



Managing Muslim-Christian Relations: Educational Policy Options

A University of Melbourne International Colloquium
Melbourne, Australia
11-13 February 2004

Participant List

AHMAD, MR SAIF

Chief Executive, Faith Regen UK (United Kingdom) < <http://www.faithregenuk.org/>>

Biodata

Saif Ahmad is Chief Executive of Faith Regen UK Ltd and its subsidiary Faith In London Ltd. Prior to joining Faith Regen UK, he served for over four years as the Chief Executive of the North London Muslim Housing Association, and for nine years as the Financial Services Manager in two inner city London Boroughs. He has over twenty years of experience in setting, developing and leading a series of community regeneration initiatives. He is a past member of the Executive Board of the Federation of Student Islamic Societies of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Presently, Mr Ahmad is a member of the Policy Action Team of the Social Exclusion Unit in the Cabinet Office, which deals with unpopular housing. He is also a member of the National Young People's Learning Committee for the Learning & Skills Council (Ministry of Education, British Government), and a member of the Regeneration Practitioners Group of the Home Office (Ministry of Interior, British Government). Mr Ahmad also sits on the Board of Directors of the Housing Association Charitable Trust, the Federation of Black Housing Organisations, the Labo Housing Association and the Irish Centre Housing Association.

Email: saif@faithinlondon.org, saif@faithregenuk.org

ALI, DR AMEER

President, Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (Australia) < <http://www.afic.com.au/>>

Biodata

Dr Ameer Ali is currently the President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), an Associate Lecturer in Economics at the University of Western Australia and part-time Lecturer at Murdoch University. As President of the AFIC, Dr Ali is responsible for co-ordinating diverse Muslim communities throughout Australia, sponsoring the building of schools and mosques and representing Australian Muslims in governmental and interfaith affairs. A graduate of the University of Ceylon in Sri Lanka, Dr Ali is a very experienced teacher who has lectured at various universities in Sri Lanka, Brunei Darussalam and Western Australia. Accounts of his research have appeared in several international journals including *South Asia*, *Asian Survey*, *Asian Studies*, *Asian Profile*, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *Journal of Objective Studies*, and *Asian Thought and Society*. He teaches economic theory, economic development, international economics and economic thought, and is the Associate Editor of *The Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* published in the UK.

Email: A.Ali@murdoch.edu.au, admin@afic.com.au

ALJEFFRI, Ms S. ZURIAH

Founding Member, Sisters in Islam (Malaysia) < <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/>>

Biodata

Sharifah Zuriah Aljeffri is a Malaysian-based artist, independent curator/coordinator, art consultant and social activist. She is currently Southeast Asian Regional Representative for the Islamic Arts Foundation's journal *Arts & the Islamic World*, Deputy President of the Community Support Network Selangor and an advisor to the Malaysian Juvenile Court. Ms Aljeffri is a founding member and former Coordinator for Sisters in Islam, a Malaysian-based NGO committed to promoting the rights of women within the framework of Islam. She is a member of the Organising Committee for the "Towards the Formation of Inter-religious Council Workshop" in Malaysia and her written work has focused extensively on Islam, human rights and inter-faith dialogue in Malaysia. She is a former Fulbright Scholar in Islamic Studies in the United States of America.

Abstract

"PROMOTING AN INTER-FAITH HARMONY IN A MULTI-RACIAL AND MULTI-RELIGIOUS MALAYSIAN SOCIETY"

This paper is presented in four parts. The first part deals with the history of Malaysia's multi-ethnic society. Malaysia's population of over 23 million is made up of many ethnic groups – Malays, Chinese, Indians, Ibans, Dayaks, Kadazans, Muruts and many other indigenous people. We are a hybrid of many cultures, traditions and religions. And thus far we have managed to live together despite some clashes in certain parts of the country. Malaysia could be a role model for religious tolerance and harmony among the citizens of different race, culture and religion

The Malaysian Constitution advocates freedom of religion. Islam is the official religion and people of other faiths are free to practice their own religion.

The second part examines the formation of inter-faith organisations and programmes that promote inter-religious understanding and harmony. In this section I will also touch on the effect of 9/11 and how different religious groups have come together to discuss understanding of the major religions in Malaysia. In this section, I will also address the tensions and frictions that occurred among some individuals and groups when the Malaysian Bar Council initiated a workshop "Towards the Formation of an Inter-religious Council"

The third section highlights the portrayal of Muslims in Western media, reasons of conflicts between Muslim-Christian relations and the 9/11 tragedies giving rise to "Islamophobia".

The fourth part makes recommendations for considerations that may help improved and stabilized Muslim-Christian relations.

Email: sistersinislam@pd.jaring.my , sza@pc.jaring.my

AZRA, PROF DR AZYUMARDI

Rektor, State Islamic University (Indonesia)

Biodata

Azyumardi Azra is currently Rektor and Professor of History at Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN or State Islamic University) in Jakarta, Indonesia. He is the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of *Studia Islamika* (Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies) and on the board of editors of the *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* published by SOAS in London. Professor Azra has held visiting appointments at Oxford University and St Anthony College in England and New York University, Harvard

University and Columbia University in the United States of America. He is a former researcher at the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI) and Vice Director of the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (Censis) at IAIN/UIN Jakarta. Professor Azra is the author of numerous books including *Jaringan Ulama* (Networks of Muslim Religious Scholars), 1994; *Pergolakan Politik Islam* (Tension of Islamic Politics), 1996; *Islam Reformis* (Reformist Islam), 1999; *Konteks Berteologi di Indonesia* (Contextual Theology in Indonesia), 1999; *Menuju Masyarakat Madani* (Toward Civil Society), 1999; *Pendidikan Islam: Tradisi dan Modernisasi Menuju Milenium Baru* (Islamic Education: Tradition and Modernization towards the New Millennium), 1999; *Esei-esei Pendidikan Islam dan Cendekiawan Muslim* (Essays on Islamic Education and Muslim Intellectuals), 1999; *Renaissance Islam di Asia Tenggara* (Renaissance of Islam in Southeast Asia), 1999 and *Islam Substantif* (Substantive Islam), 2000. He is a former Fulbright Scholar at Columbia University in the United States of America, where he completed his PhD in 1992.

Abstract

“TEACHING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AND HARMONY THROUGH EDUCATION IN INDONESIA”

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country of the world. Out some 206 million of Indonesian total population 87.21 percent are Muslim; 6.04 Protestant; 3.58 percent Catholics; 1.83 percent Hindu; 1.03 percent Buddhist; and 0.31 percent animists. Even though Muslims constitute the single largest majority of the population, Indonesia neither an Islamic state nor a secular one. In fact Indonesia officially recognizes the five great world religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and they enjoy equal government services through the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

With some examples, this paper will discuss how religious harmony can be enhanced through education in Indonesia. In addition to discussing the state of “harmony education” at elementary and secondary schools this paper will delineate some aspects of education at State Islamic Universities (UIN) and State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) throughout Indonesia. Finally, the paper will provide some policy options for promoting interfaith harmony through education in the country.

Email: uinjkt@indo.net.id

BARRA, DR HAMID

Professor and Dean, King Faisal Center for Islamic, Arabic and Asian Studies (the Philippines)

Biodata

Dr Hamid Barra is currently Professor and Dean of the King Faisal Center for Islamic, Arabic and Asian Studies at Mindanao State University in Marawi City, the Philippines. He has worked closely with the Government of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in its efforts to promote Muslim-Christian harmony and cooperation, both in the public (government) and private (civic and community) sectors. He is a leading member of the Bishop-Ulama Forum, which brings together Christian and Muslim leaders in the Southern Philippines to discuss best practice methods for jointly managing Muslim-Christian relations in the Philippines. He is the author of a number of articles and books on interfaith issues in the Philippines and has travelled extensively over the last five years, presenting conference papers and speaking about the issue throughout Asia.

Abstract

“MANAGING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS THROUGH PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE: THE CASES OF THE MINDANAO STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE BISHOPS-ULAMA CONFERENCE”

This paper focuses on the role and contributions in managing Muslim-Christian relations of two institutions in Mindanao that have been at the forefront in fostering peace, harmony, understanding and cooperation among Muslims and Christians in the Philippines. These are the Mindanao State University (MSU) and the Bishops-Ulama Conference (BUC).

The Mindanao State University, a government institution of higher learning, was established in 1962 purposely to promote integration among Muslims and Christians in Mindanao through education. Aside from including in its curricular offerings a study of Muslim and indigenous culture, society and history, MSU advances a policy of integration that requires Muslim and Christian students to live together in the university dormitories. Thus, we find peaceful co-existence, harmony, understanding and cooperation among Muslim and Christian administrators, faculty, staff and students in the university. Starting as a one-campus school in Marawi City, a predominantly Muslim-populated town in central Mindanao, the university grew into a multi-campus institution operating in different areas of Southern Philippines. In all those areas, Muslims and Christians peacefully live together.

The Bishops-Ulama Conference (formerly, Bishops-Ulama Forum) was initially convened through a dialogue in 1996 between the Catholic Bishops of Mindanao and the Ulama League of the Philippines. A year later, the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, a gathering of protestant churches joined the conference. The BUC has been very active in fostering harmony and understanding among the diverse religious communities of Mindanao. It has helped in convincing the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to return to the negotiating table, every time that the talks would bog down. It is very active in fostering understanding among diverse people of different religious persuasions. It holds a regular inter-faith dialogue not only among members but also among the diverse religious communities of Mindanao. It also celebrates an annual week of peace in the cities and towns of Mindanao. It recently held an Asian gathering of Christian bishops and Muslim '*ulama*'.

While the MSU and the BUC are successful in their thrusts for peace and harmony, there are still constraints that need to be addressed if lasting and sustainable peace is to be achieved in Mindanao.

Email: hamid_barra@msumain.edu.ph, hamidbarra@yahoo.com

BENGALI, DR KAISER

Managing Director, Social Policy and Development Centre (Pakistan)

Biodata

Dr. Kaiser Bengali is currently the Managing Director of the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) in Karachi, Pakistan. The SPDC, with its emphasis on public policy analysis and social sector development and its multi-disciplinary approach, provides a much-needed focal point for institutional development, research and policy analysis in Pakistan. Dr. Bengali has specialised in national income accounts, industrialization and employment and the governance of local public institutions in Pakistan for more than a decade and has published extensively in international journals. He has twenty years teaching and research experience and has served at the Applied Economics Research Centre, University of Karachi and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad. He has also held visiting appointments at the Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Developpement, University of Geneva, Switzerland and at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK.

Abstract

"RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN: TOWARDS A MORE TOLERANT POLICY"

A review of Pakistan's educational policies, curriculum content, and official and officially approved textbooks, shows that there is a heavy stress on Islamic ideological orientation. However, while there are innumerable negative references to Hindus, anti-Christian allusions are virtually absent. Yet, violent attacks against Christians have occurred in the last decade and a half. The roots of this phenomenon lie partly in the realm of education and partly in the realm of undemocratic governance and socio-economic factors.

There are four distinct, mutually exclusive educational systems, with each one producing a unique mindset. Except for the elite English-medium schools for the rich, the other three systems produce outlooks that are not necessarily conducive to the creation of a tolerant, pluralistic society. Religious schools (Madrassahs) lie at one extreme of this divide.

Religious parties and Madrassahs have "prospered" under military regimes and on account of poverty. Military regimes, lacking public sanction and legitimacy have tended to seek the support of marginal religious groups; thus strengthening them. Laws, like separate electorates and the Blasphemy Act, have been used to edge out Christians from their lands or their jobs. Poverty has tended to drive children of the poor to madrassahs, which provide free meals and accommodation to the students and assured employment upon graduation. The resultant political strength of the religious elements has tended to further narrow educational perspectives; thus, endangering social relations.

Email: kbengali@yahoo.com

BILKISU, Ms HAJIYA

President, Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Nigeria (Nigeria) <
<http://www.ifh.org.uk/fomwan.html> >

Biodata

Hajiya Bilkisu is a Founding Member and current President of the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN), an alliance of over 150 Muslim associations across Nigeria which aims to improve the lives of Muslim women and children, in particular, and all Muslims in general throughout Nigeria. She has over twenty-five years of experience as a journalist, and has published widely on women's and Islamic issues in Nigeria. She is currently the Editor of *Citizen Magazine* and former Editor of *Sunday Triumph* and *New Nigerian* newspapers. She is involved in a wide range activities aimed at addressing developmental, health, women's and children's issues in Africa, including as a Consultant to the World Health Organisation's African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control and Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Directed Treatment with Ivermectin, as a National Executive Member of Transparency in Nigeria, and as a Consultant/Trainer for Democracy and Governance at the USAID Centre for Development and Population Activities.

