

## **Efforts to establish the appropriate ground for Reconciliation in Iraq**

**Prof. Dr. Salah Al Jabery**

Iraqi educational, cultural and political institutions have Made important steps on the path International reconciliation, Those steps were represented in rejecting violence, promoting peace and coexistence and teaching peace and genocide. Iraq has been awarded two UNESCO Chairs: The first was the UNESCO Chair for Inter-Religious Dialogue studies awarded to the University of Kufa, and the second was the UNESCO chair for genocide prevention studies awarded to the University of Baghdad. As well as other projects founded by faculty of Arts at the University of Baghdad, such as a professional diploma in the Peace-building and Transformation of conflict in conjunction with the faculty of peace at the University of Innsbruck in Austria, and draft technologies peace and prevent the genocide, and draft of graduate studies at the level of master's and doctoral in studies of the prevention of genocide.

The University of Baghdad has also launched international and local campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers of violence and genocide , for example, the international campaign to preserve Heritage launched by Ms. Bokova, Director of UNESCO Organisation, after the Iraqi culture heritage was subjected to a deconstructive campaign by ISIS. This Global campaign had a profound impact on students, professors and various segments of Iraqi society. As it alerted to the importance of Iraqi Heritage and that it is a global heritage that transcends geographical borders. Then the college of Arts launched a national campaign under the title “National Day Against Violence and Genocide” aimed at promoting national reconciliation and renouncing violence. This campaign included primary schools, secondary school and University students, and the campaign had a significant impact on students’ tendencies towards accepting the Other, rejecting violence and achieving reconciliation.

In the context of promoting reconciliation and achieving sympathy with persecuted minorities, The Unesco chair for Genocide Prevention Studies at The University of Baghdad participated in the peace technologies project in partnership with The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Sulaimani Polytechnic University and Yazda Organisation. Students and Proffesors created sympathy with the survivors of the genocide and promoted the reconciliation and recognition among the components of Iraqi Society.

The following is a presentation of the International and national projects that established reconciliation education and promoted a culture of tolerance and coexistence and preventing the recurrence of genocide, as well as implementing justice and rehabilitation genocide survivors:

### **Diploma Program for Peace-building, Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation at the College of Arts**

**University of Baghdad**

March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

#### **Goals**

- (1) Goal of the Diploma Program for Peace and Conflict at the College of Arts at Baghdad University is the education of students who aspire professional activity in the field of national and international peace and conflict transformation, humanitarian and social work, development-cooperation, human rights, mediation, security, disaster relief, conflict work and peace research on all social levels and in the broadest sense of the word.
- (2) The program offers a postgraduate consolidation of knowledge and skills according to the latest results of Peace and Conflict Studies as academic disciplines and practices. The program is open for results and methods of the relevant academic field and its neighboring disciplines. It tries to teach the state of the art and to contribute to academic and practitioners' debates. It tries to frame these results in a praxis-relevant, experimental and experiential teaching method. The program understands itself as a completion and extension of already existing programs in neighboring disciplines.
- (3) The graduates are familiar with the history of peace and conflict studies as an academic discipline. They are aware of its transdisciplinary character and understand the diversity of its methods. They are able to connect the epistemological foundation of peace philosophies with their practical application in the field of conflict transformation. And they see the need for special didactics in the training of strategic leadership, relationship and team building. They are principally familiar with selected areas of energetic, moral, modern, postmodern and transrational interpretations of peace.
- (4) The graduates are familiar with the main methodological approaches to peace studies and know the most important schools and their different epistemologies. They are able to apply these epistemologies for doing research and writing academic papers. The graduates are able to identify relevant problems and questions of peace and conflict studies and to answer them with the proper academic methods; to elaborate specific research questions of the field in a profound way and to draft self-reliantly an individual and concrete research outline. The graduates are able to independently write academic papers.
- (5) The graduates have practically and academically exercised topics from the main fields of the discipline. This includes humanitarian law and human rights, development and social justice. They are able to contribute academically to these topics in written and oral form, to draft and present respective projects.
- (6) The graduates understand the relation between peace and cultural activities. They are understand the human nature as a multilayer-relational phenomenon that can communicate via various techniques. They are able to handle some of these linguistic, physical and acoustic tools.
- (7) The graduates gain basic understanding of psychological tools and methods for applied conflict work and homeostasis of the conflict worker. They are familiar with several tools of conflict work and moderation such as Non-Violent Communication, Theme-Centred Interaction, Active Listening

