues and viewpoints on this complex issue and its geographic and cultural range.[21]

The relationship of religious education to national states varies so widely as to defy easy categorization. In US schools, as described above, the Constitution does not permit confessional religious instruction in schools; it is the province of religious institutions only, and no state control is exercised over its content. In some European countries, in contrast, religious education is afforded time in the school schedule, but state-recognized religious entities are responsible for the content. This is the case in Germany, a national government that collects taxes on behalf of religious institutions. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Education Reform Act of 1988 foresees both religious instruction and daily worship.

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[20]Historical studies of Muslim regions widely attest to this phenomenon and to the bringing of the waqf system under state control during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but two representative English-language studies are Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vols. 2 &3 (University of Chicago Press, 1974) and Francis Robinson, "Knowledge, Its Transmission, and the Making of Muslim Societies," in Robinson, ed. *Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[21] Articles include several papers presented at the Library of Congress, 2002 conference "Teaching the Other: Muslims, Non-Muslims and the Stories They Teach," on Egyptian, Pakistani, Indonesian and Jordanian textbooks and instruction, retrieved at http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/0212/textbooks.html ;
Ayse Gul Altinay, Sabanci University, "Who is a good Turk?: The 'Ideal' Student according to Textbooks" International Human Rights Education and Textbook Research Symposium, Istanbul, 4/2004 retrieved at http://www.bianet.org/2004/05/01_eng/news33248.htm; Suparto, "Reforming Pesantren," *Inside Indonesia* (January-March 2004) retrieved at http://www.insideindonesia.org/edit77/p22-23suparto.html, Saleem H. Ali, "Islamic Education and Conflict: *Understanding the Madrassahs of Pakistan,"* University of Vermont and Brown University, USA, submitted for consideration to Oxford University Press, 8/2005, retrieved at http://www.uvm.edu/~envprog/madrassah/Ali-Madrassah-draft-8-15-05.pdf ; Nathan Brown, George Washington University, "Study of Palestinian Textbooks," (Foundation for Middle East Peace, Nov. 1, 2001), retrieved at http://www.fmep.org/analysis/palestinian_policy.html.

Religious education content is not part of the National Curriculum, and provisions for various faiths and sects, as well as opt-out provisions for parents and students make for a variegated reality that is subject to criticism. Comparative research on religious education in twenty European countries' conducted within the framework of the Intereuropean Commission on Church and School reveals a "multi-layered" mix of education "into religion, education about religion, learning from religion," with most schools providing one or all of these types within public education.[22] In nations formerly under Soviet rule, the legacy of state suppression or discouragement of religion is a factor affecting attitudes and content on religious education today. Such countries include Muslim majority nations of Central Asia as well as those in eastern Europe with Muslim populations. Attempts to meaningfully evaluate the instructional materials used in these schools must take these factors into account in order to approach any conclusions based on more universal goals.

Civic education efforts

Beginning perhaps with the fall of the Soviet Union, and continuing through other crises to the present, interest has grown in educational programs whose objective was cultivation of competent and responsible citizens in democratic political systems. These programs extend from the elementary to the collegiate level and into community and adult education. These programs are based on recognition in established and emerging democracies that democracy can only be sustained by ongoing efforts to implant its values and maintain the skills to support an appropriate political culture for democracy.
While civic education has been part of national curricula in the past, networks of educators have begun to share experiences and cooperate to promote more effective practice at all levels. Governments' support for international programs has grown during the past decade, and with the increased awareness of the need to expand democracy to regions where it has been denied or left unnurtured, several programs have expanded their reach to Central Asia, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, as well as Latin America.

In Western Europe, the German Federal Center for Civic Education has a record of efforts to promote education for democracy as a part of its unification efforts in Germany. Its efforts also extend to other Western European nations and in Eastern Europe and other newly independent states. The Center for Civic Education (The Center), which wrote the US National Standards for Civic and Government, has participated in this network. The European Union, the Council of Europe, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and the Soros Foundation have supported these programs. One of the widest reaching programs is Civitas International, affiliated with The Center, with funding from the United States Information Agency, an arm of the US State Department, developed *Civitas: A Framework for Civic Education*, a resource for civic educators in the United States that is used internationally as well. Civitas has aided in establishing 90 centers throughout the world as members of Civitas International with the online network Civnet (www.civnet.org) linking civic educators throughout the world. Its International Civic Education Exchange Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education with the cooperation of the U.S. Department of State.