Abstract

"SHARIA IMPLEMENTATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS IN KADUNA STATE."

The paper examines the conception and implementation of an expanded Sharia legal system in ten states in Northern Nigeria in 1999, which generated conflicts between Muslims and Christians. These conflicts which were violent in some states led to loss of lives and property and put considerable strain on Muslim-Christian relations generating misunderstanding and distrust among adherents of both faith.

In spite of the crises, the hitherto estranged communities are still living together. Both have descended from the hardline positions they had earlier adopted. Christians had opposed the

Sharia insisting that expansion of the Sharia legal code will infringe on their human rights and the essential freedoms the constitution grants to all Nigerians. Muslims on the other hand stressed that Sharia which is applicable only to Muslims, is their inalienable right because the constitution supports religious freedom. The paper raises the following questions: What roles did the religious and community leaders play in resolving the stalemate over the Sharia? What strategies did they adopt and what informed the adoption of these strategies? The outcome of these, and the best practices that emerged from the experiences of the religious and community leaders in ensuring inter religious peace and harmony will be addressed in the paper.

Finally, the paper analyses the implications of the case study for policy making in a multi religious state. It makes recommendations on the way forward.

Email: bilkisuy@yahoo.com

BLUNDELL, SR PATRICIA

Chair, Queensland Branch, World Conference of Religions for Peace (Australia) <
<http://www.wcrp.org/> >

Biodata

Sister Patricia Blundell is currently Chair of the Queensland Branch of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (Australia), a Foundation Member of the Committee for the establishment of the Multi-Faith Centre at Griffith University, and Acting Director of the Centre during its establishment phase. She is currently Co-ordinator Chaplaincy at Griffith University, a member of the Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Relations (Brisbane) and a member of the Commission's Taskforce for Christian Muslim Relations.

Email: p.blundell@griffith.edu.au

BOUMA, PROF GARY

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research & Development), Monash University (Australia) <
<http://monash.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Professor Gary D. Bouma is Professor of Sociology at Monash University, and Chair of the Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans. He is also Associate Priest in the Anglican Parish of St Dunstan's, Camberwell in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne; Chair of the Christian Research Association and Vice-Chair of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (Australia) and Board Member, World Conference of Religions for Peace – Asia Pacific. Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, he trained at Calvin College in Classics, Princeton in Theology and Cornell University in Sociology. Following ten years at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he served as Chairman of the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, he moved to Monash University in 1979. His research in the sociology of religion examines the management of religious diversity in plural multicultural societies; postmodernity as a context for doing theology; religion and terror; inter-cultural communication and missiology; religion and public policy; women and religious minorities; and gender factors in clergy careers. He is the author of twenty books and over 100 chapters and refereed articles.

Abstract

“THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN MANAGING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS AND PROMOTING INTERFAITH HARMONY”

Drawing on a recently completed research project funded by The Australian Commonwealth Government Department of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Indigenous Affairs, this paper presents a short case study comparing the impact of differences in religious and community leadership in promoting interfaith harmony in Melbourne and Sydney. The paper provides evidence in support of the claim that there is a different tone to interfaith relationships in Sydney and Melbourne and that some of that difference is attributable to the role of community and religious leaders. This case study will be set in a larger framework derived from a series of community studies examining interfaith relations conducted across Australia in 2002 with a view to making some general statements useful in the formulation of public policy particularly in the difficult area of the role of nation states in the management of religious diversity.

Email: Gary.Bouma@adm.monash.edu.au

BROOKE, MR ALAN

Community Liaison Section, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Australia) < <http://www.immi.gov.au/>>

Biodata

Mr Alan Brooke works in the Community Liaison Section of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs in Australia. The Community Liaison Section's primary role is to identify and address issues affecting community relations.

CAHILL, PROF DESMOND

Postgraduate Coordinator Multicultural, RMIT University (Australia) < <http://www.rmit.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Professor Des Cahill works in Intercultural Studies in the Department of Language and International Studies at RMIT University in Melbourne. He has worked for more than twenty-five years in the areas of immigrant and intercultural studies, cross-cultural communication and, more recently, in cultural diversity and globalization. Together with Professor Michael Singh, he constructed RMIT's undergraduate programme in International Studies. He has conducted numerous research projects and consultancies for the Australian government, and has recently completed a Commonwealth Government study, *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia*. For many years, he was the cross-cultural trainer for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He has been a lecturer in the Public Diplomacy series, speaking to locally employed staff in Australian embassies across the world about immigrant and multicultural Australia. Since 2000 he has been President of the Australian chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, the world's leading inter-faith organization, and he is a member of the Governing Board and the Executive Committee of the Asian Conference of Religion and Peace (ACRP) and of the newly formed Australian Partnership of Ethnic and Religious Organizations (APER0).

Abstract

"LIVING UNDER GOD'S TENT: CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTS FOR CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL INTERACTION IN A MULTI-FAITH SOCIETY"

Using the tent in the wilderness as a symbol, the paper will explore the interrelationship between education and faith, acknowledging that all the great religious figures of history have been teachers and exploring the notion of religious identity in a multi-faith world: (1) the religiously captive identity (2) religiously encapsulated identity (3) religiously clarificatory identity (4) dual-religious identity (5) reflective inter-religious identity (6) a global religious identity, balancing the

tension between formation in one's own faith tradition and knowledge about other faith traditions.

The central focus of the paper will be upon the necessity for and search for curriculum constructs to guide the formulation of teaching modules for use inside and outside schools such as journeys, hospitality and memory.

As a case study, this paper will be guided by the results of a current curriculum project between Catholic and Islamic secondary schools in Melbourne which goes beyond mere school exchange and by reflection on the work of inter-faith groups operating at local government level within Australia. A central theme throughout the paper is that Christian-Muslim educational initiatives cannot take a bilateral approach, but need to incorporate a multi-lateral view that takes into account other world faiths.

Email: desmond.cahill@rmit.edu.au

CICEK, MR ORHAN

Program Co-ordinator, Australian Intercultural Society (Australia)

Biodata

Mr Orhan Cicek is the Founder and Program Co-ordinator of the Australian Intercultural Society, which is pro-actively promoting inter-cultural and inter-faith relations within Australia's multicultural setting. As Program Co-ordinator, Mr Cicek has organised a number of international conferences, workshops and seminars aimed at promoting social harmony within Australian society. He established and chaired the first Turkish/ Muslim educational foundation, the Selimiye Foundation Ltd. (Melb.), MCYESS Ltd. (Adelaide) and community-based private schools, accommodation centres and youth organisations. He has also worked as chief editor and Broadcast Co-ordinator for ZZZ Radio's Turkish program.

Email: o.cicek@tpg.com.au

COFFEY, MRS MARGARET

Producer, "Encounter" Program, ABC Radio National (Australia) <
<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/enc/default.htm> >

Biodata

Margaret Coffey has been making programs for the "Encounter" series for several years. She is a graduate of the University of Melbourne (BA) and Monash University (MA) and has a background in historical research and journalism. She has special interests in philosophical theology, ethics and inter-religious themes ... and in Ireland and things Irish. As well as being the researcher for the *Macmillan Dictionary of Irish Biography*, she has written the entry on Broadcast Journalism for the *Encyclopaedia of Applied Ethics* edited by Ruth Chadwick and published by Academic Press in 1998, and is a member of an acute care hospital's human research ethics committee. A highlight of her broadcasting career was a visit to Indonesia in the months prior to the downfall of President Soeharto when she met religious leaders and activists who continue to be important in Indonesian affairs. She maintains a strong interest in developments in Indonesia. Her Encounter programs have won finalist awards in the New York Festivals, as well as the New York Prize for best feature, and both the radio prize and the cross-media prize in the Austcare Media Awards.

Email: coffey.margaret@abc.net.au

COLLETT, DR BARRY

Senior Fellow, Department of History, The University of Melbourne (Australia) <
www.unimelb.edu.au >

Biodata

Dr Barry Collett is currently a senior fellow with the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. After a long period in non-academic work, he became a graduate student at Oxford University, where his research was published in the Historical Monographs Series under the title *Italian Benedictine Scholars and the Reformation*. His interest is predominantly in the area of Late Medieval and Early Modern European history, especially in Italy and England and in the connections between politics, religion and learning. However, he also has an interest in the history of Australia, specifically the remoter areas of Gippsland where he was brought up. He has taught at Oxford, and at the Institute of Education from which he transferred in 1991. His *Wednesdays Closest to the Full Moon: A History of South Gippsland* was published by Melbourne University Press in 1994. His most recent publication, *A Long and Troubled Pilgrimage: the correspondence of Marguerite d'Angoulême and Vittoria Colona, 1540-1545*, was published in 2000.

Email: b.collett@unimelb.edu.au

DELLAL, MR B. (HASS), OAM

Executive Director, Australian Multicultural Foundation (Australia) <
http://www.amf.net.au/home_welcome.shtml >

Biodata

Mr B. Hass Dellal OAM was appointed Executive Director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation in 1989, an organization established to promote a strong commitment to Australia as one people drawn from many cultures. Mr Dellal has over twenty years experience in policy, management, community development and programming for cultural diversity. He has extensive experience, nationally and internationally, in multicultural affairs. Mr Dellal serves on various committees, and spearheaded initiatives for the development of the general community. He has prepared programs on community relations, on behalf of Government authorities and the private sector. Mr Dellal is a Special Adviser for the Australasian Police Multicultural Advisory Bureau, Committee Member of the European Multicultural Foundation; Board Member of the Adult Multicultural Education Services and a Fellow of the Williamson Leadership Program. He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to Multiculturalism, the Arts, and the Community in 1997.

Email: info@amf.net.au

DOOGUE, MS GERALDINE

Presenter, "Compass" ABC Television (Australia) < <http://abc.net.au/compass/default.htm> >

Biodata

Geraldine Doogue is a renowned Australian journalist and broadcaster. During her career she has won two Penguin Awards and a United Nations Media Peace Prize. Quite aside from her role in print media and broadcasting her personal involvement in ethical, spiritual and religious issues is extensive, and ranges from talks on spirituality in pubs to major involvement in conferences for large corporations. Geraldine was thrilled when she joined "Compass" back in 1998 – and has since been tackling issues often left unaddressed. 'I believe there are gaps in the media's

attention on many issues today' she says. "Compass" recognises those gaps will focus not only on religion and faith, but in the changing focus of many people from economics and technology, to values, morality, and their spiritual growth.' With a unique approach - making complex issues accessible - Geraldine tackles subject matters with an infectious optimism, humour and warmth. She also currently presents ABC Radio National's "Life Matters" program, which has pioneered coverage of patterns of major social change in Australian society.

Email: doogue.geraldine@abc.net.au

D'SOUZA, DR ANDREAS

Director, Henry Martyn Institute for Islamic Studies (India) <
<http://www.humanscapeindia.net/volun/ngos/hmiis.htm> >

Biodata

Dr Andreas D'Souza is currently the Director of the Henry Martyn Institute for Islamic Studies in Hyderabad, India. A native of Mangalore, Dr D'Souza has lived and worked in Hyderabad for the past twenty years as lecturer, Associate Director and, since 1992, as Director of the Henry Martyn Institute. After his high school and college studies in India, he studied in Rome, Paris, Tunis, and finally completed his PhD at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. His doctoral dissertation was on the "Interpretation of the concept of revelation by Indian Muslims: A critical analysis of the religious thought of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Abu al-Kalam Azad and Abu al-Ala Mawdudi." As Director of the Institute for the past ten years, Andreas has devoted his life to building bridges between people of all faiths attempting to promote peace and reconciliation among people. He has travelled widely in India and abroad to spread the message of reconciliation. His contributions on this topic are published in Indian and overseas journals.

Abstract

"COMMUNITY-BASED INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY"

This paper is a case study of a community-based project of the Henry Martyn Institute: International Centre for Research, Interfaith relations and Reconciliation in Hyderabad, India.