## **2 Principles**

- (1) The Diploma is a program in the second circle of academic education in the frame of the Law of Higher Education, based on a degree of the first circle, regularly a BA or an equivalent degree.
- (2) The Diploma is strictly scientific, international, intercultural and oriented towards practical application of its content.
- (3) The Diploma is made for best possible national and international compatibility with respective programs of the first (BA), second (MA) and third (PhD) circle

of higher studies. Compatibility with national and international programs is a high priority. Both national and international cooperation is welcome and targeted.

- (4) The chosen format of the MA Degree is equivalent to a “British” Master with a workload of 1500 real hours or 60 European Credit Points (ECTS), half of the “Bologna” format of 3000 real hours work load or 120 ECTS.

### **3 Profile**

- (1) The Diploma program enhances and enlarges previously achieved knowledge and skills. Students are trained practically and prepared for innovative academic research and work in the field.
- (2) The graduates are able to process research questions and practical challenges by the application of theory-based and experimental approaches. They are able to relate to the international state of the art in the discipline and work with them independently.
- (3) Knowledge-based ability to solve problems, creative thought, intuition and elicitive conflict transformation in inter-disciplinary, trans-cultural, trans-rational and widely unfamiliar contexts will be trained as equilibrium of scientific peace theory and praxis-related exercises.
- (4) Graduates
- dispose about sufficiently large and deep knowledge and expertise to become self-responsible and rapidly acquainted with new tasks and methods of applied peace and conflict work;
  - are able to apply their knowledge and skills professionally for problem solving in their specific field;
  - dispose about expertise, personal and social competence that qualify for leading positions in the field.
- (5) Possible professional fields for graduates:
- National and international peace and conflict work; diplomacy; international relations and solidarity work; cultural peace; human rights; security; environment protection; disaster relief; mediation, counseling and similar.
- (6) Teaching languages are Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Courses in further languages can offered on demand.

### **THE SOURCES OF CURRICULUM:**

The College Committee of Translation had translated Two Books to Arabic:

1. Wolfgang Dietrich, Interpretation of Peace in the History and Culture, Translated to Arabic by Sanaa Lazem Gereeb and Alaa Husien Jassim, Review: Hassan Al Haqani, Published by Al Ammel Iraqi Organization, 2019.
2. Wolfgang Dietrich , ELICITIVE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND THE TRANSRATIONAL SHIFT IN PEACE POLITICS, Translated to Arabic by Sanaa Lazem Gereeb and Others, Published by Al Ammel Iraqi Organization, 2020.

### **The Project of Encountering Genocides in Iraq And Enhancing Reconciliation and Tolerance**

— It's so important for new younger generations to learn more about genocide in the world, in order to know its negative impacts on society, and to encourage them for integrate and enhance the peace and cultural diversity, in addition to spreading the culture of tolerance and coexistence.

— **The Aim of the project**

— Our intellectual project to encounter genocide in Iraq aims to open the field of genocide studies, and to fill in the big gap of this type of studies in the Arabic.

— **The importance of the project**

— Focusing on genocide studies in Iraq and comparing its negative impacts on the society will help the Iraqi people to prevent violence and genocide and encourage the new younger generations for integrate and enhance the peace and cultural diversity, in addition to spreading the culture of tolerance and coexistence.

— The phenomena of genocide (cultural and physical) had deep roots in human history, therefore we need to investigate the Archaeology of genocide to excavate these roots and study its different Dimensions, so as to expose these inhuman practices and prevent their recurrence.

— **Factors of Genocide**

— There are several factors that motivate some of the political systems and ethnic or sectarian groups to commit genocide against minorities and other ethnic and sectarian groups. Such as, cultural, political, national, racial, economic, religious, factors and so on. What we interested in is the cultural factor. Therefore we need a new culture other than the traditional one to face thought and culture of terrorism.