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[22] Peter Schreiner of the Comenius-Institut/Germany presented the paper *Religious Education in Europe*
At Oslo University, September 8, 2005, retrieved 2/15/06 at http://resources.eun.org/etwinning/europa2.pdf

John Patrick, Executive Director of the Social Studies Development Center at Indiana University at Bloomington, part of The Center's Civitas Exchange Program network, outlined a framework for influencing civic education in constitutional democracies. In brief, several trends in civic education that have become embodied in Civitas projects around the world are the following:[23]

- Civic education is based on the interrelated components of civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic virtues.

- Core concepts form the systematic content of civic education, including popular sovereignty, individual rights, the common good, authority, justice, freedom, constitutionalism, rule of law, and representative democracy.

- Case studies are used to bring to life these core concepts through application to familiar situations and analysis to support the development of decision-making skills, helping students to identify issues, to examine alternative choices and their consequences , and to defending their positions.

- Comparative and international analysis of government and citizenship helps deepen students' understanding of their own democratic institutions while expanding their knowledge of democratic principles. Comparison also diminishes the focus on ethnocentrism, and allows them to consider various insitutional models.

- Cooperative learning activities support development of participatory skills and civic virtues, including   leadership ability, conflict resolution, compromise, negotiation, and constructive criticism, while practicing toleration, civility, and building trust.

- Use of literature or story-telling helps hold interest and point out role models of the concepts and virtues that are learning goals of the program and help students understand the meaning and importance of morality in civic life.

- Active learning rather than rote memorization institutional hierarchies involves students in their acquisition of knowledge, skills, and virtues and practices the citizenship skills needed to make a constitutional democracy work.

- Content and process are joined in teaching and learning of civic knowledge, skills, and virtues to achieve both intellectual and participatory objectives, so that learners practice thinking critically and model effective action, based on virtuous response to public issues, weighed through the decision-making process.

Since 9/11, the US Department of State has given special emphasis to the process of democratization in Muslim countries. Under the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), an "education pillar" includes support for programs aimed at reforming the overall quality and content of national education systems in the Middle East have come to include civic education projects. The Center for Civic Education and the Arab Civitas network have established a region-wide program aimed at introducing effective citizenship

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[23] Charles N. Quigley, "Global Trends in Civic Education," presented at the Seminar for the Needs for New Indonesian Civic Education, Center for Indonesian Civic Education (CICED), March 2000, in Bandung, Indonesia, retrieved at http://www.civiced.org/articles_indonesia.html .

education as part of education reform in the schools. Instructional materials using the framework above have been translated and adapted for each of the participating countries.

A model program in this vein is being conducted by The Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) and Street Law, in a project entitled Islam and Democracy. Supported in part by US State Department funding, Islam and Democracy takes the framework for civic education out of the purely pedagogical realm and incorporates it into a process of civil society consensus-building. The CSID's partner, Street Law Inc., has carried out participatory education about law, democracy, and human rights for over 30 years, beginning its international programs with co-development of a human rights text in South Africa entitled "Democracy For All," with human rights and democracy-building activities in more than 30 countries.[24] The crucial difference in the Islam and Democracy model program is that is was not based on translating or adapting materials from the US or Europe and injecting them cold into the civic environment. Instead, the partners produced civic education teaching materials written by Arab writers, through a process of broad involvement and dialogue among various stakeholders in Arab society. . Four countries—Morocco, Algeria, Jordan and Egypt—were chosen, and through a network of contacts, a wide range of Islamist and secularist groups, professional organizations (lawyers, engineers, etc.), women's groups, Boy and Girl Scout chapters and religious education organizations, among others were brought into an inclusive, regional training program and intellectual forum whose purpose is to build bridges among groups in Arab civil society and achieve in consensus surrounding shared interests, concepts and compatibility of ideas among secularist positions, and build awareness of the congruence between Islamic and democratic principles. The civic education workshops were important participatory activities in themselves that involved dozens of civic leaders who could work with their organizations to train others. The process also resulted in selection of a team of eight authors who participated in the forum and utilize the civil education framework to produce the Arabic-language training manual *Islam and Democracy: Toward Effective Citizenship* (*Al-Islam wal Dimokratiyah: Nahw Muwataniyah Fa'aliyah*). The eight writers are recognized leaders, activists and scholars in their own right, a selection process that adds weight to the final product and helps ensure that further phases of the work attain a high profile. Three, for example, are members of parliament from Morocco, Algeria and Jordan. The long-term goal is to utilize these instructional materials as part of further participatory workshops in Muslim countries to continue the process of citizenship education in Arab countries and beyond, building on the group of nearly a hundred trainees across the region.[25]

