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PEACE EDUCATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Ali Askerov[1]

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Abstract

This article critically discusses peace education and its role in conflict resolution. Peace education is a powerful tool for social and personal change. The basic assumption about peace education is that the more people study and learn, the more capable they are to address issues and problems peacefully on different levels. The need for peace education exists in every aspect of our social lives. Also, it calls for a new awareness of how people think and tell their stories, which involve a highly developed sense of self and other. It deals with the movement from violence to nonviolence, which is tightly related to the process of learning and awareness. Is peace education, then, for everybody regardless of age, gender, social status, race, religion and ethnicity? This article is a critical analysis of peace education and the role it plays or may play in conflict resolution.

Key Words: peace, education, change, nonviolence, resolution

Introduction
Education is life itself
-John Dewey

Peace education is defined as a philosophy and a process involving skills such as listening, problem-solving, cooperation and conflict resolution (Harris, 1996). The process of peace education means empowering people with skills, attitude and knowledge to create a better and safer world (Harris and Morrison, 2003). The philosophy of peace education, on the other hand, teaches people nonviolence, love, compassion, and reverence for all life (Harris and Morrison, 2003). The

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major purpose of peace education is to confront indirectly violence in societies by teaching people about its causes and providing them with knowledge of alternatives (Harris, 2002). Peace education also seeks to transform the present conditions by changing social structures and patterns of thought that have created them (Reardon, 1988).

One of the major aims of peace education is to create in the human consciousness a commitment to the ways of peace. Students in peace education classes learn how to deal with conflicts nonviolently by motivating people to choose peace when faced with conflict. It can be argued that education about nonviolence can help counter violence largely. As Galtung pointed it out years ago, the goal of peace education should not be just to stop the violence, but rather to prepare children psychologically to learn how nonviolence can provide the basis for a just and sustainable future (Galtung, 1976).

The concept of peace is sometimes misunderstood, due to the fact that in the modern world understandings of peace vary from culture to culture, from context to context. For some people peace is absence of war, whereas for others peace means much more than the absence of war. Peace researchers have pointed that peace has both negative and positive connotation (Galtung, 1996, Harris and Morrison, 2003). In negative terms, peace means stopping some form of violence. Peace also has positive connotations involving justice, respect for human rights and rights for equal political participation. Kovel, for example, defines peace as a state of existence where neither the overt violence of war nor the covert violence of unjust systems is used as an instrument for extending the interests of a particular nation or group. As he argues, it is a situation where basic human needs are met, where conflicts are resolved through non-violent means, and all resources are shared for the benefit of all people. Put simply, peace is a concept that connotes more than a violence free situation (McIntrie et al., 1976).

The simplest meaning of peace education refers to teaching about peace: what it is, and how to achieve it. Diamond and McDonald refer to education/ research/ training as one of the nine tracks that are necessary for successful peacemaking (Diamond and McDonald, 1996). The main idea here is to generate and transfer information about issues of peace and conflict, as well as peacemaking and conflict resolution.

This track suggests policy or action implications arising from that information. The basic assumption is that the more people study and learn, the more capable they are to address the problems on all levels. Studying the problems in details helps with producing alternative ways of resolving conflicts as well. It is argued that in order to change the world for better we must begin by educating people. The field of education is seen by Diamond and McDonald as a subsystem with basically two structural components: think tanks and educational institutions. The first includes research, analysis, and study programs, whereas the latter includes K-12, colleges, and universities offering instruction in peace and conflict resolution issues (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

G. Salomon (2002) argues that the scholarly aspect of the field of peace education is not as developed as its practical aspect. This fact results in some conceptual confusion related to its definition and goals that are well indented but not very clear. Insufficient empirical examination of the field does not allow us to perceive how effective the practice of peace education is. He also argues that there are basic conceptual distinctions between different types of peace education as they rely on different programs in different regions (Salomon, 2002).

Moreover, G. Salomon (2002) argues that peace education is not a single entity at least because peace itself has more than one meaning, as well as it is contingent on a context in which peace education takes place. Above all, as aforementioned, there is a distinction between positive and negative peace, where the former denotes collaboration, integration, and cooperation, and the latter denotes the absence of violence (Galtung, 1996). A second distinction relates to the sociopolitical context where peace education occurs (Rouhana and Bar-Tal, 1998). These might be regions of intractable conflicts, regions of ethnic or racial tensions, and regions of tranquility and cooperation. A third distinction pertains to the levels: local and global. Moreover, another distinction can be made between the political, economic, and social status of peace education participants. The most important distinction out of all these, according to Salomon (2002), is the sociopolitical one that determines the challenges peace education faces, its goals, as well as its ways of treating the different subgroups of participants.

Peace education is a broad field that combines many different academic fields, as well as it is taught in very different places such as day care centers, high schools, universities and informal places. Jan Maasen defines the main questions for peace education that are related to its contribution to the extension of the peace culture, as well as prevention of social polarization (Maasen, 1996).