— **Our activities to face genocide**

- The first conference of genocide in 20 October 2014. Presented in it 30 papers discussed many aspects of the subject. This was the first time that conference about genocide held in Baghdad.
- The second conference in 22 October 2015. fifty research papers were presented in it which all discussed various aspects of the topic.
- The national day to encounter violence and genocide launched in the third of April 2016.
- Launching global complaint to protect the Heritage in the college of Arts with presence of the director of UNESCO Mrs. Bokova.
- Translating some important books and researches about genocide.
- our preparation for The UNESCO chair of genocide studies.
- Studying genocide in postgraduate studies of MA and PhD in departments of sociology and psychology of our college.
- Studying mass graves by GSR system in department of geography.
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**The project of UNESCO chair for genocide Prevention studies in the Islamic World at University of Baghdad**

The proposal corresponds to UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2016 , specifically for Genocide studies in the Education Sector by

supporting education system responses to contemporary challenges for a culture of peace and non-violence and integrating universal values based on mutual understanding and respect for human dignity into education policies and programmers.

The UNISCO Chair aims to produce multidisciplinary academic knowledge on aspects of Genocide studies and to contribute original research to the study of non-Muslim in Muslim-majority societies. The focus of the Chair is on Genocide studies in Iraq, Arab world and the world, however, within a comparative perspective that considers other world religions, and other multicultural societies characterized by alternating periods of conflict and accommodation between communities. The chair will bring together a diverse team of Iraq professors, researchers and public intellectuals to share in research projects. A regional and international network of universities and scholars will support the development to the Chair's research and teaching capacities through a program of visiting lectureship, joint PhD supervision, and collaborative research. On the basis of the knowledge produced, the Chair will develop educational initiation and engage with civil society: and religious and political actors to foster understanding, dialogue and reconciliation between sects and religious communities and help rebuild social cohesion in Iraq.

The UNISCO Chair will be a hosting for activities on the Iraqi identity concept through inviting scholars from Iraq and abroad to participate in these activities.

The Chair address one of the most pressing challenges facing Iraq and other Islamic societies today increased social and political tensions mistruth and violence under the pretext of difference in religious and sectarian identities and the urgent need to produce alternative knowledge, visions and narratives to serve as bases for mutual understanding dialogue and cohesion within multicultural societies. The public debate on inter-sectarian relations is highly partisan and polarized in the Arab region as a whole, and even more so in Iraq where the Sunni-Shi'a divide is used to justify political violence and where non-Muslim communities feel increasingly alienated and insecure in the prevailing climate academia have so far been largely unable to engage with the issue beyond restricted intellectual circles. On the one hand, inter-sectarian and inter-religious relations have deteriorated to such a degree over the past decade that Iraqi universities are now identified as Sunni, Shi'a or Christian. On the other hand, the country is emerging from decades of authoritarian governance and repeated conflicts during which large numbers of academics left the country, and those who remained were isolated from international advances in their fields. The Baghdad UNESCO Chair will contribute to addressing this multi-layered situation. Its creation is premised on the need to reestablish academia as a credible moderating voice in the Iraqi public sphere precisely on what is today's most continuous issue inter-religious relations. The Chair therefore pursues four parallel objectives to redevelop Iraq's research and teaching capacities in the Genocide in fields of humanities and social sciences to approach inter-religious, and particularly Sunni-Shi'a relations through state-of-the-art research

methodologies and theories to provide a platform where professors, students and other intellectuals from Iraq, the region and beyond can meet and work together across sectarian and religious divides, and to engage academia in a dialogue with civil society and religious and political actors in Iraq and the Islamic world at large so as to make a meaningful contribution to an issue of immense social import.