It is clear from the sponsorship and international scope of these civil society initiatives that they represent an important forum for the exchange of ideas and educational efforts in the schools and beyond. It is important that they remain relevant to the societies into which they are transplanted, however, and that they take into account local conditions, cultural and religious elements and the political context, if they are to succeed.

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[24] Street Law, Inc. programs are described at http://www.streetlaw.org/ .

[25] The Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy web page describing this civic education project was retrieved at http://www.csidonline.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=139&Itemid=1 .

Crossroads of structure and content issues: Higher education reform and integration of curriculum

Among the hallmarks of recent achievements in global scholarship has been the success of interdisciplinary studies in bringing advancements in knowledge. A common feature in research over the past fifty years has been the connections among formerly discrete fields of study. Curriculum reform efforts have also pointed out the need to teach the core subjects, and disciplines within the core subjects, in less isolated ways. Curriculum reform at many levels of the education system has raised discussion not only about shortening the lag for incorporating new knowledge into school classrooms, but also tempering the mass of new information by restructuring the teaching of subjects to facilitate inquiry and to create meaning for the learner. A simple phrase that captures this objective is "making cross-curricular connections." Many of these ideas have found their way into education reform efforts that encourage learner participation, use of high-tech instructional resources, and critical/analytical thinking skills as part of knowledge acquisition.

A few decades ago, it was customary to break up instruction in science, for example, into discrete segments, and distribute these across the school schedule. For example, a middle school student might take a little biology on Monday, physics on Tuesday, Chemistry on Wednesday, and so on. Mathematics was broken up into arithmetic, algebra, geometry and trigonometry, for example. This practice spilled over into language instruction, with handwriting, spelling, reading, and writing divided, or only loosely connected into separate programs. Even Islamic studies was represented to students through discrete text booklets for 'aqida, hadith, Qur'an, and fiqh. In school systems whose semesters were punctuated by exams, this could result in a staggering marathon of test-taking. Gateway testing that determined progression through the system and on into vocational and collegiate opportunities kept fewer students plodding through it than those disadvantaged or resistant students who gave up on the system. Rethinking the menu of content mastery required of a student today has involved striving for integration as a tool for greater efficiency. Instead of rigid disciplines, curriculum frameworks often refer to "strands" which are incorporated from the earliest grades onward. It is possible, in this model, to teach algebraic concepts to kindergarten students at a simple level, and to build on these ideas up to the formal study of algebra. Language arts instruction is increasingly viewed not as a school subject by itself, but as a toolbox for content instruction. Students can gain reading comprehension, utilize the vocabulary to explain concepts in writing and orally (presentation skills), process and critique them (listening and critical analysis) in any content area such as science, history or literature, they can be shown to have achieved a performance-based grasp of the material. This content learning process may take place in one or more languages simultaneously. Other examples of experiential learning and language arts integration may involve all school subjects.

