

## Cultures in Contact: How Education and Cultural Studies Help Obliterate Unnecessary Perpetuation of Cross-cultural Misunderstanding Between the USA and the Arab World

Marwan M. Obeidat<sup>1,\*</sup>; Nazmi Al-Shalabi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Professor. Department of English, Hashemite University, Jordan

<sup>2</sup>Department of English, Hashemite University, Jordan

Postcode: Zarqa 15113. Assistant professor, Hashemite University, Jordan

\*Corresponding author.

Address: Department of English, Hashemite University, Jordan

Postcode: Zarqa 15113.

Email: marwanobeidat@hotmail.com

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### Abstract

Cultures often shape the way people think and the way they see the rest of the world. For cultures, to be sure, provide us with customs, values, ideas, beliefs and principles. And people live in a cultural web that influences the way they relate to each other, the way they look, their habits, dreams and desires. But as cultures bind people together, they also blind and set them apart. We accept certain ways of looking at the rest of the world that can only be characterized as cultural stereotypes or frames of reference. These stereotypes define their relationships to other nations, cultures and societies, and they view other cultures as prescribed by their own. The most dominant ones shape the way people perceive the world, and they blind us to other ways of seeing it. When something violates such stereotypes, it may be called unnatural, uncommon, or, even worse, unethical! Our identities (who we are and how we think) are deeply rooted in certain cultural values that are so closely associated with our beliefs that questioning them implies re-considering the way people see the world, and the way it sees them.

As a matter of fact, in the aftermath of the Cold War and 9/11, 2001, the Arab and Muslim World has been engaged in an ongoing struggle to develop new approaches, initiatives, and programs toward a better understanding of the region and its peoples, while stressing the point that much of the misunderstanding between this part of the world (the Middle East) and the rest of the world stems from real conflicts and displeasure with Western policies.

It is the purpose of this paper to explore the manner in which education and cultural studies can be a vehicle, which may serve to moderate the tensions that emerge from dissimilar understandings and goals. It is our intention to address those pedagogical and systemic aspects, which, in a way, serve to unintentionally reinforce a jaundiced view of other nations and people, and find answers for the following questions in the course of the paper as well: What divides and binds cultures? Where do our differences come from? Are those differences cultural? Are they religious? Are they social? Or are they political? Should nations live in cultural boxes? How can education and cultural studies help us build bridges instead of walls?

**Key words:** Mutual understanding; Common ground; Grievances; Foreign policy; Set apart; Differences; Exchange programs; Forums; Perceptions; Stereotypes; Animosity

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### INTRODUCTION

Common differences are, to be sure, primarily political in nature. They are not cultural or religious--as some prefer to think. Alternatively, cultural and religious arguments are used to justify political actions. The Arab-Israeli conflict remains, Edward Said(1980) claims, a visible and significant point of contention and dispute between the West and the Arab and Muslim countries, and that an everlasting just peace in the Middle East (ME) would reduce tensions (political and otherwise)(1-273).

However, as some believe the differences to be political, it is essential that others acknowledge that this fact serves to make them systemic as well.

The purpose of this paper is, then, to explore the manner in which education and cultural studies can be a vehicle, which may serve to moderate the tensions that emerge, Obeidat (1996) argues, from dissimilar understandings and goals (37-44). It is our intention to address those pedagogical and systemic aspects, which, in a way, serve to unintentionally reinforce a jaundiced view of other nations and people, and find answers for the following questions in the course of the paper as well: What divides and binds cultures? Where do our differences come from? Are those differences cultural? Are they religious? Are they social? Or are they political? Should nations live in cultural boxes? How can education and cultural studies help us build bridges instead of walls?

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## 1. THE CONVENIENCE OF SEEING CULTURES THROUGH INDIVIDUALS

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Most of us in education and cultural studies have first-hand experience with the silent guilt of unspoken concurrence while, in other circumstances, we may have experienced the quiet pride of confronting perceived injustice. Although it is clear that some live closer to one or the other of these polar extremes, those who have not experienced this struggle between engagement and indifference, between courage and cowardice, must lead lives of unreflective isolation. While this internal conflict may not readily be apparent in those we hold in contempt or admiration, individuals with even minimal introspection recognize that this characteristic looms closely under our veneer of social acceptability. Why should we expect a nation or culture to be any different than the aggregate of the individual traits?