In an atmosphere where religion is confined to external observances and rituals, when the essence of religion, the uniting factor is taken over by dividing and destructive elements, where religion is used to instil fear, hatred and violence, I explore the working of a project aimed at promoting inter-faith understanding and communal harmony.

The elementary school for children, the tailoring centre for young women or the gathering of young men to read news papers or learn computer skills provide space for learning about each others faith informally and thus help in building wholesome relationships. Even though no formal religious education is provided, the community celebration of Christian, Muslim and Hindu festivals, the informal sharing of religious values on a day-to-day basis succeeds in healing wounds and nurturing good neighbourliness. The paper concludes that providing space for understanding each others religion in a non-competitive informal atmosphere, leads to understanding, accepting and respecting common and differentiating aspects of faith, which I believe is the very foundation of interfaith relationship.

Email: hyd1_hmiis@sancharnet.in

FAWKNER, SR PATTY

Director, Uniya - Jesuit Social Justice Centre (Australia) <
<http://www.uniya.org.au/>>

Biodata

Sister Patty Fawkner is currently the Director of Uniya, the Jesuit Social Justice Centre. She is a native of Sydney and has been a member of a religious congregation, the Good Samaritan Sisters, for thirty years. Sister Patty has worked in primary and adult education within the Catholic Church. Her degrees are in education, theology and arts, and she has recently completed a Masters' degree in Pastoral Ministry in Boston. The focus of Uniya's work is Australia's policy on asylum seekers and refugees, and Australia's role in the region, in particular its relationship with East Timor and Indonesia. In 2003 Uniya hosted a national seminar series on Muslim-Christian relations. In February 2004, Sister Patty will begin a three year appointment on the Commission of Australian Catholic Women. A current aim of the Commission is to promote interfaith dialogue as an instrument to work for constructive relations in a pluralistic society.

Abstract

"SEMINAR SERIES: 'MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS, WHERE DO WE ALL STAND?'"

This paper explores a national seminar series on Muslim-Christian relations held in six mainland cities in July, 2003. About 3000 people attended this community-based educational project organised by Uniya, a small Catholic Social Justice Centre.

A key impetus for the decision to mount this series was the rise in fear and tension between ethnic and religious groups within Australia during the past two years.

The seminars were conducted in a spirit of deep respect and goodwill, and with honest acknowledgement of theological and cultural differences.

Informal gatherings after the seminars were valuable and instructive, particularly in Adelaide, highlighting that it is in normal social interaction, that understanding and tolerance will grow.

The seminars were supported by quality educational resources and good media coverage.

Only a small number of Muslims attended the seminars, reflecting that this was the first initiative of Uniya in the area of Muslim-Christian relations. The contacts made, however, will provide the building blocks for further collaboration and networking.

Email: patty.fawkner@uniya.org

FERNANDO, PROF ANTONY

Executive Director, Inter-Cultural Research Centre (Sri Lanka)

Biodata

Antony Fernando is Founder and Director of the Inter-cultural Research Centre in Sri Lanka. The Centre's two aims are the development of a more enlightened system of teaching religion – one that makes individual believers more mentally mature and brings people of different religions closer together - and the promotion of English as a second language among Sri Lankans. Professor Fernando completed his Doctorate in Theology in Rome, his Higher Diploma in Religious Education in Paris and his PhD in Sri Lanka. He has been a lecturer at the National Seminary, Sri Lanka and Head of the Department of Western Classical Culture and Christianity at Kelaniya University, Sri Lanka. Professor Fernando's published works include books, articles and chapters of books on interfaith relations and English as a second language for Sri Lankans. He was named the International Man of the Year 1997-98 and has received the 20th Century Award for Achievement, both awarded by the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge.

Abstract

“THE BETTER WAY TO TEACH CRISTIANITY AND ISLAM”

The real solution to the current conflicts between Muslims and Christians is for both Islam and Christianity to teach religion in the right way. Both religions need to resort to a method that fits better the cause proper of religion.

Since the word ‘religion’ has two senses to it, any religion can be taught in one of two ways. Religion can be taught either to safeguard the handed down tradition of a clan-community, or to give individual believers a vision to live by. Even a doctrine like ‘Faith in God (Allah)’, which is the very foundation of both Islam and Christianity can be taught in either way. The present hostilities between the two communities clearly indicate that what is taught by both religions as ‘Faith in God’ could not be what the two founders, Mohammed and Jesus, would have intended. Faith in the same God should unite, not divide.

Both Christianity and Islam today need a more enlightened form of religion- teaching than the one actually in use, namely one which can, on one side make individual believers mentally more mature, and on the other, bring the people of the two religions closer to each other.

Email: inculture@eureka.lk

FLEMING, DR G. P. (JOE)

Manager Religious Education Programs, Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Melbourne (Australia) < <http://www.ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Dr Joe Fleming has worked in Catholic Schools since 1973 and has held positions of Religious Education Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and Head of the Senior School in a range of schools. He worked at the Catholic Education Office in the mid to late 1990s and worked extensively with the Religious Education and Curriculum Coordinator Networks. In 1999 he joined Australian Catholic University as a lecturer in Religious Education and in 2002 was awarded a PhD. The thesis examined the role of the Religious Education Coordinator in Secondary Schools. In 2003 he rejoined the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne as Manager of Religious Education Programs. He has written extensively in the area of religious education in professional journals as well as contributing chapters to student textbooks. In 1999 he co-wrote *Sabbath of Sabbaths* – a text for Religious Educators on scriptural images of God as the basis of the Year of Jubilee and in 2002 co-authored a text book for Tertiary Students on the methodology of religious education entitled *Thriving in the Religious Education Classroom*. He has also presented papers at international conferences on a wide range of issues.

Email: Jfleming@ceo.melb.catholic.edu.au

FLORENCE, MS CLARE

Rector’s Warden, Parish Council at St James’ Church (Australia) < <http://www.stjameschurchsydney.org.au/>>

Biodata

Clare Florence is current Rector’s Warden at the Parish Council at St. James’ on King Street in Sydney. She is an Australian citizen who has lived and worked in Europe and Asia as a lawyer, and as a consultant on business development in Asia, for nearly twenty years. She is a member of the Parish Council at St James’ Church and is also Chairman of the Australia Thailand

Business Council, New South Wales Chapter. Ms Florence is currently working with the Islamic Council of New South Wales on organising an International Summit on Islamic-Christian Dialogue, which will be held in Thailand later this year.

Email: cflorence@ozemail.com.au

FRY, MR IAN

Independent Scholar, Writer and Consultant (Australia)

Biodata

An independent scholar, writer and consultant, Ian Fry studied at Roseworthy Agricultural College, South Australia, for his Diploma in Agriculture (RDA). After seventeen years in agricultural advisory work within the chemicals industry, having been heavily involved in church affairs during that period, he was appointed Communications Officer for the Presbyterian Board of Local Mission in Victoria. After failing to gain support within the churches for a program of reassessment of the fundamental theological concepts around which Christianity, Judaism and Islam divide, he resigned to pursue private research into those issues and their impact on interfaith relations and world affairs. After an initial visit to the Middle East in 1975 Mr Fry changed career path to journalism. He worked as an Australian Volunteer Abroad to help a community-based organization establish a provincial newspaper in Milne Bay and moved to Papua New Guinea in 1991. He was subsequently appointed as general manager for WORD, a newspaper publishing company jointly owned by the country's four major churches. Mr Fry returned to Melbourne in 1996 to complete a two-book critical reassessment of the relationship between Christianity, Judaism and Islam, *Trouble in the Triangle*, which was published in 2000. He was awarded Papua New Guinea's Silver Jubilee Medal the same year.

Abstract

“CONCURRENT REASSESSMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGICAL ISSUES:
VITAL TO ENSURE OPTIMUM IMPACT FROM THE ADOPTION OF BEST EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE”

The role of **religious education** in promoting **Muslim-Christian harmony** and cooperation is discussed in the context that Islam and Christianity are two of three streams of Abrahamic faith whose origins within a framework of evolving Judaism, history, self-understanding, doctrinal development and communal conduct are intertwined.

Doctrine adopted, notably within Christianity, prejudiced their relationships and influenced subsequent events. Therefore only limited progress towards resolving current world crises is possible until key doctrinal issues are resolved, and considering relations between two faiths without the third equates to considering the white and shell of an egg as if the yolk did not exist.

Reform of education policies and practices – primary, secondary, vocational, tertiary, congregational and family – requires consideration of factors that influence each community's self-understanding, and the adoption of educational best practice in isolation cannot offset the cause of crisis.

Redirection of education policies and research-based reassessment of those factors, especially revealed theology, doctrine and dogma, must therefore proceed *concurrently*.

A study of attitudes of clergy and religious leaders to communal self-understanding and its foundation in doctrine shows that religious institutions cannot conduct the reassessment in isolation. Recommendations are therefore made for systematic re-examination of fundamental religious concepts by scholars of all three streams of Abrahamic faith working within collaborating universities.

Email: ian.fry@ozemail.com.au

GHAUS, PROFESSOR DR KHALIDA

Director, Women's Studies Centre, International Relations Department, University of Karachi (Pakistan)

Biodata

Assistant Professor Dr Khalida Ghaus has a Masters Degree and PhD from Karachi University in Pakistan and is currently the Director of the Women's Studies Centre based in the Department of International Relations at Karachi University. Her areas of interest are: Human Rights, the Far East, and Pakistan's Foreign Policy. Professor Dr Ghaus has published articles in internationally acclaimed journals, completed several research projects sponsored by Karachi University, and participated in, and organized, many national and international seminars and conferences. She has been a delegate to the UN Commission on Human Rights, and has delivered numerous guest lectures at universities throughout the United States of America and on the Indian Sub-Continent. She is the Honorary Assistant Director of the Pakistan Center for Democracy Studies and the Secretary-General of the World University Service (an International NGO). Professor Dr Ghaus is the author of *Rights of Women in Islam* and co-editor of *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: Problems and Prospects* and has contributed articles to many books, journals, newspapers and magazines.

Abstract

“THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT EDUCATION POLICY IN PROMOTING MUSLIM/CHRISTIAN HARMONY & COOPERATION IN PAKISTAN”

Pakistan education policies as propounded by various regimes in Pakistan have a common objective, that is, to protect and promote Islamic values through education.

These are to begin with certain theoretical problems, which are related to the Evangelical nature of both these two religions and doctrinal systems. Both Islam and Christianity claim to possess the ultimate truth and by definition truth claims at variance to either Christianity or Islam becomes problematic. In spite of this theoretical tension between the two religions Islam seems to provide more accommodation to Christianity by accepting the Prophethood of Jesus Christ and by proclaiming a close affinity between the two religions. Practically in Pakistan the textbooks in educational institution contain nothing derogatory to Christianity nor do they assert Christianity to be totally false. Christian community in Pakistan has been actively involved in the field of education by establishing mission schools and colleges, which attract Muslim students and have shown a remarkable level of tolerance in the Evangelical work. Other than some recent events motivated by the terrorist groups the two communities in Pakistan had have a very amicable relationship. Recent rise of fundamentalism particularly after the Afghan-Soviet conflict has motivated a minority, which is intolerant and aggressive. The only way to address this problem is to emphasis the truth common to these two religions without denying its value to either community. At all levels occasions should be provided to enter into dialogue and encourage interaction between the Muslims and Christians of Pakistan. To examine the extent to which the text books used in schools and colleges to promote this harmony or work against it have to be thoroughly examined and report be prepared recommending the exclusion or inclusion of certain ideas relating to all religions practised in Pakistan.

Email: kghaus2001@yahoo.com

GOLDBURG, DR PETA

Head, School of Religious Education, Australian Catholic University (Australia) <
<http://www.acu.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Dr Peta Goldberg is currently Head of the National School of Religious Education, and a senior lecturer, at the Australian Catholic University. She lectures in under-graduate and post-graduate teacher education programmes and in 2001 was co-author, with Dr Maurice Ryan, of *Recognising Religion: A Study of Religion for Senior Secondary Students*.

