A Dissertation

entitled

Peace Education Reconstructed: How Peace Education Can Work in Kuwait

by

Sara Alnufaishan

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Foundations of Education

_____
Dr. Dale Snauwaert, Committee Chair

_____
Dr. Leigh Chiarelott, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Lynne Hamer, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Fuad Al-Daraweesh, Committee Member

_____
Dr. Amanda Bryant-Friedrich, Dean
College of Graduate Studies

The University of Toledo

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An Abstract of

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Peace education is an emerging and growing field of study that holds promise for the future survival of our species. This reconstructive project involves a process of comparative philosophical analyses between approaches to peace education, as well as between the approaches and the social context of Kuwait. It concerns the research question: what philosophical conception and approach to peace education is potentially most compatible with Kuwaiti culture? In this dissertation, I place particular focus on the following approaches to peace education: integrative, critical, Islamic, gender, and comprehensive. Using a relational hermeneutics method, I analyze the relative compatibility of these approaches to Kuwaiti culture. Based on a fusion of peace education horizons and Kuwait's cultural horizon, the following compatible elements emerge: reflection, dialogue, creative learning, and action. These elements form the framework to guide a potential Kuwaiti Approach to Peace Education (KAPE) proposed at the end of the dissertation. While I argue these elements must exist in a successful KAPE, I also contend that they only provide guidelines and a basic structure while the people of Kuwait have to actually complete and fulfill the framework through their own reflection, dialogue, creative learning, and action.

To my mother: You may have left this world but you never left me.

To my husband, Waleed, and children, Khaled, Maryam, and Fahad: The superheroes behind the scenes who helped reach my goals.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge and give thanks to my committee members, who provided guidance and expert feedback throughout the process of researching and writing my dissertation. In particular, to my chair, Dr. Dale Snauwaert, thank you for your sage advice, availability, wisdom, and guidance. Without your influence, I would never have understood the meaning and power of dialogue.

I also want to thank my husband, Waleed Alazemi, who has given me strength and courage since the beginning of my career. As they always say, "behind every great man there's a great woman," but today I find that behind this successful woman is a great man. Waleed is the real supporter who has encouraged me with his patience and understanding for overcoming obstacles and taking some pressure off my shoulders.

My children Khaled, Maryam, and Fahad represent the joy, love, and optimism in my life. I am grateful to Khaled and Maryam for their bravery in leaving home to study in the USA. Despite their emotional struggles with a new culture, a new language, and a new home, they were patient and stayed positive. Fahad is the new and beautiful addition to our family; he uses his hands to share great stories about our extraordinary journey. To my children, I love you all and thank you.

A special thank you goes to my parents. My father's love and guidance are with me in whatever I pursue. My late mother may be gone, but her belief in me has made this journey possible. My parents are the ultimate role model.

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Last but not least, I am thankful for my close friend Alaa Nyazi, who supported me unconditionally throughout this journey. Her optimism was a source of inspiration.

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List of Abbreviations

BCE...........................Before Common Era

CHR ....Constitution and Human Rights

GCC ....Gulf Cooperation Council

KAPE ....Kuwaiti Approach to Peace Education
KSA ....Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

PBUH........................Peace Be Upon Him

SC..............................Social Constructionism/Constructivism

UAE ....United Arab Emirates
UN.............................United Nations
UNESCO ....United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USD ....United States Dollars

Chapter One

Introduction

The philosophical and socio-cultural construction of any approach to education, including peace education—the focus of this dissertation—is influenced by one's own broadly defined social context. In other words, a philosophy is constructed from within the person's historically and socially defined perspective. Moreover, the effectiveness of a philosophy of education, including a philosophy of peace education, is also contingent upon the social context within which it is implemented. Given these influences on the construction of a philosophy of education, to what degree and in what ways should one or more prominent philosophically conceived approaches to peace education (peace education philosophies) be philosophically reconstructed to align with the core tenets of the social context within which it is to be implemented? This reconstructive project involves a process of comparative philosophical assessment between philosophies, as well as between philosophies and their social context.

This dissertation addresses the issue of peace education in Kuwait. It concerns the question: what philosophical conception and approach to peace education is potentially most coherent with Kuwaiti culture? In order to address this question, this dissertation is based on the belief that knowledge is socially constructed, so it is necessary to acknowledge how a particular nation or culture constructs knowledge before being able to determine what approach to peace can work. In order to determine how knowledge is constructed, a hermeneutics methodology is applied. This dissertation includes the five chapters: the introduction to the topic; the background of Kuwait, theoretical foundations of the social construction of knowledge, and definitions of Kuwait and Islam; the review

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of literature on peace education; the hermeneutics methodology, and the analysis, synthesis, and recommendations for future approaches to peace education in Kuwait.