Aspeslagh and Burns (1996) note that survival in the world is not only threatened by the possibility of wars between nations, ecological disaster, etc., but also by the erosion of human dignity, human rights and human aspirations. In this sense, peace education is essential for the service of human betterment in moral and ethical sense (Aspeslagh and Burns, 1996).

K. E. Boulding (1991) discuses the concept of staple peace that he defines as a situation between two independent nations in which none of them has a significant plan to go to war with the other. He argues that the study of stable peace that would contribute to international peace tremendously has been neglected for about 150 years. Stable peace has happened spontaneously as a learning pattern in national behavior, and is not related to any peace movements and organizations. There are a number of the conditions necessary for stable peace to appear, one of which is that change in the positions of national boundaries be removed from national agendas. Another condition is related to the intervention of one nation state into the domestic affairs of the other nation (Boulding, 1991).

V. F. Armengol argues that the conditions for a peace culture are also the conditions for social learning (Armengol, 1991), whereas E. Boulding notes that a peace culture is a learning culture that is a bridge between heart and mind preparing for change and difference (Boulding, 1991). C. Satha-Anand, on the other hand, calls for a new awareness of how people think and talk that involves a highly developed sense of self and other (Satha-Anand, 1991). The movement from violence to nonviolence is therefore tightly related to the process of learning and awareness. Learning as a process and awareness as an outcome are not related only to education of peace, they are also related to the awareness of the power to deference. As, for example, M. Gandhi argued, it would be impossible for the British to rule India by physical coercion alone. If the

Indians withdrew their consent to the British rule, its power would disappear (Grovier, 2002). It might happen nonviolently because British physical power was based on obedience of people which if withdrawn would cause Indian independence. The history proved that this approach was correct in Indian case. T. Hobbes argued that power requires deference, and it is based on honor and obedience (Hobbes, 1968). In this sense, peace education may play a vital role in teaching and preparing people about their potential to deal with coercion, and empowering them to handle their differences nonviolently.

Goals of Peace Education

Peace education is a purposeful activity, the main aim of which is to achieve certain short- and long-term goals related to peace and non-violence at all levels starting from interpersonal to societal and global. Peace educators must address the immediate dangerous situations in the world, as well as to create in human consciousness the permanent structures that strengthen basis of peaceful coexistence which is instrumental for transformation of human values to promote nonviolence (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

Harris and Morrison (2003) discuss both short and long-term goals of peace education. The immediate tense situations should be addressed in the classrooms or workshops, the longer-term goals, however, are to create permanent human consciousness about peaceful coexistence helping to transform human values to promote nonviolence. Peace education warns people about the danger of their own destructive fantasies, and develops alternatives that make people peaceful in terms of their mind and behavior. Harris and Morrison (2003) have figured out a number of main goals of peace education to achieve immediate or long-term objectives. Those are evaluating the richness of the concept of peace, addressing fears, providing information about security, understanding war behavior, developing intercultural understanding, promoting social justice, stimulating a respect for life, and managing conflicts nonviolently (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

The wide variety and diversity of the goals of peace education show that it is a broad field combining many different academic disciplines. The process of liberating people from the old ways of thinking that bring

about aggression is not easy and straightforward, rather it requires great effort and ability that rest upon hard work and careful elaboration of a number of disciplines.

Teaching Peace Education

Teaching peace education essentially is not different from teaching conflict resolution. However, it can be different at certain points, since both of them involve many different disciplines. Both of them are about philosophy and process, but unlike conflict resolution, peace education is primarily about a realization of the power of nonviolence and a wish to promote social change (Harris, 2002).

Peace education also contributes to the in-dept analysis of root causes of the problems that bring about severe conflicts. Without understanding more fully the root causes of problems, for example, violence, formulating effective means to deal with it would be difficult. Therefore, it can be argued that peace education starts with studying world order with its character and institutions, because students must have an understanding of the strength of world institutions promoting world order and also the limitations of them. Education about the international order also enlightens students about the world with basic human needs (Azar, 1997, Burton, 1990), cultural differences (Avruch, 2003, Ross, 2007), and different political contexts. The importance of "global citizenry" (Harris and Morrison, 2003:123) is a result of interests in world order. It raises the notion of loyalty that extends beyond the boundaries of an individual country and culture to embrace the world as a single community. The notion of "species identity" put forth by Elise Boulding indicates the common identity of all people of the world (Boulding, 1988). Peace education, therefore, provides students with an awareness of the problems that confronts the world people rather than people of certain regions or countries.

Harris (2002:19) has pointed out "peace education is not *pacifism education*". It does not intend to make people quiet, complacent, and content, rather it instructs them about strategies that can be used to address the problems. For example, Mohandas Gandhi used nonviolence to overthrow the British Empire in India, and Martin Luther King used it in the Civil Rights struggle in the US.

