

Diploma Program for Peace-building, Conflict Transformation and the virtual reality experience “No Body's Listening” In both The Unesco Chairs at the University of Baghdad and The Unesco Chair at The University of Kufa

Prof. Dr. Salah Al Jabery.

Introduction

In Iraq, we tried to educate the bases of reconciliation like peace and justice at primary, secondary and higher Education levels, and we had examples of ways that train students to accept the other, sympathize with him, and achieve community reconciliation, and some training and educational models were applied to university students, primary and secondary students. One of the practical models applied is an educational model in which virtual reality technology was used (no Body's listening). Designed in Britain and applied in Iraq by the International Organization for Migration, Sulaymani Polytechnic University, Yazda Organization and UNESCO Chair for Genocide Prevention Studies in Islamic World at The University of Baghdad. The other model is the Peace-building Education and Conflict Transformation Project for university students and the granting of the Professional Diploma in Peace to prepare learners who are able to teach peace and disseminate it in social settings.

GCE has suddenly become a strong policy focus in international agendas, in particular in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. Its promising aim to empower learners to act responsively towards global issues draws attention to the pressing need to foster global citizens; thereby promoting more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies. Closely linked to human rights, it conveys values of respect, diversity, tolerance and solidarity¹.

Background

The phenomena of conflict and genocide had deep roots in Iraq, 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 by Educate it to the new younger generation.

The Saddam Regime committed many genocides against Iraqi components Specially Shea and Kurdish, like displacement of thousands of Iraqi Shea families to Iran in 1978- 1981, and the confiscation of their property and assets, mass killings of young people, the elderly, women and children, and many of them were buried alive in mass graves through uprising in 1991. Attacking Kurdish cities with chemical weapons and killing tens of thousands of civilians. ethnic cleansing against Kurdish nationalism in the so-called "Anfal", an attack that led to the displacement of thousands of Kurdish families from their land and looting their property.

In August 2014 ISIS swept across the Sinjar and Nineveh plains and began targeted attacks against indigenous Yazidis, Christians (including ethnic Assyrians), Shia Turkmen, and other religious minorities. ISIS carried out its plan to eliminate the Yazidi people, killing the men and adolescent boys, and abducting thousands of women and children. Young boys were indoctrinated and forced to fight for ISIS, while women and girls as young as nine were enslaved and sold as chattel to ISIS militants. While in captivity they were subjected to beatings, forced labor, forced marriages, and sustained sexual violence under an organized system of sexual enslavement. The United Nations, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and other national and international bodies have recognized these crimes as amounting to genocide.

The Role of Education in Reconciliation

The educational institution plays an important role in achieving national reconciliation. Young people constitute a large proportion of the total population of Iraq, and educational institutions are the place that attracts them and facilitates the dissemination of ideas that establish national reconciliation, such as recognition of the other, tolerance with him, peaceful coexistence, renunciation of violence and the promotion of peace, and paving the way for the transition to true democracy. These are the values of global citizenship through which national reconciliation is taught to young people in schools and universities.

In Iraq, we need a conciliatory discourse, and education is the most effective way to spread and reinforce this discourse.

Reconciliatory discourse is a civil discussion in which participants with divergent views seek to build common ground for (educational) practice through the articulation of a shared problem to which they are all morally and intellectually committed. Participants in RD use compromise and make practical choices to build on the best. They respect divergence and eschew consensus for consensus' sake. They use its principles in writing as well as in practice-oriented discourse. Their purpose is to make better public and private judgments about education².

From these underpinnings will come a view of reconciliatory discourse, which demands the meeting of hearts as well as minds. The aim is to rethink the purpose of educational debate, within the commitment to build on the best to improve education for all children. To do this, there will be the development of common ground on aims, the use of compromise, an ability to build on the best of arguments, and to integrate them.

Iraqi educational, cultural and political institutions have made important steps on the path of national reconciliation. Those steps were represented in rejecting violence, promoting peace and coexistence and teaching peace and genocide.