The genuine complexity of both cultural systems is often eroded by oversimplification of a snapshot mentality, or of a stereotype, of a single image or characteristic, Said (1981) holds, that is assumed to tell the story rather than rich and noble narratives of the protracted struggle between what is and what could be (1-272). These universal commonalities, those similarities that vastly exceed our differences, are what cultural studies must seek to critically evaluate and address.

Which America do most people know? Is it the one in which unfettered buying and selling of goods and services is seen as the most honest statement of national and cultural values or the one in which individuals live out sacrificial commitment to improving the lives of others? Do people first think of an economic system predicated in greed, dedicated to the proposition that if someone accumulates possessions he/she has won the race, or are they more likely to think of volunteers from around the nation volunteering time and money to help those who

have suffered manmade or natural disaster? Is the America that most people know a country of mass consumption, or mass production? Racism? Capitalism? Freedom? Or what?

And, by the same token, which Middle East do most people see? Is it the one that places fervent allegiance to a religious group or sect ahead of recognizing the humanity in others, or the one in which a stranger will be ,Edmund Ghareeb (1977) maintains, taken in and cared for with a sense of responsibility unknown in much of the world? Do people think first of strong extended families in which tremendous care and respect are exercised, or do they think of the manner in which Muslim women lead their lives? Or is it the historical sites such as Petra, the religious centers like Jerusalem, or simply the exotic nature of the ME at large? (1-171).

Who would people hold up as the example of what it means to be an American? Ken Lay, Colin Powell, Billy Graham, or Maya Angelou? Who would be the shorthand that would enable Americans to capture the Middle East best? Is it H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan, Osama Bin Laden, Ayatollah Sistani, or Muhammad Odeh al-Rehaief (the Iraqi lawyer who risked his life and those of his family members to lead American soldiers to rescue Pvt. Jessica Lynch in Iraq)?

It is clear that a given society or culture emerges from an intense clash of ideas and beliefs that are frequently lost on the casual observer. Education, then, must seek to nurture an understanding of, and appreciation for the ideological competition from which cultures emerge rather than serve a merely descriptive function. However, there are a number of factors that serve to temper the presentation of a complete picture within the regional and international educational context.

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## 2. INCONSISTENCIES WITHIN CULTURES

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Although examples abound between the more interesting and least politically polarizing in a discussion of US-ME relationships, there are situations that have arisen in Indiana and in New York, as shorthand examples. Five years ago, the adjunct faculty at the New School University, with support of many students, sought to organize for the purpose of representation in negotiating their conditions of employment. Despite the institution's progressive history and location in one of the more liberal regions of the US, the University used a series of tactics to delay and deny this right to the adjunct faculty. Adolph Reed, a political scientist,(2004) observes: "President Kerrey's response to this campaign has been more worthy of the CEO of Wal-Mart than the president of a university, but it fits into a broader tapestry—the casualization of the academic labor force, the increasing prominence of corporate values in university governance" (15).

One also might consider the case in which Tata American International was the lowest bidder in an open competition to contract services to streamline the systems used to handle unemployment claims in Indiana. Their closest competition was over 50% higher than their winning low bid of \$15 million. In the ensuing political turmoil, the state cancelled the contract, and decided to rebid under conditions that would be more favorable to US companies.

In addition to highlighting institutional inconsistency, these two isolated, and relatively insignificant events, demonstrate the capacity of those in positions of power to define knowledge, to include (or exclude) information as best benefits their perceived need of the moment. It might also demonstrate the current predisposition of institutional and state leadership to think first of financial and/or political impact rather than to consider the long-term cultural/intellectual benefits. The President of New School University, for instance, wanted to retain the greatest latitude for action in the allocation of limited resources. In this effort, he demonstrated willingness to delay the process at every step, to provide erroneous and superfluous justifications for actions, and to ask the courts to intervene when other avenues failed. Though not a very widely known story, but worth mentioning, the Governor of Indiana, on the other hand, was willing to allocate money that could have been used for education or healthcare to benefit Indiana corporations. When confronted with political pressure, he chose fiscal irresponsibility.

Lest some think examples of this sort are limited to American society per se, one might consider the wealth accumulated by those in power in the quest for Palestinian autonomy, or the “democratic” state of Israel that gives overwhelmingly systematic and formal preferences to religion and ethnicity. Another example that comes quickly to our minds here is the killing of many Iraqi civilians in the name of “religion” or for the sake of “freedom.” Neither reason will adequately explain the loss of an innocent child to a devastated parent.