Peace Education and International Entities

The role of international organizations such as the UN, as well as nongovernmental and grass-roots organizations in peace education is remarkable. E. Boulding argues that successes of the important organizations such as the UN in dispute settlement and in promoting special assistance programs to particularly deprived populations such as women, children and refugees, are far more numerous than the failures, however it is the failures that are publicized (Boulding, 1987).

International nongovernmental organizations are part of a civilian grass-roots movement in the world (Tanqeren et al., 2005). They promote peace and justice, and the rise of the civilian movement in the world is very rapid. Boulding (1995) argues that the fast growth of NGOs is partly due to the women's groups that began at the end the twentieth century in the age of social reform. NGOs are seen as networking systems contributing social welfare and peace and justice among the people of the world (Boulding, 1995).

R. Aspeslagh (1996) argues that culture and internationalization is now gradually becoming a core of peace education. It is not, therefore, possible to ignore the role the nation-states on global peace. The role of nongovernmental organizations and movements in peace education is important, however, this doesn't necessitate denying the role of nation states in both positive and negative sense. If the notion of nation states still is in force, its impact on transnational movements is inevitable. The power, for example, of an informed international public opinion in influencing governments towards peace and nonviolence is huge. Obviously, this and similar questions raise the problem of legitimization of peace education.

Legitimacy of Peace Education

R. J. Burns (1996) specifies two issues of legitimacy of peace education. The first is related to the nexus between peace research, peace education and peace action. The major question about the legitimacy of peace education here is related to peace education as an identifiable task distinct from research, but at the same time distinct from action too.

The second question is about the praxis and the knowledge of peace education. This involves generation of peace knowledge for education, teaching approaches, and action framework making the choice of research paradigm important (Burns, 1996). Peace research, peace education and peace action have strong interrelationships, and all they constitute an integral aspect of the search for peace. Peace is a commonality for researchers, educators and activists. As Galtung argues, a strong formula for the content can be developed only by keeping peace research, peace education and peace action together (Galtung, 1974).

Burns (1996) identifies three problems for the legitimation of peace education arising from political will to use education as part of the process of control through its forms, contents and outcomes. The first problem is about legitimizing its epistemological foundation versus other approaches of the peace studies. The second problem is related to the legitimation of a framework of socio-political criticism that exposes structural violence. The third problem is about legitimating an educational process embodying the forms of social action, methods of decision-making, the roles assigned to individuals that are expected to bring about positive peace.

Cross-Cultural Dialogue and the Movement for Restorative Justice

One of the important contributions of peace education is to bring peace to the world through cross-cultural dialogues. The ability to resolve conflict by peaceful means is probably one of the most important skills that one can learn. Cross-cultural dialogue is one of those skills (Tanqeren, et al., 2005). Dialogue helps parties in conflict to liberate themselves from interlocking situations that are dangerous for the possibilities of searching alternatives that allow them to seek a solution to the problem that enables them both to satisfy their needs. This approach would permit the parties in conflict to achieve a gradual agreement effectively without all the transactional costs of digging into interlocked positions (Fisher et al., 1991).

It is argued that the roots of restorative justice are in the world's indigenous cultures where traditional methods of conflict resolution were used to settle the problems (Harris and Morrison, 2003). E. Bouilding, for

example, talks about "healing circles" where community elders were listening to the parties in conflict to produce a peaceful resolution to the problem.[2] The peacemaking activity becomes more successful when it involves a gathering of more than those involved in the conflict. Traditional peacemaking stories told in those kinds of gatherings, and other rituals may seriously contribute to the resolution of the conflict.

The restorative justice model sees conflict as interactive; therefore crimes that individuals commit are accepted as against individuals and communities. This notion makes healing involve necessary recovery to individual relationships as well as to the community. Here the primary goal is reparations and restitution, not punishment *per se*, and in this regards it is the community's responsibility to insure that victims and offenders are part of the restitution process. Traditional ways of nonviolent conflict resolution are still used in many parts of the world (Fry, 2006). Educating people on the vital role of grass-roots and traditional modes in promoting a culture of peace is important; and peace education plays a vital role in this regards.

Addressing Conflicts through Peace Education

Many scholars believe that education is a possible solution to conflicts an any levels, including ethnic conflicts (Bekerman and McGlynn, 2007). Sustained education is considered as necessary toward peace, but it is not sufficient by itself, since it depends on political, economical and social structures. Peace education needs to struggle against dysfunctional human relationships, as well as commit itself to more critical approaches through which it may disclose the historical forces and political structures that generate and sustain conflict in our world.