Philosophical Problem

The philosophical problem addressed in this dissertation is how can peace education translate to a Kuwaiti culture. This dissertation takes the nation of Kuwait as the focal point for the exploration into how to advocate for peace and introduce peace education into the Kuwaiti curriculum. A few other writers have looked at how peace education can fit into the Islamic world in general, such as Hassan (1987), Hashmi, (1996), Koylu (2005; 2004), and Kalin (2005). However, the Muslim world is large, diverse, complex, and widely varying, so even looking at the issue of peace education from an Islamic perspective can be too broad. It is important to have a narrow focus when considering how to apply peace education because the approaches that may or may not work can vary so greatly from place to place. Furthermore, peace education hinges on the active involvement of students in the process of constructing a more peaceful world, so it is helpful to get as close to the level of the specific groups of students as possible. Even focusing on Kuwait might be considered too broad, but it is a step in the right direction. This dissertation takes the position that approaches to peace education need to be sensitive to the local dynamics of the classroom, school, city, nation, and region in order to effectively introduce peace education to particular parts of the world.

Other peace educators can and should focus on other nations, regions, and sub-regions of the world, but this dissertation sticks as closely to Kuwait as possible. While it is important to look at the contexts of the entire globe, the Islamic world, the Middle East, and the Arab Gulf states in particular in order to understand the unique situation of

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Kuwait, for the most part everything is discussed in reference to Kuwait and anything else is outside of the scope of this dissertation.

In addition to the main question of "how can peace education translate to a Kuwaiti culture?", this dissertation also considers the following minor questions:

- What are the different types of peace, and where does Kuwait fall within the spectrum of peace?

- How can Kuwait deal with differences in religion, culture, tradition, and nationality in pursuit of internal and external peace in a nation?

- What approach to peace education or aspects of various approaches are most compatible to Kuwaiti society?

These questions are explored throughout the dissertation in relation to the research and my own role as a researcher in foundations of education and comparative education and international student interested in peace education.

Subjectivity

The application of peace education in Kuwait is the focus of this dissertation because of my own connection to this nation. I am an international student from Kuwait who is studying in the US. My educational background has led me to this topic in ways that I would not have imagined from the beginning. My bachelor's degree is in Islamic studies from Kuwait University, my master's degree from the University of Kansas in the social foundation of education, and in my doctoral program in Education at the University of Toledo, my major is foundations in education and my minor is in philosophy of education. I have also earned a graduate certificate for foundations of peace education from the University of Toledo. My studies abroad have been sponsored

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by Kuwait University, and one of the main stipulations of this scholarship is that I study comparative education.

The more I learned while studying the foundations of education abroad, the more excited I became about the new ideas and concepts I was learning. I wanted to apply all of the new approaches to education I was learning about to Kuwait, but it did not take long for me to reach roadblocks: the more I thought about the ideas, the more I thought they would never work in Kuwait. I began to think about how the way things work in Kuwait is wrong, and the educational model is outdated and overly strict. I became very critical of the educational system in Kuwait, with its emphasis on traditional, teacher-centered classroom dynamics, lectures, and memorization and repetition of facts rather than student-centered dialogue, discussion, and criticism. Later on in my education, I began to wonder if it was the ideas I was learning that were wrong, or at least not practical. I questioned whether those approaches ignore the reality that young people thrive in structured environments and desire strong guidance and direction. Classroom discussion and dialogue sounds great in an ideal world, I thought, but is it practical? Is it realistic? After pondering these questions back-and-forth, I realized that these two opposing feelings could be synthesized with enough work and effort. This led me to the goal of this dissertation, which is to strive for the synthesis of the foreign and the familiar, the ideal and the real, and the global and the local. By comparing, analyzing, and synthesizing these ideas, it might be possible to understand how to apply foreign ideas in a new context or even how to construct new ideas based on similar foundations of education.

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Significance of this Study

In addition to my own educational line of inquiry that has led me to peace education in Kuwait, another factor that makes Kuwait a particularly interesting area of study is its role in the world. Kuwait is in the middle of Middle East. This region, as anyone who has paid attention to the news over the past 50 years knows, has been associated with war more than peace. It has been in a state of constant conflict, although the particular sites of conflict have fluctuated around the region. Amidst this turmoil, Kuwait has fairly consistently taken the role of being a peacekeeper amidst various warring factions. Even very recently, as of the time of writing this dissertation, Kuwait has filled that role again with its Gulf neighbors as the nations of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE have cut ties with Qatar. The Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Sabah, responding to these growing tensions among his neighbors by personally making a demanding peacekeeping tour of the leaders of the region during the month of Ramadan, visiting three nations in two days all while fasting at the age of 88 ("Emir of Kuwait," 2017). Sheikh Sabah has also been credited with playing a pivotal role in mediating a compromise in a similar 2014 diplomatic dispute between Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Gulf states ("Emir of Kuwait," 2017).