The common theme in these instances is that those in power sought to redefine the issues in such a manner so as to provide them with a more “convenient” range of decisions. They structured public knowledge about a particular incident or set of circumstance independent of any consistent ideology and with some level of disregard for accuracy. This way, they behaved as bank managers rather than leaders; as politicians rather than statesmen. In short, they did exactly what most people would have done.

### 3. POWER-DEFINED KNOWLEDGE ACROSS CULTURES

At the heart of this discussion is the simple notion that all cultures, consciously and unconsciously, structure and constrain knowledge in ways that serve to benefit certain groups within a society. Most often the beneficiaries of such a system unknowingly (if not unwittingly) exercise disproportionate influence over the unspoken acceptance of one form of knowledge over another. Our collective ability to tolerate a system that is often internally inconsistent is testimony to the effectiveness of common cultural values as an attenuating control on those perspectives and interpretations that excessively deviate from the norm.

A more thorough and complete discussion of the manner in which culture as a social construct that subsequently structures the knowledge of the members of a particular society is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is important that the reciprocally deterministic nature of knowledge and culture, and the role that power plays, Macedo (1994) claims, in this relationship, be understood (1-206).

To be sure, cultures have numerous formal and informal mechanisms, which seek to ensure that members of a certain society hold a common worldview and that it is effectively transmitted from one generation to the next. While schooling may bear the primary responsibility, the values and attitudes that are rewarded in schools are generally consistent across social institutions and associations. The benefit and danger of this practice is that most individuals in a given culture are presented with a sufficiently narrow range of competing interpretations of their lived experience so as to create a false logical consistency. The result is that most of us have developed a phenomenal capacity to proceed through life uncritically, to accept certain core values and resultant practices as the sole reality. Consequently, it is genuinely befuddling when someone ascribes certain thoughts, words, and actions to a less noble origin.

### 4. SCHOOLING FOR CONTROL: THERE IS AN ANSWER

Believing that there is a single appropriate response to the complexity of global issues, nations often propose solutions which demonstrate an indifference to the context of those impacted by a given situation or action. This occurrence should by no means provoke any astonishment as our systems of education persist in structuring an intellectual perspective that is consistent with simple, if

not wrong, answers. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the unconsidered solution for most problems was and is narrowly defined versions of democracy and free markets. In other words, the educational systems, the power-defined knowledge, cultural manners, schooling, all of these highlight the differences between the USA and the Arab World. Henceforth, there is a great need for an educational reform on both fronts that can bridge the gap between America and the ME.

As is characteristic of congruent ideological approaches, the two are explicitly linked in most public debate. John Sullivan (2001) suggests that there are three essential aspects of democracy, which have proved to be crucial to long-term economic and social development. These are:

- A stable democratic system is the best guarantor of political stability, which is essential for long-term economic growth.
- Democratic practices such as transparency and accountability are essential for effective and responsive government and for efficient and prosperous economic activity.
- Sound legal and regulatory codes backed by the rule of law must exist if business is to thrive in a market economy.

Lamentably, an analysis such as this clearly holds only for certain national conditions and particular cultural value systems. A conceptual exploration of the meaning of democratic practices and the nature of markets may hold the potential for highlighting the reasons that this answer may not be the answer for all nations.

A democratic government, whether direct or representative, suggests that the power of such government rests in the hands of those who are governed. Legal, social, and political equality of the citizenry must certainly be regarded as *the sine qua non* of such a system. Despite essential preconditions provided by meticulous protection of rights, not all of the governed will have a voice. Simply put, it is the best, flawed system humanity has developed.

A similar, though different in form, argument can be made about markets. The immediate appeal is that as purchases represent individuals' effort to maximize utility, in the aggregate these consumption decisions reflect the preferences of a population. One, then, might assume that, as cost-constrained supply adjusts to price-sensitive demand, this system will provide the people those goods and services they want and desire.

The primary shortcoming within both systems is that they function well for those who are sufficiently "equal" so as to be able to participate fully. Those in positions of comparable ability to impact their daily economic and/or political circumstances are predisposed to believe that systems such as these function impartially and fairly. It is very important to make one connection very clear: the manner in which nations school future generations makes

this uncritical acceptance of presumed fairness possible.