In the contemporary world the notion of societal peace has become more elusive, although the number of post-conflict states is growing which are turning from violence to political diplomacy in order to remove

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[2] Elise Boulding, Mary Morrison, Lyn Haas, Cynthia Cohen and Gail Jacobson prepared a peace education curriculum, *Making Peace Where I Live*, a project designed for young people to meet peacemakers and peacebuilders in their own communities. See: http://www.crinfo.org/special_projects/hosted_sites/mapwil/cover_letter.html (Accessed 01.21.2009)

the enmity that has divided them (Johnson, 2007). However, as Johnson (2007) argues, relying on diplomacy as the major channel toward peace is less than satisfactory. In divided states, for example, "where deeply entrenched distrust of "the other" has impeded political progress toward peace settlement… political diplomacy alone is not able to mend the walls of division" (Johnson, 2007:21). As V. Volkan argues, in divided societies, sides hold on to their perception of the other as the enemy by tirelessly venerating their own "chosen traumas" and "chosen glories" (Volkan, 1998). This type of perception keeps going on because an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child's personality (Volkan, 1997). Zuzovski, moreover, argues that when people continue to harbor feelings of injustice towards "the other", it is very difficult to negotiate a peaceful coexistence (Zuzovski, 1997). Therefore, to build sustainable peace in divided societies a dramatic change in the collective worldview is needed, and a reframed understanding of the other must be developed (Johnson, 2007). Then, education as a primary conduit for the transmission of knowledge, culture and values acquires extra importance. To succeed peace education must be systematically integrated and politically contextualized. Johnson (2007) among other argue that systemic approaches of peace education must include engagement at multiple levels of government, education ministry, political party systems, labor unions, commercial enterprise, school and university, and family and community.

a) The Integrative Theory of Peace and the Education for Peace

Peace and education are inseparable sides of civilization (Danesh, 2007). The main premise of the Integrative Theory of Peace (ITP) and the Education for Peace (EFP) program is that all human beings relate to themselves, the world, and life through the lens of their specific worldview. The main theme of the EFP is that effective and sustained peace education needs to focus on all aspects of human life: intellectual, emotional, social, political, moral, and spiritual.

As Danesh (2007) discusses, there are four subtheories of the ITP: (1) peace is psychological, political, moral and spiritual condition; (2) peace is the main expression of a unity-based worldview; (3) the unity-based worldview is a prerequisite for creating a culture of peace and healing;

(4) comprehensive, integrative and life-long education within the framework of peace is the most effective approach for a transformation from the metacategories of survival-based and identity-based worldviews to the metacategory of unity-based worldviews.

Based on this theoretical framework, the EFP curriculum is designed to be comprehensive, integrative, all-inclusive, and both universal and specific. It is comprehensive and integrative because it includes all aspects of peace-biological, psychological, social, historical, ethical and spiritual, and integrates them into one whole and all-inclusive framework. The "all-inclusive" aspect of the curriculum refers to the fact that it involves all members of the school community- teachers, students, administrators, and indirectly all parents. The "universal" principles of peace are fourfold: humanity is one; the oneness of humanity is expressed in the context of diversity; unity in diversity is a prerequisite for peace; and peace requires the ability to prevent and resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. Application of these principles is "specific" within every community, as it aims to safeguard and celebrate unique cultural heritage within the context of these "universal" principles.

As Danesh (2007) pointed out, according to integrative theory of peace, there are at least four conditions for a successful peace education program: (1) a unity based world-view; (2) a culture of peace; (3) a culture of healing; (4) and a peace-based curriculum for all educational activities. Education for peace program, in turn, is based on these conditions having four main goals: (1) assisting all members of the school community to reflect on their own worldviews in order to develop a peace-based worldview; (2) helping participants to create a culture of peace in and between their school communities; (3) creating a culture of healing in order to help members to recover from the damages of war and violence affecting their families, community members and themselves; (4) learning how to prevent new conflicts and resolving them by peaceful means (Danesh, 2007).

b) Adult Education

Some scholars discuss the importance of adult education for peaceful transformation of conflicts (Alger, 1996, Houghton and John, 2007, Nolan, 2007). Houghton and John (2007) argue that peace education

opportunities for adults in South Africa are rare, and short-term peace education interventions have limited impact. They also argue that peace education is something more than just acquiring knowledge and skills, because it does require more sustained peace education programs and growth of the peace educator community in South Africa (Houghton and John, 2007).

Nolan (2007), however, discusses adult education and community relations in Northern Ireland. The programs for adults in Northern Ireland include courses related to prejudice reduction, local history, assertiveness training, victim support, equality awareness, mediation skills, antisectarian workshops, listening skills, and so forth. All these courses of peace education make it explicit that integration, not segregation, is the end goal in Northern Ireland, which cannot easily be reconciled with strategies that build upon difference (Nolan, 2007).