Education for national reconciliation is achieved by promoting the values of tolerance, understanding, acceptance of others, dialogue and rapprochement with them, in accordance with the principle of appreciation and mutual respect.

The International Committee on Education for the Twenty-first Century affirmed at its first session in Paris in 1993 that the central topic that should be attached to is the role of education in promoting the values of peace, tolerance and dialogue. Therefore, the Committee adopted a plan emphasizing the importance of humane, cultural and international education, with a focus on providing students with values It harmonizes with a knowledge society whose global character is increasing day by day.³

The Virtual Reality Experience "No Body's Listening" is a pioneering experiment in the use of technology to educate young people about the catastrophic effects of genocide and violence on society, and provides a powerful tool for generating empathy with victims, deepening the sense of others' right to life, liberty and coexistence, and recognizing them as they are In The Reality, and as they present themselves to others.

No Body's Listing and Peace-building Project

Two global projects emerged from the cultural project at University of Baghdad: the first is the Culture Project for Genocide Prevention, and the Peace-building and Conflict Transformation Project. These two complementary projects have been completed; The first was the granting of the University of Baghdad the UNESCO Chair for Genocide Prevention Studies in the Islamic

World, and the second represented by the establishment of the Postgraduate Diploma in Peace Building, which was accomplished in our college in partnership with the Peace College at the University of Innsbruck in Austria. Therefore, our college today grants an international certificate recognized by nations United and European universities.

The most recent method of teaching reconciliation and peace is to use technology to teach genocide, and to achieve the empathy required as a basis for reconciliation.

Technology of Virtual Experience

Nobody's Listening is a ground breaking immersive exhibition to commemorate the Yazidi genocide by ISIS. The virtual reality experience, which is the centerpiece of exhibition, transports viewers to an Internally Displaced Peoples' camp in northern Iraq using a combination of cutting edge immersive techniques: stunning 6D oF scenes from photogrammetry shot in Iraq; 360 footage of the destruction caused by ISIS; and 3D animation created in London studio. The branching narrative allows viewers to choose to listen to the story unfold told by one of three different characters: a Yazidi woman abducted and sexually enslaved; her brother, who survives a massacre; and an ISIS fighter who attacks the village. The VR experience was premiered at the Iraqi Parliament and University of Baghdad in December 2021.

As an immersive technology, VR has proved an effective tool in training, education, and communication settings, and it has been increasingly applied in a range of fields, including military, health, gaming, education, business, entertainment, and cultural heritage. Already dubbed "the ultimate empathy machine", VR technology enables people to see through the eyes of others. To empirically assess the effectiveness and short and long-term impact(s) of the Nobody's Listening VR exhibition on the Yazidi genocide education and awareness for potential positive changes and actions, a systematic and extensive evaluation of the Nobody's Listening VR was planned and took place between December 2020 and March 2021. The evaluation was carried out with over 120 locals from different background in five cities (Baghdad, Sulaimani, Erbil, Duhok, and Kirkuk) across Iraq. Each evaluation session involved using the Nobody's Listening VR, followed by completing two questionnaires and an interview. The research project is being led by Professor Rozhen Mohamed-Amin, Director of DCH, in cooperation with Professor Salah al-Jabri, UNESCO Chair of Genocide Prevention Studies in the Islamic World at the University of Baghdad.

Peace-building Studies Program

Stemming from the belief that education should play a major role in building peace; the College of Arts at University of Baghdad has designed a peace education program jointly with the University of Innsbruck in Austria in 2019. This study program includes teaching students methods and methods of dialogue in order to build lasting peace after conflict, and develop a culture that promotes tolerance and coexistence among the diverse and different components of Iraqi society. The program includes education on citizenship and reconciliation in the context of building lasting peace and rejecting violence in its various forms. The program also included training teachers on conflict management and peace building methods, training on the semester course program and its teaching hours and training on social and emotional learning.

UNESCO Chair at University of Kufa and the Peace-building in Higher Education Project

The UNESCO Chair has started a project to develop peace-building curricula in Iraqi universities since 2016.