In the common system of schooling, we often spend little time discussing alternative understandings of democracy and even less time providing any real practice in leading a democratic life. Over 2000 years ago Aristotle said: "...the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." History is replete with teachers and theorists of a similar mind, yet within the American system of schooling, the only marginally democratic practice that can be identified is student government, and they are tasked with such decisions as prom colors or some other generally inconsequential input. It might be noted that this is more input than many of their fellow students have in other systems of schooling.

Consequently, the aforementioned characteristics of schooling, that there is always a single correct answer, that this answer exists independent of the inquirer and the general masquerade of facts as knowledge, serve to intellectually desensitize today's learner and tomorrow's leader. Schooling conditions us to swallow the inconsistencies, engendering passivity and sublimating the need to exist in a state of bewildered frustration! It is the mechanism through which beneficiaries of such a system unwittingly exercise disproportionate influence over the unspoken acceptance of one form of knowledge over another.

Therefore, it is as understandable (as it is wrong), that one nation, which regards itself as reasonably successful, would think that other nations should benefit from the same system. This mentality is, Said (1994) argues, at the misguided core of benign imperialism, at best (1-380).

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## 5. THE DANGERS OF A SINGLE CORRECT ANSWER

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Popular media are replete with stories of the latest technical advances, or new knowledge, which may hold the key to solving one problem or another. When this is put in the context of a culture of expertise and specialization, it will be easy to understand the extent to which knowledge is becoming the purview of the few rather than the collective. Those who hold positions of authority in knowing typically do so within narrow fields of study, with conversations seldom directed at anyone outside their particular club. While this is reasonable when it comes to the best manner of producing carbon nanotubes, it is woefully inadequate for understanding the glorious imprecision that is human endeavor.

The ability of an individual or a group to lead unexamined lives is greatly facilitated by authoritarian approaches to knowledge. Once knowledge is divorced from the knower, that individual may be absolved of their responsibility. In addition to justifying a level of disengagement, it simultaneously benefits authority by

providing virtually uncontested latitude of action.

There seem to be two interrelated beliefs functioning as the ideological underpinning that sustains this particular world view: (1) facts are knowledge, and (2) a single correct answer exists. While this mindset may be consistent with technological understandings, history has, in turn, repeatedly demonstrated the insufficiency of this mentality in addressing the challenges of human coexistence.

More specifically, the synergies of these parallel beliefs are becoming increasingly obvious in the manner in which American culture is considering education. No child left behind has been significant in coercing schools, districts, and states to shift the focus of schooling to one increasingly based on skill development and factual recall. One might argue that this is the best recipe for a complacent, disengaged populace that will uncritically accept whatever “facts” presented to them.

In a similar note, we can see changes in the *Scholastic Aptitude Test* that might suggest an unintentional conspiracy of the unaware. Writing is important to success in higher education, and so they have rightly increased the focus on the demonstration of that particular skill. At the same time, the test structure has abandoned verbal analogies and analytical items. These are the very thought processes that require critical analysis and those used most often to guide public opinion. (Consider the many instances in which Hitler is used as shorthand for someone who holds an opposing position.)

As nations have increasingly moved toward becoming corporate states with the concomitant erosion of individual participation in representative democracy, there has been a corresponding shift in the values that structure national debate. As an example of such a trend, one might consider changes within schooling, in which we observed, over the last century, the gradual displacement of moral citizenship by technical efficiency as the primary organizing characteristic of this institution.

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## 6. SO WHAT CAN BE DONE?

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Both groups are required to move in the same direction. The challenges of bridging these cultural gaps will require a multifaceted approach that must address ideological, pedagogical, and programmatic issues if there is to be any hope for success. Both must, therefore, dramatically enhance the level of understanding other cultures and societies. Given the strategic significance of information technologies, a greater portion of public attention should be more effectively given to the importance of the Internet and communication technologies. Programs in support of the language and cultural studies training, a critical instrument of outreach, education, and job opportunity, must be expanded and supported by the academy in both worlds. A major new initiative, including translating books in fields of history, philosophy, politics, and education,

and making them available to libraries, research centers, and universities worldwide, should be launched.