Nolan (2007) has put that the peace process in Northern Ireland has been hailed, variously, as the successful resolution to one of the world's most intractable conflicts, and as a failed attempt to reconcile the conflicting claims of the two main ethnonationalist communities. At both these points, education is recognized as a central means. He examines the role played by adult learning. Nolan contrasts two fundamentally different approaches. The first approach is about the power of knowledge to dispel prejudice to create a world of shared values. The second one, however, is about a postmodern acceptance of different cultures that is important for a peace process that builds upon ethnic distinctions. As with the Dayton Accord and with other peace agreements brokered with international assistance, the consociational model of governance has been chosen for Northern Ireland in order to create a political equilibrium between the unionists and nationalists (Byrne, 2001). Such a political framework reverses the direction of previous integrationist educational policies in favor of a celebration of difference, an approach that is fraught with difficulties (Nolan, 2007).

Alger (1996) argues that adult education demands research that empowers local people for participation in peacebuilding. Therefore, there should be a new way of relationship between peace researchers and local communities. However, peace researchers primarily focus their research on the activities of the foreign-policy elites and their institutions

and practices, thus inadvertently serving the knowledge needs of these elite while tending to ignore the knowledge needs of lay people. Serving the needs of people will require peace researchers to be more attentive to the needs and local people, and to help them understand how they are linked to world political, economic and social systems (Alger, 1996).

c) Survival-Unity-and-Identity-Based Worldviews

In education for peace curriculum, three worldviews are identified: survival-based, identity-based, and unity-based. EFP program postulates that all conscious human activities are shaped and determined by our worldview which is an outcome of the education received from our families, schools and communities. Therefore, a comprehensive program of peace education requires attention to family welfare, parenting, school curriculum, pedagogical methodology, community relationships, economic conditions, sociopolitical policies, and leadership practices. In essence, true education is a process of creating a civilization of peace.

The survival-based worldview uses power for domination and control. This worldview is especially prevalent in times of crises and danger, such as natural disasters, terrorism and war. This worldview has existed since ancient times (Danesh, 2007).

The identity-based worldview aims survival, competition, and winning. In this mode, participants continuously strife for individual and group advantages in all realms of life- personal, familial, social, economic, political and so forth. This worldview is characterized by the domination of such issues as individualism, nationalism, racism, and other concepts that separate individuals and groups from each other. Danesh argues that within the framework of survival- and identity-based worldviews, competition, conflict, and even violence are generally the norm rather than the exception (Danesh, 2007).

The third world-view is based on the notion of unity that is related to three fundamental peace-related issues: safety and security for all; encouraging individual and group achievement and distinction; and providing opportunities for a purposeful life in a unified environment. This worldview is known as unity-based worldview within the parameters

of which society operates according to the principle of unity in diversity and holds as its final objective the creation of a civilization of peace (Danesh, 2006).

The EFP curriculum is formulated within the parameters of a unity-based worldview, and its main purpose is to help teachers, students, and staff to create a culture of peace in their school community. A culture of peace and culture of healing expects every single community member to involve in the peace process. The main objective of a culture of peace is to create an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, and recognition (Danesh, 2007). Cultures of peace and healing require that the school curriculum as a whole be implemented within the framework of principles and mind-set of peace.

Peace Education, Power and Nonviolence

As mentioned above, power and nonviolence have a direct linkage between each other, and nonviolence and peace education are tensely related to each other as well. T. Hobbes (1968), a great philosopher of power, argued that any power would lose its meaning in the case of disobedience of the targeted people. Those who hold power always strive for more power in order to keep what they have gained (Hobbes, 1968).

The central premise of a nonviolent philosophy is that the use of violence is morally wrong. It prohibits any kinds of physical and psychological harm against human beings. Some expand the scope to include not only human beings, but all kinds of living creatures, and even the whole global ecosystem.[3] Vellacott (2000) discusses nonviolent action as an agent of social change. It is also a way of life always striving for positive peace (Vellacott, 2000).

As Johansen (2007) discusses, the history of nonviolence has two traditions: the pacifist, and the pragmatic traditions. The pacifist tradition includes ideas and views from religions, philosophies, ethics and

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[3] The speech of Chief Oren Lyons of the First Nation on this topic at A. V. Centre for International Peace and Justice and the University of Manitoba in 2007 was very remarkable.

lifestyles. The pragmatic school, however, regards nonviolence as an effective and important political tools for communication, social movement, as well as a system of defense (Johansen, 2007).

The history of pacifist nonviolence shows that religious traditions dominating the history of pacifist nonviolence have been important for peace. Although almost all holy texts such as Bhagavad Gita, Bible, Koran, Tanakh, Guru Granth Sahib, Veda, etc. are subject to different interpretations, thus justifying violence in many different ways, there have always been groups of religious believers committed to nonviolence. Within Christianity, for example, churches such as the Brethren, the Mennonites, and the Quakers, as well as religions such as Jainism and Bahai are very firm in their nonviolent views and practice (Johansen, 2007).