The objectives of the project are as follows:

1. The project aims to creating a research environment conducive to the study of the circumstances surround the genocide (physical or cultural). and able to attract researchers and students majoring in Iraq and other Arab countries, and at producing a new generation of researchers and professors trained to constitute the academia elite in Iraq in the coming decades.
2. From a social and policy perspective, it is expected that the research findings of the project on Genocide will shed new light and enrich the public debate on legal historical social and political aspects of inter-religious and nations relations, and provide elements to foster reconciliation between communities and promote social and political cohesion in Iraq and Arab region.
3. Develop the knowledge and skills of lecturers, researchers, and students in research methodologies and theoretical and conceptual approaches for the study of Genocide in fields of humanities and social sciences.
4. Produce quality research comparative studies in Genocide in Iraq and in the Islamic world from different disciplinary perspective (religious, sciences, humanities, and social sciences).
5. Provide a platform where professors, students, and other intellectuals from Iraq, the region and beyond can meet and work together across sectarian and religious divides.
6. Contribute to the public debate and policy decision – making to improve Genocide studies, governance and social cohesion in Iraq.

**Nobody's Listening Virtual Reality Premiere and Pilot Event**  
**Unesco Chair For Genocide Prevention studies**  
**University of Baghdad, Iraq**  
**Prof.Dr. Salah F. Hassan Al Jabery**  
*[Date, December 2020]*  
*10:00hrs-18:00hrs*

The virtual reality experience (Nobody's listening) is an experimental method that moves the conscious to interact with the events that occurs in the movie. These events happened in reality to another person and the goal is to motivate the same feelings that it evoked in the original Other. Therefore, this new experimental mechanism can be considered among the Altered states of consciousness, which helps to unite and participants in a subject or event, tragic or delightful, to the extent that it enables the conscious to interact with the event and live it from the inside as it is, and as a result achieves direct perception of the event that can be a source of strong and diverse moral and emotional effects. It can also be described as a process that goes beyond the formal and imaginative description of the tragedy, which is not a source of emotional effects, to the level of emotional identification with the other, the targeted person becomes the Other and unite with Him to pass the same experience .Thus, we live the tragedy as the Yazidi lived it. This experience, on the other hand, is similar to

the mystical experience that transfers the individual's consciousness from the reality of temporal and spatial separation in the affective social relationship to the state of spacetime contact and emotional unity with the other. This is the reason why this experience is a tool for probing the depths of the human personality and a trigger for an explosion of the springs of sympathy, friendship, compassion, coexistence and mutual understanding.

We hope to expand the application of the virtual reality experience (no one is listening) to different social environments and at different academic levels, for example on students of high schools and institutes. We also hope to apply this experience to other cases of genocide, for example the survivors of Halebcha and Anfal, and the displaced, who were forced to leave their community, the detainees, and the prisoners from the marshes community in southern Iraq, as well as the mass graves, and the atrocities committed by ISIS against the students of Speicher, as well as the demolition of Antiquities and their theft in an event classified as a cultural genocide.

The validity of our analysis was clearly shown through the attitude adopted by the students who experienced it. The Emotional reactions were clear; I asked one of the students about her feelings and said: I did not realize what the Yazidis suffered from, I did not imagine that it reached this great degree of brutality .. One of them said while crying I wish I did not see these tragic things, and the third said that it is something strange and new and as if I was in another world, especially the environment where nature, the mountains and the simple rural life the Yazidis used to live, this made me see and appreciate their simplicity. Some of them said: I became more loving and sympathetic words towards the Yazidis. These statements, in our opinion, are evidences of an altered state of consciousness, in which the conscious becomes more focused on the subject, and the subject becomes pure and clearer.

### **The UNESCO Chair for Inter-Religious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World at University of Kufa**

The outcomes of the work of the UNESCO Chair were directed to promote a dialogue between diverse sects and religions in Iraqi society which was fragmented due to wars, with emphasis on tolerance, counter extremism, and understanding the other in order to contribute to peace-making in Iraq. The UNESCO Chairholder has established a network between the UNESCO Chair at Kufa University and many dialogue intuitions in and outside Iraq and cooperated with many governmental and nongovernmental institutions concerned with inter-religious affairs in order to enhance the goals of the UNESCO. The outcomes include a remarkable contribution to research, publications, raising awareness and distribution of information concerning the multiplicity of sects and religions in order to bridge the gap between the Shia, Suni, Kurds, Christians, Turkmen, Yazidis and other minorities. Another aim for the UNESCO Chair is to establish cooperation with NGO's, particularly with those involved with interreligious dialogue.