Email: p.goldburg@mcauley.acu.edu.au

HENDERSON, Ms JACQUI, CBE

Executive Director, London Central Learning & Skills Council (United Kingdom) <
<http://www.careline.org.uk/Organisations/OrgRecord.asp?orgcode=1574>>

Biodata

Jacqui Henderson has recently been appointed Regional Director for London Learning & Skills Council (LSC), with responsibility for an annual budget of £1.4 billion to deliver all publicly funded education and training for post-16 young people and adults across London. She is also continuing her role as Executive Director for London Central LSC, for the time being. Her previous post was that of Chief Executive of TEC National Council where she took a leading role in supporting the management and service delivery of the Training & Enterprise Councils, which operated across England. Jacqui is actively involved in establishing effective local and national partnerships. She is an Honorary Member of City and Guilds and a Fellow of the RSA. Her key areas of interest relate to raising standards, equal opportunities and diversity and ensuring essential links are created between education and business. Ms Henderson was awarded the honour of Commander of the British Empire in 2001 for her contribution to education and training in the UK.

Abstract

“CHRISTIAN/MUSLIM CO-OPERATION IN LEARNING - A CASE STUDY IN PARTNERSHIP”

I hope to provide a public sector perspective on the importance of inter-faith cooperation in the context of increasing learning and to stress the vital role of learning in the 21st Century. I will focus on a Case Study to illustrate the focus of my presentation.

In the UK it is projected that 2.2 million jobs will need to be filled by 2010, many by skilled craftsmen and yet 30% of our workforce do not have level 2 qualifications which are seen as a base for embarking on training. In Germany this is 65% and France 51%. The LSC's aim is to reduce the number of adults in the workforce in this category by 40%.

Email: Jacqui.Henderson@lsc.gov.uk

HODSON, MR OLIVER

Student Representative, Trinity College, The University of Melbourne (Australia)
<<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Oliver Hodson was educated at Melbourne Grammar School, South Yarra. He spent his gap year in Somerset, England, working in a Leonard Cheshire Home for People with Multiple Sclerosis.

Mr Hodson commenced a double degree in Arts and Science in 2001, and intends to major in Classics and Botany. He is a practising Christian (Anglican).

Email: ohodson@trinity.unimelb.edu.au

JONES, SR CATHERINE SMSM

Tutor, Catholic Education Centre, Archdiocese of Wellington (New Zealand)
<<http://www.wcec.org.nz/>>

Biodata

Sister Catherine Jones is currently a tutor in Adult Education at the Catholic Education Centre in the Archdiocese of Wellington. She was born in Dunedin, New Zealand, and made religious profession in the Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, a Roman Catholic religious congregation, in 1970. While teaching in Suva, Fiji, she graduated from the University of the South Pacific with a BA in history and geography, and a Graduate Certificate in Education. She also holds a Masters degree in Church History from the Catholic University Of America, Washington DC, and a Graduate Certificate in Islamic Studies from PISAI (Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies), Rome. As a lecturer in Church history and Pacific studies at the Pacific Regional Seminary in Suva, Fiji, she was one of the founding members of the Interfaith Search in Fiji in 1988. In 1994-96, Sister Catherine was involved in Muslim-Christian dialogue in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, where she organized a formation programme for pre-school teachers. Over the past five years, she has continued to be involved in Muslim-Christian encounters in an immigrant housing estate in suburban France. During that time she was also a member of the group Maghreb-Islam of the Archdiocese of Lyon, France.

Abstract

“EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY FROM WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND”

Ahmed Zaoui is a name that many New Zealanders now recognize: Algerian, refugee, husband and father, Muslim, he arrived in Auckland New Zealand in December 2002 seeking political asylum. As his prolonged detention in solitary confinement became known to New Zealanders, his plight galvanized many into action. The Anglican and Catholic Bishops supported Amnesty International’s campaign for “Freedom or Free Trial”.

The case of Ahmed Zaoui needs to be seen against the background of the higher public profile of Muslims in New Zealand. There have been Muslims in NZ for over 125 years, but in the last 25 years their numbers have grown rapidly. The 2001 census recorded 23,637 Muslims (less than 1% of the total population). There is a developing infrastructure of religious, educational and social organizations under the umbrella of FIANZ, the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand.

This paper will examine the development and implementation of a Wellington-based adult religious education programme for the promotion of Muslim-Christian understanding and cooperation, as well as the role religious leaders have played in making the church’s teaching on inter-faith relations known.

After analysing key issues facing New Zealand society in this Wellington experience, recommendations can be made that may be of interest to other urban contexts of Muslim-Christian relations.

Email: cathelizjones@hotmail.com

JONES, MRS JO

Director of Strategy, Faith Regen UK (United Kingdom) <<http://www.faithregenuk.org/>>

Biodata

Mrs Jones is Director of Strategy for Faith Regen UK, a multi-faith regeneration organisation in the United Kingdom. A former secondary head teacher, with over twenty-five years experience in secondary schools, she has specialised in developing community partnerships linking education and business. Much of her teaching career was within a multi-cultural environment in West Yorkshire. Her current role enables her to develop projects which focus on providing access to education and training within disadvantaged communities by promoting inter-faith partnerships for community regeneration. She is Project Manager for The Faith Forum, West Yorkshire which is a demonstration of the British Government's recognition that faith-based action is an effective component of sustainable community development.

Email: CLKEJJ@aol.com

JONES, Ms NICKY

PhD Student (French & Law), University of Queensland (Australia) < <http://www.uq.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Ms Nicky Jones is completing a PhD at the University of Queensland, studying the cases of Muslim girls expelled from French public schools for wearing the Islamic headscarf. In 2001, Nicky worked for five months at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, supervised by former federal human rights commissioner Brian Burdekin. On returning to Australia, Nicky worked as a research consultant with a three-year Indigenous Rights in the Commonwealth project. Based on her research for this project, Nicky wrote a report entitled *Wrongs and Rights: the economic, social and cultural rights of Indigenous peoples in Australia* which was published in January 2003. Following this publication she was invited to London by the CPSU to present her findings at an expert seminar in March 2003. Nicky is a Research Scholar with the Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law at the T. C. Beirne Law School, and has lectured in, and holds degrees from, Australian and French universities. She has written several newspaper articles and opinion pieces, spoken at a number of seminars and conferences and, in 2002, was interviewed by the ABC on the legal and cultural issues surrounding the Islamic headscarf in France.

Abstract

“ ‘AFFAIR OF THE ISLAMIC HEADSCARF’ – FRENCH CASE STUDIES”

This paper examines a series of cases in France, collectively known as the ‘affair of the Islamic headscarf’, in which Muslim schoolgirls were suspended or expelled from their schools for wearing the headscarf in France’s constitutionally secular public school system.

The matter reached international attention in October 1989, when three Muslim schoolgirls refused to remove their headscarves in class. It became the subject of intense public debate and national protests until France’s highest administrative court, the Conseil d’État, ruled that the wearing by students of religious signs in schools was not incompatible with the principle of secularism except in certain circumstances, such as if the religious signs were ‘ostentatious’ or ‘aggressive,’ although these terms were not defined.

Following a change of government in 1993 and a subsequent shift in government policy interpretation of the Conseil d’État’s decision, a number of Muslim schoolgirls across France

were expelled from their schools, and the cases returned to national and international prominence in 1994 and 1995.

The events of the 'affair of the Islamic headscarf' prompted much public debate over the nature and application of secularism in public schools, particularly in relation to Islam, which is the second most important religion in France.

The issues have recently returned to the national agenda, and at the end of 2003 the French government will decide whether legislative or indeed constitutional amendment is needed to ensure the consistent treatment of Islamic headscarves and indeed all religious signs in French public schools.

Email: s313496@student.uq.edu.au, jones_nicky@yahoo.com.au

KARICKAM, PROF DR ABRAHAM

General Secretary, Dr Alexander Mar Thoma Centre for Dialogue (India)

Biodata

M. Y. Abraham Karickam is currently General Secretary of the Dr Alexander Mar Thoma Centre for Dialogue and a Reader in the English Department at Kerala University. He is Founder Director of Kerala University's Comparative Literature Research and Study Centre, and Founding Chief Editor of its research journal *Rational Discourse*. He has been Convenor of the Academic Cell, as well as Co-ordinator of the Assessment and Accreditation Steering Committee, which led to Kerala University being the first university in South India to be accredited by NAAC. Professor Karickam's research has been widely published, and he has acted as editor for several other publications. He has been heavily involved in the Mar Thoma Church, especially as a member of the Mar Thoma Sabha Council (the Executive Council of the Church) and its Centre for Dialogue. Professor Dr. Karickam has held various voluntary positions in community organisations, such as the YMCA where he has been Founder General Secretary, President and Secretary and is currently a member of the Executive Committee of the World Federation of Inter-Faith Councils. He holds a PhD from Mahatma Gandhi University, a Masters' degree in English from Fatima College, Quilon and a Masters' degree in History at Kerala University.

Abstract

"THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY BASED APPROACHES IN PROMOTING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN HARMONY AND COOPERATION: A CASE STUDY OF KERALA STATE IN INDIA"

Kerala – population is three cores. Hindus, Christians and Muslims are the major communities. Militant groups create very violent situations unexpectedly, which often disturb the calm. Ever since the destruction of the Babari Masjid at Ayodhya, the situation has been grim.

Community based educational approaches have produced excellent results in fostering peace and harmony here. Some of the programs undertaken by Dr. Alexander Mar Thoma Dialogue Center are the following:

1. **On Campus Live-in Consultation for students** belonging to the Hindu, Christian and Muslim communities. Students were asked to share their views regarding the other communities first. This was followed by scholarly lectures by the leaders of respective religions. Youngsters realize their mistakes and commit themselves to work for unity
2. **Inter-religious Conventions.** Conventions offer opportunities to reach out to people in large numbers. Different religions conduct their own events at specific point and time every year (About 100,000 people attend each session of the week long Maramon

- Christian Convention). Inter-religious conventions are really challenging. Different religious leaders address people from the same platform on different days.
3. **Orientation for college teachers.** Kerala has more than 400 colleges affiliated to various universities. Teachers in private institutions are free to contest for political elections. They have great influence on the community. Inter-faith orientation camps conducted for the teaching community proves very fruitful in ensuring communal harmony.
 4. **Inter-faith Councils in villages.** As Mahatma Gandhi said, “the heart of India lies in its villages”. Village Inter-faith councils play a pivotal role in maintaining peace and containing communal riots during vulnerable situations.
 5. **Christmas, Diwali and Ramadan.** Festivals offer wonderful occasions to strengthen amity among different communities. We celebrate Christmas, Diwali and Ramadan together, which help in building a sense of oneness.
 6. **Informal Study Groups in villages and cities.** Regular classes are arranged for the study of the Vedas, Bible and Qur’An.
 7. **Seminars with Local Non-Governmental Organizations.** Series of seminars are being arranged in collaboration with local social voluntary organizations. Support and participation of agencies like YMCAs, YWCAs, Y’s men’s Club, Bharat Sevak Samaj, All Kerala Balajana Sakhyam (children’s organization) and Student Christian Movement, are ensured.
 8. **Community Activity.** A very interesting project of community activity was a padayatra (protest march) from Chengannur to Trivandrum, pleading for a railway line through the central Kerala. A large number of people from different religions participated in the ten-day march.

Community based teaching can go a long way in harnessing amity and peace among peoples of different faiths and ideologies. We have had exemplary results for programs, as suggested above.

Email: karickam@sancharnet.in

KIRBY, Ms KATHE

Associate Director, The Asialink Centre, The University of Melbourne (Australia)
<<http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Kathe Kirby has been with the Asia Education Foundation since its inception in 1993. She currently holds the positions of AEF Director and Associate Director, The Asialink Centre of The University of Melbourne. She has a long background in school education having worked as a secondary school teacher, university lecturer in education and as a senior policy officer in the Department of Education, Victoria, prior to joining the AEF. Her key interest is in implementing educational change and innovation in areas of national importance. In 2001 she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to investigate the studies of Asia in school education in the USA, UK, Japan and Korea.

Email: k.kirby@asialink.unimelb.edu.au

KUKAH, FR MATTHEW HASSAN

Pontifical Adviser on the Inter-Faith Dialogue and Member of the Nigerian Commission on Human Rights (Nigeria)

Biodata

Father Matthew Hassan Kukah is currently a Mason Fellow in Public Policy and Management at Harvard University in the United States of America, Pontifical Adviser on the Inter-Faith Dialogue and a Member of the Nigerian Commission on Human Rights. He is a Catholic Reverend Father and former Secretary-General of the Catholic Secretariat in Nigeria. He served on Nigeria's Presidential Truth Commission into Past Human Rights Violations and, until recently, was a Senior Fellow at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. Fr Kukah is a rigorous scholar and respected commentator and holds a PhD from the University of London. He is the author of the critically acclaimed work, *Religion and Politics in Northern Nigeria since Independence* (Spectrum, 1994), and most recently of *Democracy and Civil Society in Nigeria* (Spectrum, 2002).