UNESCO Chair at University of Kufa in collaboration with Iraq University Linkages Program – IREX, welcomed youths from various parts of Iraq from different religious and cultural backgrounds to take part in the first ever Interfaith and Intercultural Youth Camp program of its kind at University of Kufa⁴.

Youths were led by experts in the field of political science and conflict resolution, Dr. Eric Davis from Rutgers University, New jersey, USA and Dr. Aziz Sachedina from George Mason University, Virginia, USA.

Now days religious conflict is prominent issue all over the world, UNESCO Chair at University of Kufa took this opportunity to bring together young Iraqis to live, work and eat together for 5-days, this camp took place from December 10th to 15th 2016. Youths were able to participate in shared activities and observing each other's traditions. The goals of this program was to have an interfaith dialogue to learn about other religious and cultural group and to build a community by increasing mutual understanding and good relations, identifying causes of tension among different religious and cultural people, and promoting peace-building projects they can carry out when they return to their respective universities.⁵

The Project aims to develop the knowledge aspect related to global citizenship issues (World Peace, Cultural Diversity, Justice, Equality and Sustainable Development).

Lessons learnt

1. Students and Professors created sympathy with the survivors of the genocide and promoted the reconciliation and recognition among the components of Iraqi Society. Therefore, Education is the most effective means of accelerating national reconciliation, as there are global educational curricula that provide the possibility of teaching citizenship, freedom, justice, Peace, tolerance, pluralism and coexistence
2. The VR. Experience exhibition had a great mental impact on more than 70% of users which led to increased awareness towards injustice Genocide against the Yezidis. 70% of the participants praised and pointed out to change their information and their impressions towards the Yazidi society and culture. More than 80% of the participants associated more with the topic of The Yazidi's genocide. (Emerging Technologies and Museums, IOM, Dr. Rozen, M. Ameen, CHAPTER 4.)
3. 70% of the participants showed feelings of sympathy and anger, and this means the success of the experiment in creating a state of acceptance and feeling for the other. The experience is used to create a new approach to education based on re-creating the tragic event and empathizing with its victims.
4. Emotional attachment and sympathy, which makes this experience a means or a valuable tool for spreading peace and strengthening social relations between groups and preventing the recurrence of these tragic events for humanity in the future, and building lasting and strong peace and harmony in society.
5. Empathy and positive interaction achieved recognition of the issue at the Local and international level that what happened to the Yazidi minority is genocide. The experiment clearly revealed the great emotional impact and empathy of the users of the experience

and the exhibition and the capabilities of the metaphorical experience to build the highest level of Emotional attachment and sympathy, which makes this experience a means or a valuable tool for spreading peace and strengthening social relations between groups and preventing the recurrence of these tragic events for humanity in the future, and building lasting and strong peace and harmony in society.

6. The lesson we learned from peace education, conflict transformation and the prevention of genocide and violence is the importance of thinking through empathy and emotional interaction. This way of thinking is based on the primacy of emotional interaction and empathy over logical thinking that is based on justifying historical backgrounds. Empathy is a human feeling that is a precursor to any process of community reconciliation and social integration, and thus the promotion of social peace.

§ 7 Structure of the Program

- Abbreviation:

- CRU = Class Room Hours
- IP = Iraqi Points
- WL = Work Load
- ECTS = European Credit Transfer System – Points

§ 8 Degree/Diploma

- (1) The successful completion of one semester (15 IP = 15 ECTS) will be certificated.
- (2) Students of this program graduate with the Diploma in Peace and Conflict Transformation (36 IP = 36 ECTS)
- (3) In order to guarantee national and international compatibility the workload of the two semesters in this Diploma Program, excluding thesis writing (= 6 ECTS) are equivalent to one semester in a full European Master's Program (= 30 ECTS).