Education reform initiatives are underway in every country as part of the ongoing assessment of national needs that can be affected by changes in the education system. In Europe, these concerns include debates about the match between the job market that those leaving the education system encounter, about the cost of education and its financing, and issues of integrating indigenous and immigrant segments of the population. Reassessment of educational needs in view of advancing and changing technologies are at the top of many debate agendas, and ensuring that teaching and learning achieve high enough

standards.[26] Concerns about higher education reform in Europe relate to the balance between traditional governance and innovation in financing and program changes to stay abreast of advancing technologies and career preparation. Private/public partnerships in higher education institutions are sought after for the purpose of accelerating incorporation of research and technology for education as well as streamlining educational programs for alignment with economic necessities and global job markets [27] The European Commission report "Integrating All Young People into Society through Education and Training" addresses both indigenous and immigrant youth in European countries, outlining initiatives for every country and international projects.

 The Task Force on Higher Education report *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* [28] addresses the full range of issues relevant to improving higher education systems in developing countries that have been in place since independence, and are failing to fulfill their mandates. Issues of access and governance were discussed earlier in this paper. What is most relevant to the re-integration of academic disciplines, are calls to change graduation requirements to allow for a broader general (liberal) education rather than funneling students into a narrow vocational or professional focus, and increased access to new technologies and innovative training models, including shortening the time needed to acquire differentiated levels of degrees. The report also mentions cultivation of highly specialized education, but also fields such as the humanities whose economic value is not as apparent as their social value over time. Education for local needs requires flexible types of programs, laid out in a model for "development universities." Mention in the report of lifelong learning opportunities are further evidence of more integrated thinking applied to students within and those who have completed degree programs

Under the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the "education pillar" includes support for programs aimed at reforming the overall quality and content of national education systems in the Middle East.[29] These include the Jordan Educational Initiative, the Partnership Schools Program and others across the region which are characterized by public/private and university-based partnerships, introduction of high-tech educational tools and methods into the region, teacher training exchanges and scholarships, and language-enhancement programs. In the Gulf, numerous education reform projects involving state-led public/private partnerships are bringing accelerated reform efforts into being at a rapid pace, with numerous ongoing projects that reflect the priority this issue is

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[26] Eurybase, the education information database in Europe, contains for each country descriptions of ongoing debates in education retrievable at http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset_eurybase.html .

[27] Two publications provide an introductory overview of higher education reform issues from an international perspective. Hans N. Weiler, Stanford University, "How well do reforms travel? U.S. and European higher education and the international traffic of reform ideas," Introductory Paper for a Symposium at the 2003 Meetings of the Comparative and International Education Society, New Orleans, LA, March 13, 2003, and the European Commission paper "Integrating all young people into society through education and training," vols 1 & 2 (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000).

[28] Download the report at http://www.tfhe.net/report/downloads/download_report.htm .

[29] The Department of State Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) web page on education lists eighteen ongoing education reform programs involving non-profit organizations, NGOs, high-tech global corporations and consulting firms, US universities, and MENA ministries of education and other agencies, retrieved at http://mepi.state.gov/c10172.htm.

being given at the highest levels of society and government.[30] Private schools are emerging across the Muslim countries, many of which are attempting to incorporate a different culture of learning that results in more holistic education. The purposes are to ensure that students in these countries can compete in a global economy, but many education reformers also speak about nurturing successful individuals, social leaders and members of sound families. While some of these school projects focus formulaically on secular education, emphasizing especially math, science, and technology integration, many other efforts seek to incorporate values education that is integrated with sound and effective religious education,

There is growing recognition that avoiding a dialogue of the deaf across the dichotomy between humanities and social sciences, and the technical and scientific fields will benefit overall educational reform efforts and future development of these societies. Increased attention to environmental awareness, civic engagement, and social development are factors mentioned in numerous institutional publications and articles on the new education for development. The critique of earlier modernization models which were assiduously marketed by Western experts and followed by the leaders of developing countries bear considerable blame for many imbalances that have played out over the decades. These critiques belie the notion that rejection of modernization or modernity itself is the cause of shortfalls in progress. To the contrary, the models may have been followed too closely, and the solution may lie in a return to more holistic value, in concert with the embrace of technologies that accelerate the flow of knowledge and ideas, and enhance communication and access to greater numbers of people.