The pragmatic tradition of nonviolence has its roots in those segments of society which have fought with peaceful means for freedom, human rights and democracy (Ackerman and Duvall, 2000). Johansen (2007) pointed out that people use nonviolent techniques in most modern social and political movements related to women's networks, trade unions, environmental groups, solidarity movements, and other parts of civil society.

People posses power in relation to one another. One person is powerful because another person is willing to defer to him (Grovier, 2002). M. Gandhi, for example, argued in early 1900s that it would be impossible for the British to rule India by physical coercion alone, instead they ruled because enough Indians cooperated with them to make their rule possible. He argued that if the Indian people would withdraw their consent, British power would disappear. It might happen nonviolently because British physical power was based on obedience which if withdrawn would cause Indian independence (Gandhi, 1986).

Allen (2007) argues that Gandhi and his teachings can serve as a valuable catalyst allowing us to rethink our philosophical positions on violence, nonviolence, and education. Especially insightful are Gandhi's formulations of the multidimensionality of violence, including educational violence, and the violence of the status quo. Although Gandhi's peace education offers many possibilities for dealing with short-term violence,

its greatest strength is its long-term preventative education and socialization. Key to Gandhi's peace education means his ethical and ontological formulations of means-ends relations, as well as the need to uncover root causes and causal determinants and to free oneself from entrapment in escalating cycles of violence. Moreover, the dynamic complex relation between relative and absolute truth that includes analysis of situated embodied consciousness, tolerant diversity and inclusiveness, and an approach to unavoidable violence is central to Gandhi's teachings of peace education (Allen, 2007).

J. Johansen (2007) sees nonviolence as antithesis of violence which J. Galtung defined and categorized as direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence (Galtung, 1996). Direct violence is explained as harming people with intention; structural violence is the harm done by socio-political structures; and cultural violence refers to the cultural justification of direct and cultural violence (Galtung, 1969). Regarding nonviolence as antithesis of violence, Johansen (2007) discusses direct, structural, and cultural nonviolence.

Direct nonviolence refers to using nonviolent techniques to influence conflicts peacefully. The nonviolent methods and strategies used to directly confront decisions, laws, and systems that do not treat all humans equally are integrated parts of direct nonviolence. Structural nonviolence, on the other hand, involves the structures in a society that promote cooperation, recognition, reconciliation, openness, equality and peaceful actions in conflict situations. Civil society organizations and other democratic institutions are examples of such structures. Cultural nonviolence, however, includes those parts of the culture that transmit traditions of nonviolent behavior, and praise nonviolent values and qualities. Nonviolent traditions can be found in all cultures, religions and philosophies.

Teaching and Healing, and Forgiveness

Especially indigenous cultures are rich with the traditions of teaching in order to heal. The Indian communities view a wrongdoing as a misbehavior that requires teaching. Navajo culture, for example, approaches justice processes with different values and procedures from mainstream American society, thus making aboriginal peacemaking

different from the Western one. The Navajo Tribal Court has been recognized as a leading justice body among Aboriginal peoples. The strength of Navajo culture is that it copes with a coerced law that makes individual acts criminal, rather than trying to restore them to harmony with others. In Aboriginal cultures, peacekeeping is generally not concerned with such notions as punishment, revenge, control, determining who is right, and so forth, rather it is concerned with the ways that help people mend relationships, and return to harmony (Ross, 1996). The indigenous cultures and knowledge should be taken into account by the practitioners because they explain the shared origins of life, integrity of ecosystems, and bonds of kinship with non-human species (Byrne and Senehi, 2008).

The power of forgiveness in conflict transformation is discussed by many writers (Ehrlich, 1994). In this sense, the role of the family in human development beginning with early childhood is important. I. Harris (2003) discusses the role of morality pointing out that educating for peace is related to the development of human character. He noted that the foundations of peace are established in the early years of a person's development (Harris and Morrison, 2003). E. Boulding discusses that education is one of crafting human beings to become who they are (Boulding, 1989).

Cases of and Examples for Peace Education

C. Moffat (2007) discusses Northern Ireland's integrated schools as one model of peace and multicultural education. He examines possible approaches to the pedagogy of integrated education that brings together the notions of visible and invisible pedagogic discourses. He argues that it is needed to analyze what pedagogy means to teachers and how their practice gives meaning to their educational role. The pedagogical skills of teachers are as important as the school curricula especially in communities that have long experienced division and segregation (Moffat, 2007).