FIRST TERM

	Semester I, Foundation	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
	L: Concepts and Theories of Peace	45	3	75	3
Lit.	L1, L6, L7				
Goal	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				
TOTAL		45	3	75	3

	Semester I, Module 2: Research Methods in Peace Studies	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: Research Methods in Peace Studies	15	1	25	1
Course b	WS: Academic Writing	15	1	25	1
Lit	L1, L6, L7				
Goal	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.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	Semester I, Module 3: International Humanitarian Law	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: International Humanitarian Law	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE: Human Rights	15	1	25	1
Lit	L2, L5, L7				
Goal	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.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	Semester I, Module 4: Cultures of Peaces	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: The Idea and Principles of Cultures of Peaces	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE: Peace as a Relational Aspect of Humanity	15	1	25	1
Course c	SE: Peace, Language and Arts	15	1	25	1
Lit	L2, L4, L5, L6, L7				
Goal	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.				
TOTAL		45	3	75	3

	Semester I, Module 5: Psychology and Peace Building	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: Humanistic Psychology as a Pillar of Peace Studies	15	1	25	1
Course b	WS: Applied Methods of Peace Psychology	15	1	25	1
Lit	L2, L3				
Goal	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,				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	Semester I, Module 6: Diversity Management and Peace Building	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: Post-Conflict Peace Building in Iraq: Approaches to Conflict Resolution, Conflict Management and Conflict Transformation	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE: Selected Cases of Conflict Management and Peace Building in Iraq	15	1	25	1
LIT	L2, L3 L5, L6				
Goal	Students understand the complexities of conflicts in Iraq on all societal levels. They develop knowledge about the particularities of individual, group and societal relations and lines of conflict inherent to diverse communities in Iraq.				
Total		30	2	50	2

Possible to cover this in Iraq

	English for Peace Workers I	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	Basic English for Peace Workers	15	1	25	1
LIT					
Goal	The students are able to express themselves orally and written in English and dominate the basic use of the vocabulary of international peace work.				
TOTAL		15	1	25	1

SECOND TERM

	Introduction	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
	L: Introduction into Applied Peace and Conflict Studies	30	2	50	2
Lit.	L3, L4, L5, L6				
Goal	The graduates know the general terms and methods of Peace and Conflict Studies. They have profound ownership of the methods of elicitive conflict transformation.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

Request for UIBK to teach: possibility to teach in the beginning of March

	Semester II, Modul 2: Concepts and Theories of Conflict	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: International Peace Operations – Principles, Procedures, Priorities	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE: The Responsibility to Protect	15	1	25	1
Lit	L2, L4, L5, L6				
Goal	The graduates are familiar with basics of International Law and Principles of International Peace Missions. They know principles of individual and a team's basic requirements for civilian peace and conflict work in the context of peace organizations, missions and operations. This includes the legal, ethical and organizational aspects of humanitarian work, disaster relief, first aid, human rights, gender, and children care and peace education. They are familiar with aspects of intercultural communication, negotiation, team leadership and group organization on small and middle scale. They are able to assess situations, plan and manage the tasks of such missions accordingly. They are able to report, process and evaluate this kind of experiences academically.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	Semester II, Module 3: Sociology of Peace	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L Sociology of Peace	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE Monitoring and Documenting Social Developments	15	1	25	1
Goal	The students are familiar with the role of civil society and social institutions in peace work. They develop a basic understanding about the relations between different ethno-political groups and the broader social structures for peace within Iraqi communities.				

	They are familiar with key concepts of the field, such as sustainability, development and peace building.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	Semester II, Module 4: Crisis Management and the Art of Negotiation	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	L: Elicitive Conflict Transformation	15	1	25	1
Course b	SE: Elicitive Conflict Mapping	30	2	50	2
Lit	L2, L3, L4, L5, L6				
Goal	The graduates are familiar with a minimum of two tools of elicitive conflict transformation. They have experienced, practiced and applied them in the context of the group and introspectively. They have access to experts of these fields and can contact them for advices in applied work. They are able to assess these tools academically and to report about their use in proper written form.				
TOTAL		45	3	75	3