The winds of change have heralded a corrective period in education reform which tends toward reassembling what was broken asunder by earlier practices and prejudices. If science, math, language or social studies are taught individually in more meaningful and learner-centered ways, it is equally important to consider pulling together the dichotomized halves of the curriculum: the humanities and the technical/scientific disciplines. It might seem far-fetched to relate the sundering of these fields of human knowledge in education to poor outcomes in schooling, to less than successful development in developing countries, and to inadequate social and political integration. The conditions under which this bifurcation was implemented in modern education systems may be shown to have had far-reaching deleterious effects. The artificial separation of disciplines and sub-disciplines may have been both a symptom and a cause of the well-known ineffectiveness of rote learning rather than creative inquiry-based learning. The bifurcation of disciplines may have seriously hampered the capacity in school and university graduates to creatively address problems that require social as well as technical knowledge. One might even suggest that a student who has been torn away too early in her or his learning career from exposure to knowledge on the other side of the humanities/science-tech borderline is more likely to suffer either likely unemployment or professional and spiritual dysfunction. Combined with denatured religious education offered by state-mandated curricula, and the artificial dichotomies inherent in imported secularized curricula and teaching models, it might be possible to locate roots of religious extremism in Muslim societies in the gap between broken links with the rigorous tradition in religious learning, and the resurgence of self-

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[30] The Qatar Education Reform Initiative, the Qatar Foundation at http://www.qf.edu.qa/output/page307.asp and the Supreme Education Council web site provides information on programs in Qatar at http://www.english.education.gov.qa/section/sec/ and initiatives in other GCC nations.

taught, self-appointed interpreters of modern societal ills expressed in poorly understood Islamic terms.

Concluding Note

It is hopeful to imagine the magnitude of change that educational efforts described in this overview might bring to the societies where they are applied. This preliminary survey of issues places the responsibility for openness to critique and willingness to change on all sides of this potential alliance. Differentiated sets of problems and possible solutions require thoughtful engagement among the stakeholders, both responsible authorities and citizens who stand to benefit. It is hoped that discussion with the dignitaries who have agreed to lend their expertise and experience to this effort of creating an Alliance of Civilizations will sharpen the focus of the research task ahead, adding insights that open doors of inquiry and enable this initiative to succeed.
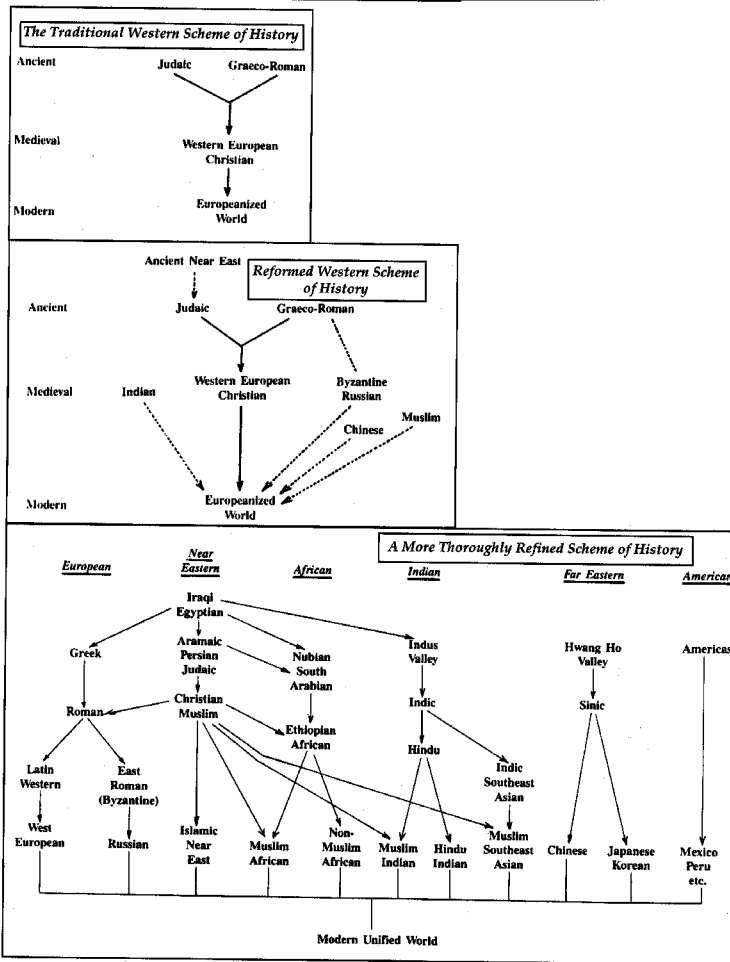
Appendix