Abstract

"CHALLENGES POSED TO CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN AFRICA"

This paper will examine some of the challenges posed to Christian-Muslim relations by emerging social, economic and political trends in Africa. The paper will address some of the historical roots of the hostilities between Islam, Western colonial rule and Christianity.

It will then examine closely the social political processes that have led to the collapse of the state in Africa. The paper will then address some of the consequences on Religion.

Drawing lessons from the crisis generated by Sharia Law in Nigeria in recent years, the paper will examine what lessons both Islam and Christianity can learn from the mistakes of the past. The paper will conclude by identifying key areas of collaboration between both faiths which could be helpful in shaping the educational policies on the continent.

Email: Matthew_Kukah@ksg04.harvard.edu

LANE, DR CHARLES R.

Chief Executive Officer, The Myer Foundation (Australia) <<http://www.myerfoundation.org.au/main.asp?PageId=323>>

Biodata

Dr Charles R. Lane is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Myer Foundation. Dr Lane returned to Australia in May 1999 after nearly thirty years abroad, ten of which were spent living in Africa. He has published more than twenty-five papers in scientific journals, authored two and contributed text to ten other books. Dr Lane has also written and narrated the documentary film "The Price of Conservation" for the BBC. As Chief Executive Officer of the Myer Foundation, Dr Lane has conducted a major review and restructuring exercise to prepare the Foundation for the 21st Century. He is on the Advisory Board of Queensland University of Technology's Centre for Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies, is a Member of the BHP Billiton HSEC Award Selection Panel, Member Australian Institute of Company Directors, Member of the Panel for CEPA Trust – Ethical Investor Corporate Sustainability Awards, Member of Management Advisory Board of "The Nature and Value of Australia's Ecosystem Services" Project at CSIRO, and is on the Governing Council of the Asia Pacific Philanthropic Consortium.

Email: clane@myerfoundation.org.au

LINDSAY, DR MARK R.

Director of Academic Studies, Trinity College (Australia) <<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Dr Mark Lindsay is currently the Director of Academic Studies at Trinity College, the University of Melbourne, as well as an Adjunct Lecturer at Trinity College Theological School. He is also an accredited postgraduate supervisor and distance education tutor at the Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations, Cambridge, UK. He completed his BA (Hons) and his PhD at the University of Western Australia with a thesis titled 'Covenanted Solidarity: The Theological Basis of Karl Barth's Opposition to Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust'. He has also been involved as a lecturer at the University of Western Australia, his most senior role being as Sub-Dean in the Faculty of Arts. Dr Lindsay has published three books and several more articles and chapters in refereed journals. He is a member of FRHistS, ANZSTS (The Australian and New Zealand Society for Theological Studies), Arbeitsgemeinschaft kirchlicher Zeitgeschichtler (Association of Contemporary Church Historians) and the Council of Christians and Jews (Victoria).

Abstract

"A CHRISTIAN CURRICULUM IN A MULTIFAITH ENVIRONMENT, OR A MULTIFAITH CURRICULUM IN A CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT?"

The question posed by the title of this paper would resonate in many theological seminaries, as a challenge of reconciling ancient heritage with current demographic context. It is felt particularly keenly within Trinity College, at the University of Melbourne.

Officially gazetted in 1871 as a residential College of the University, 'under the aegis' of the Anglican Church, Trinity began teaching undergraduates in 1872 and theological students in 1876. 113 years later, a third teaching element—Trinity College Foundation Studies—began operations, for the purpose of preparing international students for University entrance. In inevitable consequence, the College has changed from being predominantly Anglican in demographics, to (numerically at least) predominantly Muslim, Buddhist or agnostic. And yet the founding principles of the College, including its Anglican heritage and mission, remain intact.

As a College committed to both internationalization and its Anglican charter, this new demographic profile raises curricular concerns absent from previous generations. How can Trinity conduct its teaching, across all three of its academic sectors, in ways that are consistent with its Anglican Christian foundation, and yet which are not only sensitive to its current multifaith character but which actively promote interfaith dialogue and understanding?

This paper will show that a commitment to the principles of liberal education, and to the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolutions, facilitate precisely these objectives. The paper will also outline and assess various curricular and extra-curricular programs emphasizing dialogue that have already been trialed at Trinity, and will suggest further initiatives.

Email: mlindsay@trinity.unimelb.edu.au

LINDSEY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TIM

Director, The Asian Law Centre (Australia) <<http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/alc/>>

Biodata

Associate Professor Timothy Lindsey is Director of the Asian Law Centre, which he joined in 1990, and Associate Dean (International) in the Faculty of Law at the University of Melbourne. He is a graduate of the University of Melbourne Law School and completed his doctoral thesis in Indonesian studies. He teaches Indonesian Law, Malaysian Law, Commercial Law in Asia and Islamic & Traditional Customary Law. His research interests are in the areas of commercial law,

insolvency law, constitutional law and human rights. He researches and teaches in bahasa Indonesia and is a member of the Board of the Australia-Indonesia Institute and is a practising member of the Victorian Bar. His publications include *Indonesia: Law & Society*, *Indonesia After Soeharto: Prospects for Reform* and *Indonesia: Bankruptcy, Law Reform and the Commercial Court*.

Email: t.lindsey@unimelb.edu.au

MALIK, MR MUHAMMAD NADEEM

Postgraduate Student, The Department of Development Studies, The University of Melbourne (Australia) <www.unimelb.edu.au>

Biodata

Mr Muhammad Nadeem Malik is currently a postgraduate in Development Studies at the University of Melbourne and until recently a Research Consultant for the Saar Development Research Center and Oxfam in Pakistan. He spent over five years as a Research Consultant and Trainer for South Asia Partnership Pakistan, one of the largest development NGOs in Pakistan, and has also served as a Research Consultant for the Church World Services Pakistan/Afghanistan. He has published extensively on globalisation, gender and democracy, and on issues of education, development and interfaith dialogue in Pakistan. In 2000, he completed a Commonwealth funded research project entitled, *Citizens and Governance: Civil Society in the New Millennium*, which was distributed to all major national and international development organizations in Pakistan.

Abstract

“COMMUNAL TRENDS IN EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN AND THE POLICY OPTIONS FOR CREATING INTERFAITH HARMONY”

The key to promoting interfaith harmony within any society is to promote the idea of a State and society that provides equal opportunities to all its citizens to practice their religion the way they want and the fact that religion is an individual affair. The very fact that someone is Christian and the other Muslim puts them into two different boxes and for religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, it becomes imperative to first create conditions of tolerance outside the sphere of religion by celebrating and enhancing common cultural and linguistic traditions promoting universal human values through education accompanied by scientific development producing rational human mind and a strong civil society promoting democracy, and human rights. Needless to say egalitarian economic policies and equal opportunities of economic well being of all citizens significantly creates harmony within society.

There are two divergent views that exist in the field of education throughout the world. One believes in creative and participatory educational approaches and the other on authoritarianism. The former lays stress on the realization of human potential and the later stresses conformity and status quo. One facilitates human freedom and the other creates fear of freedom. What approach is to be upheld, largely depends on the nature of a given State and state policies? In this sense education becomes a highly political agenda.

Email: m.mailk@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au

MARKWELL, PROFESSOR DONALD

Warden, Trinity College (Australia) <<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Professor Donald Markwell has been Warden of Trinity College in the University of Melbourne since 1997, and is a Professorial Fellow of the Department of Political Science and Centre for Public Policy in the University of Melbourne. Rhodes Scholar for Queensland in 1981, he was Procter Visiting Fellow at Princeton University in 1984-85, a Research Fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1985-86, and Fellow and Tutor in Politics at Merton College, Oxford, and a lecturer in the University of Oxford from 1986 to 1997.

Email: djm@trinity.unimelb.edu.au

MARTINEZ, DR PATRICIA

Head, Intercultural Studies and Senior Research Fellow, Asia-Europe Institute (Malaysia)
<<http://www.asia-europe-institute.org/>>

Biodata

Dr Patricia A. Martinez is Head of Intercultural Studies and a Senior Research Fellow for Culture and Religion at the Asia Europe Institute, Malaysia. She is the first non-Muslim Malaysian to receive a PhD in Religion with a specialization in Islam, from Temple University. She also has Masters degrees in the Comparative Study of Religion and in Catholic Theology. She will be at Ohio and Stanford Universities on a Fulbright Grant in Islamic Studies from October 2003 to March 2004. Dr Martinez's publications and presentations are on Islam in Malaysia and Southeast Asia, Women in Islam, and Christian-Muslim Interfaith Dialogue. Her publications include *The Islamic State or the State of Islam in Malaysia*, *Deconstructing Jihad and its Southeast Asian Contexts* and *Is it always Islam versus Civil Society?* During her Fulbright, she hopes to work on her manuscript on Islam in postcolonial, modern Malaysia. Dr Martinez has just completed a United Nations consultancy for an education pilot project in Indonesia, focused on overcoming the problems of religion and race.

Abstract

"CONTEXT, CONTRASTS AND NEW CONFIGURATIONS: AN INDONESIAN EDUCATION PROJECT AND ITS MALAYSIAN POSSIBILITIES IN CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS"

The paper first describes the Whole Child Education Project, a UNICEF-Government of Indonesia education pilot project to overcome the cleavages of race and religion in Indonesia, sharing the outcome of two evaluations (and ensuing recommendations) which I was responsible for in 2001 and end 2002, as the UNICEF consultant to the project. I was also involved in the project for the potential of its application in Malaysia because of significant similarities with Indonesia including the need to enable Muslim and non-Muslim populations to co-exist.

Using the insights enabled by my experience, I analyse the Malaysian context including the nation's complex evolution of Muslim and non-Muslim relationships in politics, governance as well as education because Islam in Malaysia, unlike in Indonesia, is central to national discourses, governance and the politics.

The conclusion offers possibilities and problems in implementing such projects to teach children so as to enable them to overcome difference, including a different religious and racial Other. The conclusion of the paper has a particular focus on generic insights about a. translating and transferring across contexts and b. the strictures of nation-building policies and agendas of the state.

Email: pmartinez@um.edu.my, dr_pmartinez@yahoo.com, patm@tm.net.my

MCGREGOR, Ms JENNY

Executive Director, The Asialink Centre (Australia) <<http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Ms Jenny McGregor is the founding director of the Asialink Centre at the University of Melbourne and the Executive Director of the Asia Education Foundation. Under Ms McGregor's leadership, Asialink has become Australia's largest Asia centre with an annual budget of over \$4 million and activities throughout Australia and Southeast, Northeast and South Asia spanning education, the arts, media and corporate and public programs. Ms McGregor is on the Advisory Board of the Melbourne Institute of Asian Languages and Societies and the Dunlop Asia Awards. She is a member of the Arts to Asia Advisory Committee and was recently appointed as a member of the APEC Women Leaders' Network. Ms McGregor was educated at the University of Melbourne and has worked as a political advisor and senior manager in the Australian and Victorian governments before joining the Commission for the Future in 1987 to research Australia Asia relations. In 1993 she received the Peter Brice award for outstanding contribution to teaching and learning about the Asia Pacific region.

Email: j.mcgregor@Asialink.unimelb.edu.au

MCINERNEY, FR PATRICK

Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations (Australia)
<<http://www.columban.org.au/Christian-Muslim/islam.htm>>

Biodata

Father Patrick Joseph McInerney is currently a staff member at the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations. He completed his Licentiate in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome and his Clinical Pastoral Education (basic and advanced) in Melbourne. He completed his Master of Theology at the Melbourne College of Divinity in 2003. His research interests include Islam, Christian-Muslim Relations, and Lonergan Research. He published "September Eleven. What hope for unity? The mission of the church" in the *South Pacific Journal of Mission Studies* in December 2002. Fr McInerney has been a missionary in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and a former Coordinator of the Columban Pakistan Mission Unit.

Abstract

"A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONSHIPS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL COUNCILS"

In 2003 the Columban Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice and the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations, in cooperation with Affinity Intercultural Foundation, together with local councils in metropolitan Sydney, held public forums on peace and active non-violence in four local government areas of Sydney.