Teaching by UIBK

Possibility for Baghdad

	Semester II, Module 5: Applied Methods of Peace Building and Conflict Transformation	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	WS: Leadership Skills and Team Building	15	1	25	1
Course b	WS: Capacity and Relationship Training	30	2	50	2
Lit	L2, L3, L5				
Goal	The students are trained in basic aspects of team building and leadership as required in all kinds of contemporary conflict work. They understand that conflicts are relational aspects of human nature and can only be addressed as such. They know their own limits and resilience in stress situations and they understand the dynamics of operations in teams.				
TOTAL		45	3	75	3

	Semester II, Module 6: Transdisciplinary Peaces <i>The students will choose two elective classes from the list below.</i>	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Sel. Course a	L: Peace Education	15	1	25	1
Sel. Course b	L: Peace and Media	15	1	25	1
Sel. Course c	L: Peace and Environment	15	1	25	1
Sel. Course d	L: Peace and Gender	15	1	25	1
Sel. Course e	L: Peace and Age Groups	15	1	25	1

Sel. Course f	L: Peace and Ethno-Political Diversity in Nation States	15	1	25	1
Lit.	L2, L4, L5, L6, L7				
Goal	The graduates understand the transdisciplinary character of peace studies on an advanced level, which enables them to specialize on fields of interest for themselves and their further professional life. They are aware of the extended field of possible topics and specialized in two selected themes out of the offered range.				
TOTAL		30	2	50	2

	English for Peace Workers II	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Course a	Advanced English for Peace Workers	15	1	25	1
LIT					
Goal	The students are able to express themselves orally and written in a slightly advanced English and dominate the average use of the vocabulary of international peace work.				
TOTAL		15	1	25	1

Research Paper

	Research Paper	CRU	IP	WL	ECTS
Goal	The students demonstrate the ability to write an academic paper about a freely chosen topic related to peace and conflict and following the formal and methodological requirements of the participating discipline.	0	6	150	6
TOTAL		0	6	150	6

Mandatory Literature:

L1: Dietrich, Wolfgang: Interpretations of Peace in History and Culture (= Many Peaces/1); London, 2012.

L2: Dietrich, Wolfgang: Elicitive Conflict Transformation and the Transrational Shift in Peace Politics; (=Many Peaces/2); London, 2013.

L3: Dietrich, Wolfgang: Elicitive Conflict Mapping; (=Many Peaces/3), London, 2018.

L4: Lederach, John Paul: Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies; Washington, 1997.

L5: Lederach, John Paul: Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures; Syracuse, 1995.

L6: Lederach, John Paul: The Little Book of Conflict Transformation. Clear Articulation of Guiding Principles by a Pioneer in the Field; Intercourse, 2003.

L7: Muñoz, Francisco: La paz imperfecta en un universo en conflicto; in: Muñoz, Francisco (ed.): *La paz imperfecta*, Granada, 2001, pp. 2–66.

Conclusion:

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. 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.

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. 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. They are able to apply their knowledge and skills professionally for problem solving in their specific field. They dispose about expertise, personal and social competence that qualify for leading positions in the field.

Recommendations:

1. That the WHEC2022 conference support this project and find partners for it from the member states.
2. The WHEC2022 conference supports the implementation of this project in more public and private universities in Iraq with the aim of gaining more community development towards dialogue and building community peace.
3. The WHEC2022 conference will help in adopting the idea of this project among the member states, especially those that have circumstances similar to those of Iraq as countries emerging from conflicts.

References

¹ UNESCO. (2015). Global citizenship education: Topics and learning objectives. Paris, France.

² Pamela LePage and Hugh Sockett, **Educational Controversies**, First published 2002 by Routledge Falmer, London, p13.

³ UNESCO, 1993, **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization**, Paris (France).

⁴ UNESCO Chair on the Development of Inter-Religious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World, university of Kufa, official site : <http://chair.uokufa.edu.iq/about-us/>

⁵ UNESCO Chair on the Development of Inter-Religious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World, university of Kufa, official site : <http://chair.uokufa.edu.iq/unesco-chair-university-kufa-collaboration-irex-interfaith-intercultural-youth-camp-program/>