Both sides need a to have a different and more comprehensive approach to efforts that can help people and societies around the world learn more about and better understand the peoples of both cultures. Cultural ignorance is not, Samuel Huntington (1993) claims, a clash of civilizations (22-49). It simply reveals the clash inside human civilization itself, a battle for the future of our world. Arab societies have not been successful in the quest for understanding the West, and it is the unfortunate reality that Western attitudes toward the Arab and Muslim World have gone from bad to worse! Negative portrayals of Arabs and Muslims, disproportionate coverage on issues such as extremism and violence, and one-dimensional (and often distorted) reporting on Islam and the Muslims reinforce common stereotypes and prejudices towards the Middle East and its peoples, and contribute to a general climate of mutual mistrust, antipathy and fear towards Muslim and Arab communities. What is required, therefore, is not merely tactical adaptation, but strategic and radical redefinition of Arab identity and thought.

The ME nations need to transform the ways they explain and advocate national, cultural cause, and the ways they listen to what others are saying about them throughout the world. Admittedly, their views are absent from the Western cultural traditions, just as they are absent. Thus Western cultures are, in one way or another, trapped in a dangerously reinforcing cycle of mistrust and animosity.

Arabs and Muslims, on the other hand, expectedly respond in anger to what they perceive as American and European denigration of their societies and cultures, and to this Arab and Muslim response Americans and Europeans react, Maqsood Jafri (2005) holds, with bewilderment and resentment, provoking a further negative (if not hostile) response (96-98). For example, large majorities in the Arab and Muslim World view Western (and in particular U.S.) policy through the prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arabs and Muslims overwhelmingly, therefore, opposed the post-9/11 U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan, as well as the use of force against Iraq, and the U.S. war on terrorism in general. In more concrete terms, stated foreign policy of the West toward the Arab and Muslim World, on issues like those below, needs to be, Omur Orhun (2006) argues, more fully reconsidered, and the vision of Arabs and Muslims for the West in general needs to be communicated clearly and overtly across the same lines (2-24):

- Peaceful settlement of conflicts between the Arabs and Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza, in Kashmir; the Western Sahara; the Sudan;
- Peace and order in Afghanistan and Iraq;
- Economic growth through private market economies, free trade, and investment in the global marketplace.

What is clear is that these decisions include many concerns that are frequently unacknowledged and consequently unmentioned or unnoticed. For example, If Kuwait had not had oil, would the US have intervened? Does this set the standard for intervention at financial imperative, or should the standard be humanitarian in nature regardless of potential financial impact?

No matter how these questions might be answered, there is no advantage in limiting the range of opinion sought to bear on the decision, in constraining understanding into that which facilitates political interest. At this point, cultural understanding and systems for value transmission should be more open. Schools, rather than focus on facts, should go beyond that to add a level of interpretation and independence to learning. Doing this would require that the hierarchical structures that regulate classroom and socio-cultural relationships be reduced to allow for true diversity of opinion.

The American as well as the ME nations should, therefore, carefully scrutinize all foreign policy positions in which they may support activities that are fundamentally inconsistent with stated values and beliefs. One example of this might be the unwavering support of Israel by the US in spite of actions that are inconsistent with core US values. But, on the other side of the coin, we must acknowledge that the Palestinians and the question of Palestine are a unifying cause for the Arab World. And Arab countries should in this regard do much more than provide verbal support.

We in the Middle East have also failed to listen to and, therefore, failed to persuade others. We have not taken the time to understand our audience, and, accordingly, have not bothered to help them understand us. This ability to speak, write, and read a foreign language is one of the most recognized prerequisites of effective communication (cultural and otherwise). People who are fluent in English, German, or French immediately convey a sense of respect for and interest in the people to whom they speak, and fluency prevents the inaccuracy and distortion of translation.

Few scholars in the Arab and Muslim World are real specialists in Western cultures and societies. And the absence of American and European studies centers is striking. There is high demand for such centers in major universities in the region. They would include significant library collections and electronic means of making available accurate and high-quality information about American and European history, culture, and governments. Arab universities should, therefore, attempt to build or expand such centers and have joint ventures with universities in the United States and Europe for that purpose.

Educational exchange programs can be broadly effective. Exchanges and cooperative agreements in areas like journalism and media studies can have a direct impact on how the causes and policies are understood by

those external to the culture. Exchange students who are better informed about non-native cultures can without doubt advance East-West understanding. Institutionalized exchange programs such as these can quickly change inaccurate perceptions about both cultures and societies, and remove common ignorance. More journalists, for instance, should be sent abroad on exchanges. A formalized training program to teach professional journalism to Arab and Muslim journalists should be supplemented with a program that would allow them to work with the international media to gain a thorough understanding and an appreciation of the diversity of Western cultures.