At each forum there were four speakers, two Christian (a man and a woman) and two Muslims (also a man and a woman), thus ensuring a balance of gender and religious representation. Each of the speakers addressed the topic of peace and active non-violence from within their respective traditions. After the four talks, there was opportunity for the public to ask their questions, a crucial and integral part of the process. Each forum concluded with shared refreshments, which enabled the public to mix socially with the speakers and with each other, sometimes being the occasion of the first personal encounter between a Christian and a Muslim.

A very significant dimension of these forums is that the Centres deliberately went out from the churches and mosques and, with cooperation from the local Council, tried to reach out to the general public.

The forums were very well received. There were some “teething problems” in the initial contact with the Councils, in making the arrangements, and in publicising the events. However, the response of the civic officials in supporting and attending the event was very encouraging. The public witness of Christians and Muslims sharing a public platform together and talking about peace and active non-violence was itself a great counter-witness to the negative stereo-types that are all too common in society. The forums will be continued in other council areas of Sydney in the coming year.

In my address I will present the rationale for these forums, describe their basic format, evaluate their successes and failures, and draw conclusions for community-based approaches to Christian-Muslim Relations. I will also comment on the ambiguity I feel about the title of the colloquium and the idea of “managing” Christian-Muslim Relations.

Email: cmr@columban.org.au, patmcinerney@hotmail.com

MERALI, MS ARZU

Director of Research, Islamic Human Rights Commission (United Kingdom)
<<http://members.tripod.com/~Bregava/index-9.html>>

Biodata

Ms Arzu Merali is a freelance journalist and Director of Research at the London-based Islamic Human Rights Commission, which was set up in 1997. The Commission is an independent, not-for-profit, campaign, research and advocacy organization based in London, UK. It fosters links between, and works in partnership with, different organizations from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds and campaigns for justice for all peoples regardless of their racial, confessional or political background.

Email: arzu@ihrc.org, A.Merali.89@cantab.net

MICHAEL, DR MICHALIS S.

Research Fellow/Lecturer, Politics Department, LaTrobe University (Australia)
<<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/socsci/>>

Biodata

Dr Michalis S. Michael is currently a Research Fellow/Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences (Politics) at La Trobe University and Project Coordinator of its “Dialogue Project: Promoting Inter-Religious and Inter-Cultural Dialogue in Victoria.” His teaching and research areas include: international relations; conflict resolution, prevention and mitigation; theories of world politics, states and nations; international public policy; United Nations, Balkans, Southern Europe, Cyprus conflict; Australian foreign policy and inter-ethnic, inter-cultural and inter-religious civilisational dialogue. Dr Michael is currently engaged in a series of interrelated research projects that examines the impact of international events on West-Islam relations at the local, provincial, national, regional and global levels.

Email: m.michael@latrobe.edu.au

MORRISON, Ms KARIN

Director, Rosenkranz Centre for Gifted Children, Bialik College (Australia)
<http://www.lookstein.org/resources/rosenkranz_outline.htm>

Biodata

Karin Morrison is currently the Director of the Rosenkranz Centre for Gifted Children at Bialik College in Melbourne. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, under Karin's leadership, Bialik College incubated a pioneering cultural awareness program called "Harmony Through Understanding", involving middle-school students from sixteen Victorian schools, including Catholic, Islamic, Protestant and government schools.

Abstract

"HARMONY THROUGH UNDERSTANDING"

In a world where there is so much fear and uncertainty, it is more important than ever to take steps now to promote greater understanding and positive, productive relations between people of different religious, cultures and backgrounds. The most logical starting point is our children. In the words of Gandhi, "If we are to have real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the children."

Shortly after the events of September 11, a pilot project was established in Victoria, Australia to provide school students with regular opportunities to meet with similar aged students from diverse backgrounds to get to know each other and learn from each other, not just about their differences, but about their many similarities. This project, "Harmony Through Understanding", included students and teachers from Muslim, Christian and Jewish schools, government and independent schools throughout Victoria - a collaboration of several schools and organisations all united with the common belief that if children have opportunities to meet, learn, have fun and share experiences, inaccurate and dangerous stereotypes will be discarded and shared understandings will develop.

This presentation will provide a comprehensive overview of the "Harmony Through Understanding" project, including how it was established, the practical arrangements from professional development of teachers, food and venue requirements, funding, speakers and activities to the achievements and challenges.

Email: karinmorrison@hotmail.com

MU'TI, MR ABDUL

General Chairman, National Board Muhammadiyah Youth Movement (Indonesia)

Biodata

Abdul Mu'ti is currently Chairman of the National Board Muhammadiyah Youth Movement and senior staff in the Department of Sociology of Education, Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic State University, Jakarta. He has recently been the Head Department of English and Psychology at the State Institute for Islamic Studies, Walisongo, Semarang and the Director of Centre for Religious and Cultural Studies, Muhammadiyah University, Semarang. Mr Mu'ti completed his BA (Hons) in the Faculty of Islamic Education at the State Institute for Islamic Studies, Walisongo, Semarang, and his M.Ed at the School of Education, Flinders University, South Australia. He has recently been an active discussant in issues concerning youth and terrorism, having attended international conferences addressing these matters. He has published several articles concerning Islamic education.

Abstract

“GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION ACT”

Since the last five years, Indonesia has faced a very serious ethnics and religious conflicts. The two most serious are Muslim-Christian conflicts happened in Maluku and Poso, Sulawesi. Despite the facts that the main causes of the conflicts are not only religious issues, analysts said that the conflicts are indicators of the failure of religion education since religion education is a compulsory subject in every level of education.

Government policies of religion education are based on the Pancasila, the National Constitution of Indonesia 1945, the National Education Act number 2/1989 and the National Development Framework (GBHN). As it is stated in the government regulation of religion education the religion subject is taught according to the religion of students and religion teachers of the same religion. For example, students and teachers of the subject of Islam are only the Moslems.

These policies, however, do not work very consistently. Three common inconsistencies are found in the practice of religion education. Firstly, in some government schools, teachers of religion education are not religion teachers. Secondly, in private-religious schools, students receive the teaching of other religion, mostly, the religion of the institutions. Finally, students from different religions are taught in the same religion class. Apart from political and social factors, it is interesting to analyze whether religious disharmony or conflicts in Indonesia are caused by inconsistent implementation of religion education in school. Or, are there possibilities that the regulations themselves are irrelevant with religious plurality in Indonesia.

Email: abe_mukti@yahoo.com

NANJI, PROFESSOR AZIM

Director, Institute of Ismaili Studies and Visiting Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University (United Kingdom) < <http://www.getcited.org/inst/150162> >

Biodata

Professor Azim A. Nanji is the Director of the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London and is currently a Visiting Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University in the United States of America. He holds a PhD and Masters degree in Islamic Studies from McGill University and has been a Professor of Religion at the University of Florida. He is currently on the Editorial Board for the *Journal of Religion and Theological Education*, a Secretary Member for the Task Force for the Institute of Islamic Civilizations at Aga Khan University and Associate Editor for the *Encyclopaedia of Religion* at Oxford University Press. He has received many awards and honours, including his election to the American Society for the Study of Islam in 1996 and, more recently, his appointment to the steering committee for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Professor Nanji has published many books and book chapters, edited works, and articles in journals, conference proceedings and encyclopaedias. Throughout his career he has presented at many conferences and symposia, most recently at the “Diversity and Islam” Symposium, Parliament Hill, Ottawa, in 2003.

Abstract

“CREATING A SPACE FOR CONVERSATION: MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS IN THE U.K.”

Among the most critical areas of concern in forging interactions among Muslims and Christians in the UK is of enabling the creation of appropriate spaces -physical and intellectual, where such interactions can take place in the spirit of open inquiry and dialogue. This paper offers one such model in London and illustrates how use is made of the Ismaili Centre and the Institute of Ismaili Studies to promote such activity.

Email: padirector@iis.ac.uk

OTHMAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR NORANI

Senior Fellow, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (Malaysia)

Biodata

Since 1995, Norani Othman has been Associate Professor and Senior Fellow at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies. A graduate of the University of Malaya in Sociology and Anthropology, she obtained her MPhil through the University of Hull and later also pursued postgraduate studies at Wolfson College, University of Oxford. From 1977 to 1997, she was a lecturer in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (National University of Malaysia). She is the editor of two books: *Shari'a Law and the Modern Nation-State: A Malaysian Symposium* (Berhad, 1994) and *Gender, Culture and Religion: Equal before God, Unequal before Man* co-edited with Cecilia Ng (Persatuan Sains Social Malaysia, 1995). Her more recent publications include *Capturing Globalization* co-edited with James H Mittelmann, (Routledge, 2001) and "Grounding Human Rights Arguments in Non-Western Culture: Shari'a and the Citizenship Rights of Women in a Modern Islamic Nation-State" in *The East Asian Challenge for Human Rights* edited by Joanne R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell (Cambridge University Press, 1999). In addition to her academic career, Professor Othman is a founding member of SIS Forum Malaysia, a Muslim Women's group popularly known in Malaysia as Sisters-in-Islam. Professor Othman currently sits on the organisation's Board, as well as being a Vice-President of the Malaysian Association of Social Science.

Abstract

"THE PROSPECT OF THE INTER-FAITH PROJECT IN MALAYSIA"

Multiethnic and multi-religious Malaysia has adopted an inter-faith program even before the country gained its independence from British colonial rule. For example, in 1956 the inter-faith organization was set up and linked to the Malaysian Branch of the World Inter-Faith Council. This later evolved into the Inter-Faith Fellowship and currently there is a newly formed group called the Malaysian Interfaith Network. The long-term project of successfully maintaining an interfaith dialogue between different religious groups in Malaysia is a challenging one.

The Malaysian state post-*Merdeka* (Independence) can be described as secular at least in its purpose and initial intention. The Malaysian Federal Constitution, unlike that of India or Turkey, does not contain a preamble. The word 'secular' does not appear anywhere in the Constitution. However, legal and constitutional scholars claimed that there is historical evidence that the country was meant to be secular and the intention of making Islam the official religion of the Federation was primarily for ceremonial purposes.

In the past few decades since the mid-1980s the government has undertaken various types of policies to increase the Islamic character of the state and society generally. Islamisation in the Malaysian context is that process by which what are perceived as Islamic--such as laws, values and practices--are accorded greater significance in the state and society. An evaluation of interfaith dialogue or a review of the prospect or success of any inter-faith project in contemporary Malaysia requires a close look at and an understanding of the interrelationships between Islamic movements and Islamist politics in Malaysia and the kind of Islamisation policies adopted by the state.

"Islamisation" policies since the 1980s entail making amendments in the Constitution, introducing new laws and instituting changes in the laws or legal system and in some cases the structures of power. These Islamisation processes have their paradoxical outcomes and

effects on society, state and politics; and indeed on the inter-faith project of contemporary Malaysians.

Email: anioth@pkrisc.cc.ukm.my

OVENDEN, REVD CANON JOHN

Canon of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle (United Kingdom) < <http://www.stgeorges-windsor.org/>>

Biodata

The Reverend Cannon John Ovenden is currently Canon of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, Chaplain in the Great Park, Windsor and Chaplain of College of St. Catherines, Cumberland Lodge, The Great Park, Windsor. He completed his masters degree in Theology and Education at Kings College at the University of London in 1996 with a thesis entitled "The Role of Imagination in Theological Thinking and Practise". Reverend Ovenden is a member of the Executive Committee of the Council for Christians and Jews and has initiated a number of training courses and dialogues on interfaith issues. He has almost thirty years of clergy experience, include his recent role as Chaplain to the late HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Email: john@thegreatpark.demon.co.uk

OZALP, MR MEHMET

President, Affinity Intercultural Foundation (Australia) < <http://www.affinity.org.au/>>

Biodata

Mr Mehmet Ozalp is one of the founding directors and the President of Affinity Intercultural Foundation. The Foundation undertakes major interfaith and intercultural projects, as well as providing a range of information services about religion and culture. Mr Ozalp was born in Turkey and has a Bachelors degree in telecommunications engineering from the University of New South Wales. He has been intensely involved in social, cultural and religious work since 1991. He was one of the founding directors of Feza Foundation, which has, to date, established three schools in New South Wales, as well as a tutorial centre. His education on Islamic and religion sciences is based on one to one learning from scholars and his own study and research. Mr Ozalp has developed and written the material for a number of short courses on Islam and personal leadership. He has written a course titled "Islam and the Modern World" and is currently teaching this course as part of the Sydney University Continuing Education program. He has a weekly column in a community newspaper, ZAMAN, and currently writing a book entitled *100 Questions You Asked About Islam & Muslims*.