The UNESCO Chair increasingly appeals to more and more scholars as well as students every year who wish to be involved in the UNESCO Chair activities. For example, it has conducted many workshops, seminars and lectures that targeted students. It involved lecturing and training them on issues like religious diversity, tolerance, human rights, and citizenship, so they can contribute as peace-makers in their communities. At the same time Dr. Hassan Nadhem, the UNESCO Chairholder,

was continuously invited to numerous events and conferences in Iraq and the region to lecture on religious diversity and the promotion of interreligious dialogue, and has significantly contributed to establishing networks and links across academic disciplines as well as other social, public policy and civil society areas.

The work of the UNESCO Chair has significantly contributed to raising awareness on the role of dialogue to fill the gap between sects and religions in Iraq. This is evidenced through many activities. For example, an inter-faith youth camp organized by the UNESCO Chair which brought twenty Iraqi college students from diverse religious background to spend time together for a week at Kufa University Campus. They participated in practicing religious pluralism in an environment where controversial topics pertaining different faiths can be discussed in an atmosphere of respect towards different individuals and their different views, alongside acquiring leadership and interactive skills. Moreover, the publications of the UNESCO Chair, which were distributed under very low prices to Iraqi libraries and for free to readers from Iraqi universities, have strongly contributed to lessen religious conflict in the country.

#### **The launch of the activities of the global campaign to protect the heritage at the College of Arts, University of Baghdad**

On Saturday 28/3/2015 at the College of Arts/University of Baghdad, the global campaign to protect the World heritage, entitled (United for Heritage), was launched under the supervision of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The campaign was attended by the Secretary-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Hussain Al-Shahristani, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Mr. Adel Shershab, President of the University of Baghdad, Prof. Dr. Alaa Abdul-Hussein, Dean of the College of Arts, Prof. Dr. Salah Al-Jabri, Mr. Axel Plath, Director of UNESCO Iraq Branch, and his assistants of Dean and Staff of University of Baghdad and students.





**Irina Bokova: our mission will not accept cultural cleansing and our campaign is comprehensive and global**



**She Said:**

**“Baghdad University is a place of wisdom and knowledge, and we stand with the Iraqi Students and Youth to defend our dignity and our freedom to repel this attack on Heritage and Antiquities, which is cultural cleansing and destruction of things can not be compensated, and our campaign across the world title (Uniting for Heritage) against violence, hatred and racial discrimination”.**

**Finally, Irina Bokova thanked the Deanship of the Faculty of Arts for its efforts to ensure the success of the Global Campaign for Heritage and they chose this college for the originality and excellence of cultural and intellectual message that endure.**



The campaign began with a welcoming speech by Mr. Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Prof. Salah Al Jabri. He stressed the need to preserve the heritage of humanity, and disclosed the cultural message of the Faculty of Arts, which is moving in the framework of the care of the diversity of Iraqi society and the promotion of national identity, pointing out that this project is a liberation of the Iraqi self from the ethnic and sectarian prisons which recite edit land that grabbed by terrorism. Mr. Dean called on both the President of UNESCO Irina Bokova and Mr. Axel Plath to support the overall project in the request for the establishment of the UNESCO Chair of genocide that worked by the College for one year, in order to activate scientific research in the genocide physical and cultural.



Students of archeology department presented effective prose calls to renounce violence and spreading the culture of keeping relics as a bond of communication between generations and nations. Traditional Beats music of Iraqi Heritage permeated the campaign. After knead the global campaign launched (Unite for heritage) included taking pictures with campaign posters and then disseminated through social networking sites. and the Director of UNISCO met students of department, and discussed with them reality of antiquities in Iraq and how they save them, then she visited the museum in the college.

***The national day to counter violence and genocide in Iraq***

**Launching campaign in college of Arts-university of Baghdad in 3 April, 2016**



***The campaign included Elementary school students, to teach them principles of love and tolerance and rejection of violence and Hatred.***



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*Launching campaign in secondary schools for Learning Tolerance and Reconciliation*