A Center for U.S.–Arab/Muslim Studies and Dialogue should essentially be a public–policy think tank that studies ways of strengthening understanding and relations between Arab and Muslim countries and the United States. Research would encompass many subjects such as language and cultural studies, trade, education, the environment, history, politics, journalism and information technology--as examples--and would exchange more educated and less prejudiced ideas among leading scholars from different parts of the Muslim World and Western countries.

Successful international relations strategies have always focused on language teaching (good examples are the British Council and the American Language Centers at their peak). Languages are a broad, natural, and mutually beneficial front on which we need to engage foreign audience. Hence the importance of establishing Arabic for non-native speakers programs throughout the Arab and Muslim World. Employing language teaching, texts, and classroom interaction, education–based international relations enjoy great credibility, respect, and access to larger, greater, broader audiences. For, how we speak, how we think, and how we write help--at the end of the day--improve attitudes toward all of us.

Intercultural and interfaith dialogues are even more vital in this era of concern about conflict between the West and us. Religion and culture–based dialogue cannot, of course, be a function of government itself, but practitioners of public opinion and cultural studies can encourage such engagement through higher education institutions by actually doing, not just talking about it. Such dialogue holds tremendous promise for improving “our” attitudes toward “them,” and “theirs” toward “us.” For the time has come for a broad attempt to

create not only intercultural, but interfaith dialogue with the Americans and Europeans both to publicize their perspective on Islam and the Muslims, and to help alleviate some of the misunderstanding that the West has developed toward Islam for its often perceived extremism and fundamentalism.

It is time for our cultures to recognize that we do share many values and beliefs and do have many things in common. Professional and academic experts dedicated

to the history, culture, civilization, philosophy and other pedagogical issues of the United States and the European Union are urgently needed. The professional level of fluency in the local languages and the level of knowledge about the West must be tremendously enhanced. A greater portion of our resources, given the importance of information technologies, should be more effectively directed to the Internet, the media and communication technologies.

Major increases in technological and educational resources should be devoted to helping the West gain access to our history, philosophy, education, religion, manners and ethics, both in the Western hemisphere and in our own countries. A creation of Islamic and Arabic studies programs in the West, through a collaborative effort with the private sector and with local universities, should be pursued. And a careful educated review of the merits of television networks should also be undertaken.

Aside from the various strata in human societies and in the absence of such conveniently simultaneous changes in both sides that would lead to better relations between them, what is presently required of both are sustained and effective public relations campaigns to acquaint one another with patterns of political and social thought of each other. Just as the Western World needs to know how the Arab and Muslim street is thinking and what its grievances against the West are, the people of the ME need to know the same about the West.

Such grievances have been aggravated to such horrendous and dreadful extents as to lead to the present outbreaks of extremism, violence, turmoil and terrorism. The Arab/Muslim Street is also in dire need to be acquainted with Western political, academic and social institutions and their patterns of thought as well.

Obviously, the present debacle in Western Islamic relations is, first and foremost, political (rather than cultural). It is good to hold Islamic-Christian conferences, seminars, and forums to discuss differences between the two faiths and ways and means of finding a common ground for a mutual understanding. But the danger here is that such meetings may wander into mazes of abstruse and esoteric theological disputation, which would remain largely an exercise in academic theology more or less.

The crucial issue that urgently needs to be considered and addressed by all of us is the political one: The foreign policy of the U.S. in the Middle East is foremost among the issues that bedevil, and constantly aggravate Western-Islamic relations.

Let diverse nations, in the end, learn to talk with each other; let them have a common ground for a mutual, better understanding of each other; let them, in turn, learn to build bridges instead of walls and live with their differences, not for them! Let nations express hope in providing educated opportunities to discuss concrete examples of best practices to rightly identify human

societies and communities, develop an intellectually effective engagement with the civil world at large, and think of the importance of education, especially of cultural studies, for improving their relationships. In the words of Senator J. William Fulbright(1967), let us “bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship”(1-284). Let diverse nations seek a way forward based on mutual respect, interest and trust.

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