Abstract

"CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN KIND"

The challenge in interfaith dialogue initiatives is to have a positive lasting change in people's understanding of the Other. There is a need to formulate innovative community-based educational approaches to ensure that participants in Muslim-Christian encounters leave thinking differently, feeling differently and acting differently.

In order to trial a different approach, Affinity Intercultural Foundation together with St Charles Church in Ryde, Sydney, developed the idea of having house discussion groups. The project comprised of six separate groups having monthly meetings for six consecutive months. Each group was made up of four Muslims and four Christians. A facilitator directed each meeting,

which covered a set topic from a Christian and Muslim perspective. After a particular faith perspective was delivered, a respondent from other faith summarised the talk as they understood it. This was followed by a questions and answer session.

The experience effected profound paradigm shift and a deep level of understanding of the other. The key to success was the establishment an atmosphere of trust in an informal setting of a house; training each participant in listening skills and having a willingness to understand. The right atmosphere, the right skill set and right attitude produced a unique community-based educational approach in Muslim-Christian relations.

Email: mozalp@affinity.org.au

PALAPATHWALA, REVD DR RUWAN

Lecturer in Pastoral Theology, Trinity College Theological School (Australia)
<<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

The Reverend Dr Ruwan Palapathwal is Lecturer in Pastoral Theology (half-time), sharing this ministry with being priest-in-charge at St Alban's North Melbourne. Ruwan's initial study was in Sri Lanka. His doctoral thesis on Paul Tillich and Buddhism was undertaken at Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand. Ruwan has particular interests in the Theology of Paul Tillich, Theravada Buddhism, Asian religious thought, inter-faith dialogue and adult education. He has taught Systematic Theology at the Bible College of New Zealand, and Theravada Buddhism and Asian Studies at Victoria University , Wellington. His present research interests include Christian ministry in the 21st Century, Christian and Buddhist studies and Theology of Culture and Religion. Within the Theological School, Ruwan has responsibility for coordinating the Supervised Theological Field Education (STFE) programme and the Friday formation programme. His teaching embraces two GradDipTheol/MDiv units in the Schools on-line programme, postgraduate supervision and lecturing in the UFT. He is also a Research Associate of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Theology at Monash University.

Abstract

“BEYOND PROVINCIALISMS: A CASE FOR A GOVERNMENT EDUCATION ENDS POLICY IN PROMOTING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN HARMONY AND COOPERATION IN AUSTRALIA”

This paper argues that Muslim-Christian harmony and cooperation can be promoted by changes to the existing government educational policy that tends to mould people into approved patterns of patriotism, racialism and religion.

Education is the prime responsibility of the state. However, when it is left as commercialised source of supply, education fails to provide citizens with the training they require which is consonant with the well being of the state. This is detrimental to the Muslim-Christian cooperation in particular and to the pluralist global community in general. In the cases of Islam and Christianity, it contributes to perpetuate accustomed views on society, state, race, and religion which are native to each tradition and thus forges points of conflict and discord.

This paper makes recommendations for an educational ends policy that would educate people to become useful members of the nation and broaden their outlook to overcome religious provincialisms. Such a policy, this paper contends would be transformative and liberative and thus creates a free society in which the cooperation among Muslims and Christians may grow with each individual having economic security, intellectual life and spiritual freedom. It would also equip individuals and communities of each tradition with self-knowledge, self-scrutiny, self-

criticism and perpetual endeavour to cultivate harmony and meet the moral challenge of the global era.

Email: ruwanp@trinity.unimelb.edu.au

PEACOCK, MR ROGER

Vice Principal (University Development), The University of Melbourne (Australia)
<www.unimelb.edu.au>

Biodata

Mr Roger Peacock is currently Vice Principal of University Development at the University of Melbourne. After studying cross-cultural psychology and labour relations at the University of New South Wales, Roger worked in training and education in Papua New Guinea, lectured at the Australian School of Pacific Administration in Sydney, and managed Australia's global food aid program and project assistance to South Pacific and ASEAN countries. He was a senior adviser on international education to Commonwealth Ministers for Education, the Executive Officer for the Asian Studies Council, the founding CEO of the Australian International Education Foundation and served at Australian diplomatic missions in Jakarta, Beijing and Bangkok. Mr Peacock joined the University of Melbourne in 1996. He is currently responsible for the development of the University's international relations, its corporate relations, alumni, communications and fundraising operations, and its activities in the rural centre at Shepparton in Victoria. He is the member of the University's Senior Executive responsible for Asialink, is a member of the Academic Board, the board of the National Academy of Music and the Council of University College. He has taken a keen interest in the development of the University's involvement in environmental, social and cultural activities.

Email: r.peacock@unimelb.edu.au

PERERA, REV M. ANURA LASANTHA

Executive Secretary, Inter Religious Peace Foundation (Sri Lanka) <
http://www.euconflict.org/dev/ECCP/ECCPSurveys_v0_10.nsf/0/D29123B29DD58E70C1256C6E0041B10A?opendocument>

Biodata

The Reverend M. Anura Lasantha Perera is a core lecturer in the Post Graduate Diploma Course jointly organized by Bradford University and Social Scientists' Association in Sri Lanka, a post he was appointed to in 2003. In the same year, he became the Executive Secretary to the Inter Religious Peace Foundation, which involves serving as a member of the of the executive board for a term of four years. In 2002 he was appointed as a Core National Secretary to the Department of Social Responsibility in the Methodist Church, where he initiated the section of Interfaith Collaboration in Social and Political issues in the Department. He has also been an external lecturer to the Theological College of Lanka on Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies. He has completed his Bachelor of Theology degree at Serampore University in India. He completed his Post Graduate Degree (M.Phil) in Peace Studies with the University of Dublin in 2001.

Abstract

"THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN MANAGING MUSLIM- CHRISTIAN (INTER- RELIGIOUS) RELATIONS AND PROMOTING INTERFAITH HARMONY"

This paper examines the clashes irrupted between Tamils- Muslims in Eastern province which constitutes a severe challenge to the peace process in Sri Lanka. Even though the immediate

and crucial causes of the clashes in the Eastern Province is the question of human security, we as an inter religious group consisting Buddhist Monks, Hindu Priests, Muslim Maulavies and Christian Priests along with the community leaders in the area were able to mediate between the two communities to building trust by giving them a chance to share their own grievances.

Our policy is to bring together clergy and laymen working on interfaith collaboration in current social and political issues with a view to share their experiences, identify common problems and together find solutions. Fostering fellowship, unity and harmony among religious leaders, conflicting communities and others through inter-faith collaborative action.

Promoting a culture of peace in Sri Lanka through working together with other religious communities. To develop a democratic state and social order based on principals of equality, solidarity, dignity, autonomy, security and freedom for all communities. All the religious leaders who are working with us have agreed to work together on the above policies.

(Now we are in the process of organizing an Inter Religious Peace Meditation in the area under the theme of "Let us forgive the violent history and building trust for a better future" which will be held on November 2003.)

Email: anuraperera@eureka.lk

RAFFERTY-BROWN, MRS CHRISTINA

Educational Consultant, CRB Consulting (Australia)

Biodata

Christina Rafferty-Brown has worked in the Australian TAFE and tertiary sector for the last 24 years in the development and delivery of English and Indonesian language programs. Recently, she has established her own independent educational consultancy company - CRB Consulting.

Over the last 20 years she has also worked on a range of educational projects in Indonesia developing Cross Cultural materials as well as English Language Learning and Assessment materials for the secondary, tertiary and vocational sector.

Her most recent assignment was the design, development and facilitation of an English Language Training program for a Saudi Arabian Government Organisation.

She is fluent in Bahasa Indonesia and has ongoing linkages with the Indonesian educational sector.

Email: chrisraff14@hotmail.com

ROUDE, MR ALI, OAM

Chairman, Islamic Council of New South Wales (Australia) < <http://www.icnsw.org.au/>>

Biodata

Mr Ali Roude OAM is an Australian who migrated from Lebanon with his family in 1971. He has been Chairman of the Islamic Council of New South Wales since 1983, making him the longest standing democratically elected leader of the Muslim communities in Australia. In this role, he has initiated numerous projects, including the development of a comprehensive Islamic Scripture Program for New South Wales Muslim children covering 300 public schools, the organisation of the Bosnian Humanitarian Appeal, burial according to Islamic law and the establishment of the Muslim Cemetery Trust, the establishment of the Voice of Islam radio

station and the establishment of Rissalah College, a Muslim school in Sydney, where he is now the Principal. Mr Roude has also served on many government advisory committees, including the Olympic Multicultural Advisory Committee and the Police Ethnic Advisory Committee. His voluntary work and ongoing commitment to Muslim communities resulted in him receiving Australia's most prestigious award, the Order of Australia, in 1988.

Email: roude@rissalah.nsw.edu.au

ROUDE, MS NADA

Consultant, Islamic Council of New South Wales (Australia) < <http://www.icnsw.org.au/>>

Biodata

Born in Lebanon, Ms Nada Roude is an Australian consultant advising on cross cultural and religious issues and a leading speaker on Islamic issues in Australian society. She is a fluent Arabic speaker and has been actively involved in community development and education programs for more than twenty years. She was a pioneer in welfare work directed at the Arab community in Australia, and a government liaison officer assisting ethnic communities from diverse religious backgrounds. In New South Wales, Ms Roude worked for the Ethnic Affairs Commission for more than thirteen years, advising the Premier on ethnic issues. In addition to sitting on numerous ministerial committees, she founded the Muslim Women's Association, the Arabic Women's Federation and was instrumental in establishing the first Muslim women's refuges. As President of the Muslim Women's Association in the early 1980s, she began an ongoing interfaith dialogue with Christian women. Since 9/11, she has been actively involved in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding through seminars and training.

Email: nada_roude@hotmail.com

SADA, MR MEHBOOB FRANCIS

Director, Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi (Pakistan)

Biodata

Mr Mehboob Francis Sada is currently the Director of the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan as well as a postgraduate Lecturer at Allama Iqbal Open University. His areas of work are in social harmony and interfaith dialogue at grassroots level. He was awarded his Master of Education and his Master of Literature (Urdu) degrees by Punjab University, Lahore, Pakistan and completed his MPhil from Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan. He is currently working on his thesis. Mr. Sada sits on five boards including the Advisory Council of the Ministry of Information and Media Development. He is Diocesan Director for the Justice and Peace Commission, the Christian-Muslim Ribta Commission, for Family Life Commission and for the Family Life Commission in Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Pakistan. He has facilitated and lectured on Interfaith and Human Rights Issues to more than fifteen organisations throughout Pakistan. Mr. Sada has had more than 300 articles published in national and international magazines and newspapers, and is involved as editor of several other publications. Mr. Sada is a highly respected member of the Pakistani community having received many national awards, most recently the Pride of Performance for Human Rights Award 2001-2002.

Abstract

“NEED OF INTERFAITH HARMONY AND REVIEW OF EDUCATION POLICY”

Indo-Pak Sub continent has been a place where people from all faiths and believes have lived together and there was a good example of a pluralistic society, where the religion did not effect the daily relations of the indigenous people. Even the religion of the rulers did not play any

negative role to promote his/her religion. However, with the arrival of invaders, the whole atmosphere was scratched and people, in order to get closer to the rulers, preferred insignificant benefits. Though there were some serious thinkers who warned the people against any such steps, but they were not heard properly. This disunity was the major source in breaking the national harmony.

This disunity proved the real need for interfaith harmony. This needed a positive response from religious societies however the response was very slow. The basic need was to identify the areas where disharmony was widened. The major area for such case was identified from the field of Education. It was only curriculum and textbooks, which provided fuel for hatred. Small children and young ones were all of the same opinion what they have read from the books.

The role of the intellectuals and peace builders cannot be ignored who tried their best to cut the big tree of religious bigotry, intolerance, religious hatred and sectarian killings, whose seed was sown by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. There had been a review of the curricula and textbooks, where the material was reviewed and suggestions for its improvement were forwarded to the ministry of education. This urges that the religious, community leaders have a good hold on society. Now it is needed that they should come forward and recognise their duties in order to bring the society back to its normal position, where peace, love and harmony prevails and there is enough room for every religious community to grow and share their gifts with others.