This study is significant because promoting peace requires finding common ground and reaching a mutual understanding. Peace education is one means to achieve that. However, despite the importance of peace education and the historical significance of peace in Kuwait, there has not been any philosophical studies of the role of peace education in Kuwait.

Definitions of Peace

As Johnson and Johnson (2005) stated bluntly, "Peace is not an easy concept to define" (p. 276). Defining peace is problematic because there are multiple concepts and perspectives attempting to describe peace. There has been a struggle to determine whether peace is a thing that is present, or if it can only be defined as the absence of war and violence. Johnson and Johnson are in the majority opinion when they assert that "peace is not the absence of war, just as health is more than the absence of disease" (pp. 276–277).

This struggle with the nature of peace has led to the development of the concepts of *negative peace* and *positive peace*, terms coined by Galtung (1969). Galtung defined negative peace as the reduction and ideally the elimination of physical violence, while positive peace is the promotion of social and economic justice, i.e., the reduction and elimination of structural violence. Here, structural violence refers to the institutionalized injustices faced by various races, ethnicities, genders, and other minorities (Galtung, 1969). This terminology has been widely accepted in the fields of peace studies and peace education (Berlowitz, 2009; Cohrs & Boehnke, 2008; Galtung, 1969; Gawerc, 2006, Harris, 1988).

The terms negative and positive peace are useful for moving beyond the idea of simply defining violence in physical terms and peace as the lack thereof. It calls attention to the ways that, in a superficial sense, a nation or region may seem peaceful, but under the surface there may lie deep injustices that reveal a lack of peace. In a state of positive peace, the possibility for further aggression is significantly reduced because the

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conditions causing violence are reduced. Johnson and Johnson (2005) explain these two dimensions two peace in more depth:

On the first dimension, war, violence, and strife are at one end (war is a state of open and declared armed combat between entities such as states or nations) and at the other end are settlements, agreements, or common understandings that end or avert hostilities and violence. On this dimension, if war or violence is absent, then peace is assumed to exist. On the second dimension, discordant, hostile interaction aimed at dominance and differential benefit (i.e., winners and losers) and characterized by social injustice is at one end, and mutually beneficial, harmonious interaction aimed at achieving mutual goals and characterized by social justice is at the other end. On this dimension, if the relationship is characterized by positive relationships, mutual benefit, and justice, then peace is assumed to exist. (p. 277)

Given these two dimensions to peace, Johnson and Johnson concluded, "Peace may be defined as the absence of war or violence in a mutually beneficial, harmonious relationship among relevant parties" (p. 278). It is the second part of that definition that points towards the need for positive peace.

However, even the negative–positive peace dichotomy has been criticized as being too rigid reductive. Boulding (1977) criticized Galtung's articulation of peace as too dichotomous and asserted that it oversimplifies the concept of peace. Boulding (1977) wrote:

I would certainly not call Galtung a strict determinist, but there does seem to be a certain underlying tendency for a structuralist to think in rather deterministic

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terms. . . . Galtung seems to me to have a certain carelessness in the definition of positive and negative terms. The expression 'negative peace' of which he is very fond seems to me a complete misnomer.… Peace is a phase of a system of warring groups. It is not just 'not-war' any more than water is 'not ice.' Both peace and war are complex phases of the system, each with its own characteristics. (p. 78)

Boulding (1977) stated this definition of peace is structuralist, hierarchical, and rigid, while it should be evolutionary. Similarly, Johnson and Johnson (2005) noted that peace is a dynamic, active, and relational process. Reardon (1988, 2010, 2011) has also posited a dialogic openness in the definition of peace in which peace is an evolving conception. She has even recently considered whether the terms negative and positive peace have outlived their utility (Reardon, 2011).

A synonym of positive peace used by some authors, particularly in the critical approach (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Brantmeier, 2010), is *just peace.* Just peace comes from combining the ideas of both peace and justice, and is based on the belief that there is "no peace without justice" (Snauwaert, 2011, p. 316). In other words, it is a concept that peace is not just the absence of war and violence but that it is the presence of justice as well. Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) make a similar point, stating, "peace is a condition in which justice is assured and violence is abjured" (p. 196). In contrast, peace without justice is a negative peace and likely to be short-lived while peace with justice that minimizes not only physical violence but also structural and cultural violence is a more robust and likely longer-lasting form of peace.