L. S. Johnson (2007) pointed out that the signs of division can be seen in every aspect of Northern Ireland society but especially illustrated in its segregated educational system where children attend separate schools by religious and cultural traditions (Johnson, 2007). In fact, sectarian

attitudes are tacitly reinforced in the educational institutions in Northern Ireland. As Johnson noted, about 95 percent of children in Northern Ireland go to the schools that can be considered "single-identity" schools. Only about 5 percent of all the schools in Northern Ireland are independent or integrated schools. As discussed above, the education system can also play a role in sustaining and perpetuating conflict. For example, this is the case in Cyprus where division among the Turks and Greeks is reinforced not only through the textbooks but also by the ethnocentric tenets that are espoused in the classrooms (Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis, 2000). Consequently, systemic peace education approaches in divided societies has acquired a special importance lately.

Divided societies in post-conflict period struggle against their specific problems related to implementing initiatives aimed at rapprochement. It is argued that the educational system of Northern Ireland has succeeded to some extent to conceptualize and implement systemic peace education. Institutional, curricular and policy initiatives in Northern Ireland to support peace education goals on a system-wide basis is not observed in Cyprus, for example, since political settlement issues remain important in the island so that pursuing system-wide educational efforts is impossible. Political reasons often cause and exacerbate the "us versus them" dichotomy. The psychological separation of students and teachers in divided societies can be more dangerous than the geographic separation. Systemic peace education efforts canalized into addressing the issues of division may contribute to coexistence and creative tensions instead of violence and hatred that deepen separation and alienation (Johnson, 2007).

Feldt (2008) discusses the role of history in peace education in the Israeli-Palestinian context. Israeli and Palestinian histories are vital parts of the conflict between the two groups of people aiming at the destruction of the collective memory of the other. Feldt argues that history's role in peace education is rarely discussed from a theoretical and philosophical perspective but only from a realist and representationalist perspective. Israeli and Palestinian history underwent a remarkable revision during the 1990s and the new histories that appeared were labeled as New History and were generally considered as peace oriented. Peace education seems to be more reflexive in its perspective on history but its focus on recognizing the collective memory

of "the other" fails to recognize the effect of histories on the self before the other. This article suggests a new look at the uses of history in peace education (Feldt, 2008)*.*

Turpin (2008) discusses that the Iliff School of Theology in Denver established a justice and peace concentration within its curriculum to respond to the challenges of racism, class and economic exploitation, sexism, and militarism. The paper discusses the temptations students experience when learning about justice and peace in contexts of privilege, as well as the pedagogical practices that emerged in this particular context, and the failures and limitations of these practices for individual and institutional transformation (Turpin, 2008).

In his article *Educating for Peace,* Almon (2008) discusses peace education intended for children. It is important to put an emphasis on peace education for children not only to educate them in a healthy way, but also to secure their future. Children's views should be taken seriously in regards to peace and peace education, since conflict harms their psychology and physiology more than other segments of society (Almon, 2008).

Arweck and Nesbitt (2008) discuss that peace is one of the values at the heart of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV), the program of which seeks to promote human values in British schools, as well as in regards to educating pupils from different social, cultural or ethnic backgrounds towards greater tolerance and understanding. The program aims to achieve this as part of the statutory provision of physical, social and health education. Also, it aims the social, moral, cultural and spiritual development of pupils in community schools (Arweck and Nesbitt, 2008).

Sommerfelt and Vambheim (2008) pointed out that numerous educational efforts have been tried in order to address problems of conflicts and violence at various levels of society, and these efforts have been effective to various degrees. They discuss the effectiveness of the Swedish-based peace education project called the dream of the good (DODG), where they apply mind/body-oriented methods to develop non-violent attitudes and behavior in individual students (Sommerfelt and Vambheim, 2008). Smith (2008) discusses how US community colleges

play various roles in American higher education. Due to their wide-ranging diversity and open enrollment policies, they are frequently referred to as democracy's colleges (Smith, 2008).

Page's (2007) works provide some reflection and principles for the efforts of teaching peace to the military. According to him, the phenomenon of military personnel studying peace provides an interesting challenge from a peace education perspective, since the military is an institution that ultimately exists for war. He proposes a number of principles in regards to teaching peace to military that include respecting but not privileging military experience, emphasizing the just war tradition and the awareness of students of the case for nonviolence (Page, 2007).

Harris (2007) discusses the Virginia Tech school shootings of April 2007 and suggests that schools ought to support peace theory. He presents an overview of the three elements of peace maintenance, which are peace through strength, peacemaking, and peace-building. Harris posits that if Seung-Hui Cho, the murderer, had been exposed to peace education, the events could be averted (Harris, 2007). Moreover, Shorr (2007) presents his reflections on the aftermath of the Virginia Tech school shootings of April 2007. He suggests teaching peace education in schools, and highlights the dualistic nature of the pedagogy citing its research and teaching applications. An overview of the method is also presented, particularly in relation to the topic of peacemaking and interaction with such social issues as violence, war and social inequality (Shorr, 2007).