Email: cscpak@comsats.net.pk

SAEED, PROFESSOR ABDULLAH

Acting Director, The Melbourne Institute of Asian Languages and Societies (Australia) <
<http://www.mials.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Professor Abdullah Saeed holds the Sultan of Oman Chair of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Melbourne and is the Acting Director of its Melbourne Institute of Asian Languages and Societies. Educated in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Australia, Professor Saeed holds a Bachelor of Arts in Arabic Language, Literature and Islamic Studies at Islamic University in Medina, Saudi Arabia and a Masters in Applied Linguistics and a PhD in Islamic Studies from the University of Melbourne. Professor Saeed is involved in a range of research projects relating to Islam in Australia; Islam and human rights and the interpretation of the Qur'an in the modern period. He is the author of numerous books and articles, including *Islam in Australia*, 2003, which was recently published by Allen & Unwin.

Email: a.saeed@unimelb.edu.au

SHAYO, MR SIMON PETER

Consultant Sociologist, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (Tanzania) <
<http://www.tgnp.co.tz/> >

Biodata

Mr Simon Peter Shayo is a Consultant Sociologist with the Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. His work at TGNP includes conducting action-oriented research on areas of human resources, health (especially HIV/AIDS), women's and children's welfare and on a variety of other issues of public interest. He is actively engaged in youth leadership and has been involved in various consultancies as a researcher and trainer. Mr Shayo completed both his MA (Sociology) and BA (Hons) at Dar es Salaam University. He is the present Chairperson of East African Uongozi Association (EAFUA) Tanzania chapter and an

active member of the WAMATA (organization of people against HIV/AIDS in Tanzania), the Saint Egidio Community for Peace and Justice and a volunteer in community based education programme (Scuolar Popolare) in Dar es Salaam. His current professional role is as HR (Learning and Development) Advisor to BP Tanzania, where he serves as a Human Resources/Learning and Development Advisor.

Abstract

“THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN MANAGING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS AND PROMOTING INTERFAITH HARMONY”

Religious leaders are held in very high esteem by the believer of the knowledge they seek to propound but at the same time highly challenged by those whose views descend from their. This fact has elevated exorbitantly the political powers held by religious leaders, in this case, either their charismatic or shamanic power. Religious proclamations and declarations have stood above rest of socio-economic orders. It is this very influential potential embodied in religious leadership that can be manipulated to gather a following of the masses being for good or malicious intentions.

Analysis of politico-religious relations in Tanzania has two faces. The first face depicts efforts where religious leaders did strive to foster peace and tranquility and promote intra-religious and inter-religious understanding leading to national unity that was highly needed for socio-economic growth. Mostly this era can be situated within during the first two decades of independence. The second face of interfaith relations has seen an elaborate surfacing of religious instigations motivated by both political and economic frustrations. In some few notable instances, both community and religious leaders have manipulated each other's power to achieve their desired goals. This will not seek to go to the nitty-gritty of religious harmony and conflicts in the country, but rather attempt to present an introductory scenario of the same.

Email: shayo2000@yahoo.com

SIDDIQUI, DR ATAULLAH

Senior Research Fellow, Islamic Foundation (United Kingdom) < <http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/>>

Biodata

Dr Ataullah Siddiqui is a Senior Research Fellow at the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, Assistant Director of the Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE); and Visiting Fellow in the Centre for the History of Religious and Political Pluralism, University of Leicester in England. Dr Siddiqui is also co-editor of *Encounters: Journal of Inter-Cultural Perspectives*, a bi-annual journal published by the Islamic Foundation. He teaches “Islam and Pluralism” and “Inter-Faith Studies” at the MIHE. His publications includes *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century* (London: Macmillan 1997); *Islam and Other Faiths (Collection of Ismail Faruqi's articles)* (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1998); and *Christians and Muslims in the Commonwealth: A Dynamic Role in the Future*, co-edited with Anthony O'Mahony, (London: Altajir World of Islam Trust 2001).

Abstract

“CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN BRITAIN: INITIATIVES, EVENTS AND GOOD PRACTICES”

This paper will explore the Church's role in public life in England, particularly the Church of England's role in relations to Muslims. It will highlight some of the major events that have some bearing on Christian-Muslim Relations such as the *Satanic Verses* and its impact on the Education Act of 1998. The paper will explore a local initiative of Christian-Muslim relations with

special reference to Leicester. It will highlight some recent good practices of co-operation between Muslims and Christians particularly in training of Muslim chaplains. Finally, the paper will provide some practical steps that may help in fostering better relations between the two communities.

Email: atuallah@islamic-foundation.org.uk mihe@islamic-foundation.org.uk
atuallah_s@yahoo.co.uk

SUCCARIE, SHEIKH NABEEL

Member, New South Wales Board of Imams (Australia)

Biodata

Sheikh Nabeel Succarie is currently a member of the New South Wales Board of Imams that deals with issues pertaining to Islamic law and settlement in New South Wales. He is also an advisor to the Islamic Council of New South Wales on religious and interfaith dialogue. He was born in Lebanon in 1968 and completed his primary and secondary schooling in Lebanon. He graduated with a Degree in Islamic Studies at the University of the Imam Al Awzaii and taught in Lebanon for several years while also performing the role of a Khateeb delivering sermons at mosques and lectures on a wide range of issues and topics. In 1996, he migrated to Australia and pursued his teaching on a full time basis at Rissalah College as a coordinator in Arabic and Islamic studies. In addition to his current teaching responsibilities, Sheikh Nabeel also delivers Friday sermons at the Musallah in the Liverpool Islamic House. He is a member of Majlis al Qadaa- Islamic Judicial Council which comprises Imams who are responsible for resolving family and individual conflict in the Islamic community.

SUDRADJAT, MRS ALLISON

Director, Indonesia Section, Australian Agency for International Development (Australia) <<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/>>

Biodata

Mrs Allison Sudradjat is currently the Director of the Indonesia Section at the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid), which manages the Australian Government's official overseas aid program. She has worked with AusAID since 1989, and has been posted overseas to Indonesia (1992-1995) and Papua New Guinea (1996-2001).

Email: allison_sudradjat@ausaid.gov.au

Vu, Ms TAMARA

Student Representative, Trinity College (Australia) <<http://www.trinity.unimelb.edu.au/>>

Biodata

Ms Tamara Vu is currently working towards a Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Arts degree on a Melbourne National Scholarship, majoring in English and History at the University of Melbourne. She is also the recipient of a Clark Scholarship, the Maurice Hurry Law Scholarship and the SAF Pond Scholarship from Trinity College. She graduated from secondary school in 2000, was Dux of her year, and also received prizes in English, Modern History, Legal Studies, Religious Education and Creative Excellence from her school. She was ranked in the top 0.15% of the state of Queensland in her academic year. She is currently a Case Note Editor for the Melbourne University Law Review and active in the Melbourne University Law Students' Society Mooting Competition. Her extracurricular interests include writing extended fiction and poetry as well as theatre writing and production.

Email: tvu@trinity.unimelb.edu.au

WALTERS, REVD DR ALBERT SUNDARARAJ

Dean of Students, Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (Malaysia)

Biodata

Reverend Dr Albert Sundararaj Walters has been a Lecturer at the Seminari Theoloji Malaysia in Seremban, Malaysia since 2000. He completed his PhD (Islamic Studies) at the University of Birmingham with the thesis titled "Contemporary Presentations of the Trinity in an Islamic Context: A Malaysian Case Study." Reverend Dr Walters completed his Master of Theology degree at the Presbyterian Theological College & Seminary in Seoul, Korea, and his Bachelor of Divinity at Bishop's College in Calcutta, India. His written works have been published on several occasions, and include the recently published *We Believe in One God? Reflections on the Trinity in the Malaysian Context*. Throughout his career Reverend Dr Walters has been involved in social work and community development projects in Malaysia.

Abstract

"THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN MANAGING MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS AND PROMOTING RELIGIOUS HARMONY"

Malaysia has one of the most diverse populations in the world, with numerous ethnic and religious groups. However, this unique heritage has been diminishing over the past several years as a result of the use of religion for political gains. A growing trend towards religious revivalism and resurgence and a reassertion of Islam in political affairs is evident in Malaysia. Of late there has been a resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism, notably among the urban youth, with calls for Islamizing the state, and stressing the dominance of Muslims. This has been fed by the increasing coalescence of religious and ethnic identity - the Malay-Muslim equation - with its attendant privileges and prominence both politically and culturally. The tendency to use religion for political gains has created misunderstanding and intolerance among the peoples of Malaysia.

This paper will examine the role played by religious and community leaders in countering fundamentalism and intolerance. In this complex situation, it is imperative that we develop meaningful dialogue to address pertinent issues facing Christians and Muslims, thereby promoting the spirit of communal harmony and fellowship. Religious leaders should play the role of human rights defenders and peacemakers in society.

Email: walters@seminary-stm.com.my

WARDAYA, DR BASKARA T.

Director, Post -Graduate Programs, Sanata Dharma University (Indonesia) <<http://www.usd.ac.id/>>

Biodata

Dr. Baskara T. Wardaya is currently the Director of Post-Graduate Programs at Sanata Dharma University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He graduated from Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat iDriyarkaraï (iDriyarkaraï Institute of Philosophy), Jakarta, Indonesia in 1986. After teaching at Xavier High School in the Federated States of Micronesia for two years, Dr Wardaya undertook theology studies at Sanata Dharma University. He continued his studies at Marquette University in the United States of America, where he earned both a Masters degree and PhD in history. He has published several books on democracy and Indonesia, and writes for a number of different magazines and newspapers in Indonesia. Dr Wardaya is currently teaching history and the

“Religion and Culture” Masters Program at Sanata Dharma University. He is also teaching Philosophy at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, working as a part-time researcher at the Center for Regional Studies of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) in Jakarta and is a Consultant for the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Asia-Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.

Abstract

“RESTORING DAMAGED RELATIONS: INTER-RELIGIOUS COOPERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS”

Since the time of the Revolution for independence up to the 1960s religious relations in Indonesia (including Moslem-Christian relations) were seldom a serious problem. There were attempts to make a certain religion have political dominance over the country (such as in the case of the “Jakarta Charter”), but sectarian attempts like this were peacefully settled in the spirit of unity as one nation. Religious conflicts were rarely heard. Socio-political problems began to occur when religions were used as a political tool. This began in the mid-1960s, when religions were used as an important factor in the Mass Killings of 1965/66, in which hundreds of thousand of people who were accused of being communists (and thus ‘atheists’) were slaughtered.

Since then many regarded religions as a “political commodity” and used them to create social tensions and conflicts, which eventually would benefit the country’s political and economic elite. During the rule of the New Order (1966-1998) such a practice was very common. The tension in Moslem-Christian relations taking place during the period should be seen in this context. The burnings and destructions of hundreds of churches (and other places of worship) should also be seen in the same context.

It was hoped that with the fall of the New Order in 1998 the damaged relations between Christians and Moslems would return to the pre-New Order status. Unfortunately, even several years after the regime’s fall, relations between the two religious communities remain uncertain, in part because of the current domestic and international dynamics.

Concerned with the situation, Sanata Dharma University in Yogyakarta—along with other universities in the country—promotes cooperation among students from different religious background. In more specific ways, the university’s “Religious and Cultural Studies” Master’s Program actively promotes cooperation among members of various educational and religious institutions.

Email: baskaram@yahoo.com

YUSUF, MR KABIRU ABDULLAHI

Editor-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer, Media Trust Limited (Nigeria)

Biodata

Mr Kabiru Abdullahi Yusuf is currently Editor-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer of Media Trust Limited, which publishes the *Daily Trust* and the *Weekly Trust* in Abuja, Nigeria. He holds a Masters degree in Political Economy from the University of Toronto in Canada, and has served as a Senior Lecturer in political science at Usmanu Danfodio University. His career as a journalist stretches back to 1984, when he was appointed Deputy Editor of the *Sunday Triumph* in Kano, Nigeria. Since then, he has served as Editor of the *Daily Triumph*, the *Today* newspaper, and as a Foreign Correspondent for the BBC African Service based in Zimbabwe and South Africa, before joining Media Trust Limited as its CEO and Editor-in-Chief in 1998.

Email: yusufkabiru@yahoo.com