Figure 1: From Douglass, *Strategies and Structures for Teaching World History* **(Amana Publications, 1994), p. 25.**
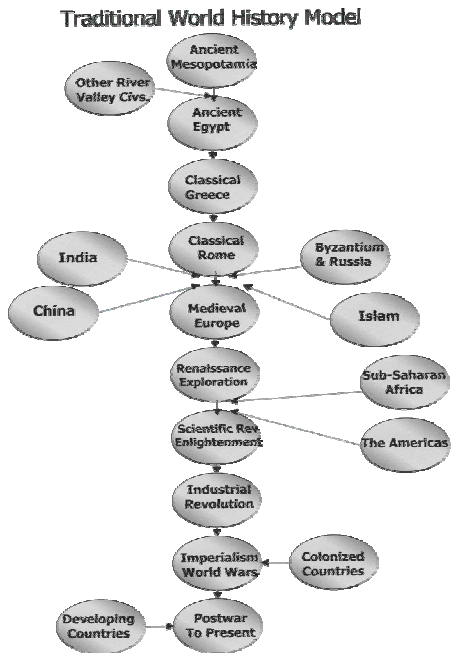
Traditional World History Model

Figure 2: Typical organization of traditional world civilizations textbooks, which may include multiple insertions of listed culture groups.
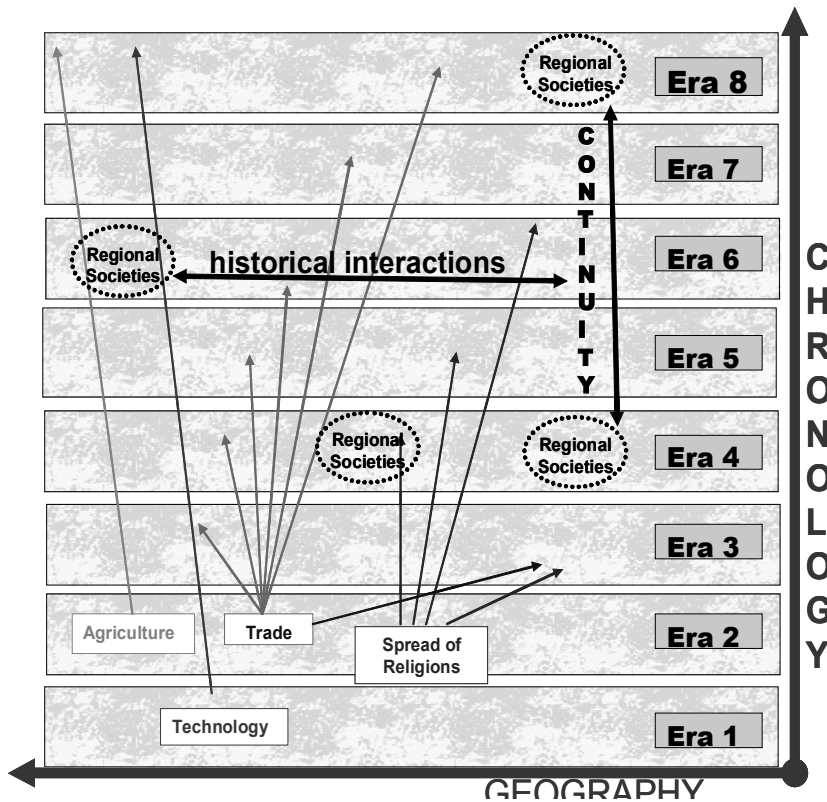

Figure 3: New World History Model, whose unit of organization is a global era within which coverage of individual cultures and societies may be incorporated in the context of their interactions and longevity.