In her *Teaching War Literature, Teaching Peace,* J. Powers (2007) discusses literature taught in three different courses and the peace education approaches used for each, including epics in literature courses, Vietnam War literature, and literature of anger and hope. She recommends the teaching of war literature as an essential part of a peace education curriculum. Devastating events such as the Holocaust, the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings and the Partition of India should be studied not only as history but also as literature, for deeper truths may emerge from metaphoric representation and descriptive details than can be provided by factual accounts (Powers, 2007).

Zembylas (2007) discusses how educators can use discourses of empathy and reconciliation to problematize the prevailing conflictive ethos in their curriculum and pedagogy. The ideals of empathy and reconciliation are examined through the lens of emotion. Educators should work to contribute toward the goal of reconciliation when conflict and trauma have a social and political manifestation. Zembylas suggests that discourses of empathy and reconciliation in curriculum and pedagogy are critical components of the reformation of peace education goals in a conflict-ridden society because of its power of rediscovery of commonalities with the other (Zembylas, 2007).

Zembylas and Karahasan (2006), a Greek and a Turkish Cypriots, put together an interesting article titled as *The Politics of Memory and Forgetting in Pedagogical Practices: towards Pedagogies of Reconciliation and Peace in Divided Cyprus*. The authors argue that being raised in a divided country made people deeply concern with the ideological and affective practices that are used to perpetuate the existing stereotypes about "the other" within each community. They use as a point of departure their own personal narratives depicting the circulation of nationalistic technologies in education. The main argument of the article is that nationalistic education is a problem for achieving of peace and harmony. The authors analyze the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalistic pedagogical practices to figure out ways to disrupt those practices and invoke pedagogies of reconciliation and peace in both communities. They also emphasize the importance of considering personal stories of past trauma in critical terms to help people re-learn the wisdom of forgetting in order to remember that the weight of the past should not stand in the way of the future (Zembylas and Karahasan, 2006).

Biton and Salomon (2006) in their *Peace in the Eyes of Israeli and Palestinian Youths: Effects of Collective Narratives and Peace Education Program* discuss how they studied the effects of the collective narrative of a group in conflict and participation in a peace education program on youngsters' perceptions of peace. Participants in the study were 565 Jewish Israeli and Palestinian adolescents, about half of whom participated in a year-long school-based program; the other half served as a control group. Pre- and post-program questionnaires measured youngsters' free associations to the concept of peace, their explanations

of it, and its perceived utility, and suggested strategies to attain it. Initially, Israeli students stressed the negative aspects of peace, which means absence of violence, and Palestinians stressed its structural aspects such as independence and equality. Both Israeli and Palestinian program participants came to stress more the positive aspects of peace, which means cooperation and harmony, following participation in the program. The authors concluded that peace education can serve as a barrier against the deterioration of perceptions and feelings. It became evident that individuals' perceptions of peace are differently influenced by their group's collective narratives and more immediate experiences of current events. But they are significantly altered by participation in a peace education program (Biton and Salomon, 2006).

Bockarie (2003) argues that African peace education programs have achieved some success, but have not greatly affected oppressive policies in the most parts of the continent. He argues that it is not enough to work in the schools alone, rather educators must go to the wider community and take organizational links into account. Also, in African countries, government programs are sometimes biased, and macro-level factors have deep roots in history that affect current policies (Bockarie, 2003).

According to Weiss and Newcombe (2002), history can be seen as a race between education and disaster. They make an argument that the tragedy of September 11 must not be used as an excuse to start another war. They also argue that, women play crucial role in peacekeeping and promoting peace education. Therefore, their voices must always be built into peacebuilding strategies. The authors have pointed out that peace must be learned, and it is not inherited, therefore peace education is needed in communities as well as in schools. Weiss and Newcombe advocate integrating peace into education extensively (Weiss and Newcombe, 2002).

Conclusion

This essay has intended to examine the substance of peace education and basic concepts and theories related to it in order to examine the role of peace education in social life to address violence peacefully, and contribute to positive and peaceful social change. In essence, peace

education can contribute to the process of change at any level by initiating dialogue across cultures, social attitudes favoring nonviolence, settlement of disputes by peaceful means, acceptance of the rule of law and multicultural understanding (Cabezudo and Haavelsrud, 2007).

Also, education and community education can address the threats of violence by teaching people about alternatives to violence and empowering them to contribute to peace or peaceful resolution of problems. As in John Dewey's philosophy, the primary goal of peace education is about preparing learners- students, adults, parents, children, grass-roots leaders, and so forth- for active, responsible, and democratic citizenship. After all, creating peaceful individuals means creating a peaceful world (Staub, 2002). Peace education's mission to help people create an image of a better future and how to get there has empowering and inspiring effects on them.

Finally, peace education is for everybody regardless the age, gender, occupation, education and social status. It should be started in early childhood, however, because today's children are tomorrow's world citizens (Byrne and Senehi, 2008), and their healthy psychology is highly dependent on their education.

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