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Conversely, by realizing that conflict, tension, violence, and war are constantly present, then it is possible to work on minimizing their destructive effect without actually believing the impossible—that there can be an *absence* of war. Ultimately, as Reardon (2011) noted, it may be impossible to eliminate all violence, yet this does not mean that we should not strive for it.

Boulding (1977) has pointed out the problem with defining war and peace in direct relation to each other. Criticizing Galtung's definition, Boulding wrote, "Peace is a phase of a system of warring groups. It is not just 'not-war' any more than water is 'not ice.' Both peace and war are complex phases of the system, each with its own characteristics" (p. 78).

Hermeneutics Interpretation

In order to better understand how to promote peace education in Kuwait and to understand the social context of Kuwait, I use a hermeneutic approach. Rather than throwing in all the approaches or assuming one approach is the best approach, it is necessary to understand how the Kuwaiti society might respond to the different approaches. Hermeneutics is a method that can help translate the Kuwaiti experience to a non-Kuwaiti audience as well as translate the peace approaches to the Kuwaiti culture.

The origin of the term "Hermeneutics" (from the Greek *hermeneuein)* refers to the Greek messenger god Hermes (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2004). To deliver the messages of the gods to the people, Hermes had to know the language of the gods as well as of the mortals for whom the message was intended (Butler, 1998). Hermeneutics first developed as a methodology for biblical interpretation (Maunter, 1996), and later became part of legal, historical, and philosophical traditions (Sikh & Spence, 2016). As

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the history of the term and methodology shows, hermeneutics involves making the unknowable more understandable, although not perfectly so. Hermeneutics is defined as the interpretation of meaning (Butler, 1998; Bleicher, 1980), and borrows tools of interpretation from a wide range of sources, such as phenomenology, linguistic analysis, semantics, structuralism, Marxism, and Freudianism (Madison, 1988). The approach to hermeneutics I use in this dissertation is primarily the pragmatic/constructivist approach with some critical elements, as discussed in more depth in Chapter Four, which focuses on the proposed methodology of the dissertation. This approach is used because when trying to improve cross-cultural understanding, particularly between Western traditions and the Middle Eastern culture of Kuwait, the tools of interpretation, translation, and understanding offered by hermeneutics can help bridge the gaps in knowledge and experience.

Outline of Chapters

In the following chapters, this dissertation explores the question of which approach to peace education would work best in Kuwait. Following this Introduction in Chapter One, I provide the Foundations, History, and Definitions that are important to understand the rest of the dissertation. Although such background information is often included in introductory chapters in dissertations, in this dissertation it deserves its own chapter because there is so much new and foreign to many audiences, such as the theoretical framework of this dissertation, the history and culture of Kuwait, and the concepts and beliefs in Islam. Following the presentation of the background of the sociocultural context of Kuwait and Islam, Chapter Three reviews the literature on the various approaches to peace education. Chapter Four then explains the hermeneutic

method and how it is used in the dissertation to analyze the case of peace education in

Kuwait. Chapter Five includes an analysis of which approach to peace education is most

compatible, followed by a synthesis of all of the arguments and findings, a summary of

the main points and recommendations for future approaches to peace education in

Kuwait.

Chapter Two

Foundation, History, and Definitions

In order to build an understanding of the ways peace education can be implemented in Kuwait and answer this dissertations research question, it is necessary to establish a foundation upon which to build it. This foundation ensures that the author and the readers have a shared understanding of the theoretical framework, sociocultural context, and vocabulary with which to support the rest of the analysis and synthesis to be conducted later on in the final dissertation. This chapter of the dissertation explains the theoretical basis of this dissertations in the social construction of knowledge, provides history and sociocultural context of Kuwait, and defines some of the most important terms and concepts in Islam in order to provide a foundation for the rest of the dissertation.

Theoretical Foundation: Social Construction of Knowledge

The social construction of knowledge is a belief that most or all knowledge is the product of social relationships and does not exist independently from the social group. At the extreme end of this thesis is the belief that all knowledge, and even reality and truth, is socially constructed. Various philosophies and schools of thought are based on the premise that knowledge is socially constructed, such as constructivists, social constructivists, social constructionists, and social learning theorists. These different schools of thought share many of the same beliefs, assumptions, and arguments, but differ in subtle ways that are briefly addressed in this paper. Most of this dissertation involves setting a foundation for the social construction of knowledge, including briefly reviewing the history, outlining the fields of study involved, considering different

perspectives, and defining the key terms dealing with the social construction of knowledge. However, more development of this question and its answers are explored later.

History of the social construction of knowledge. The concept of the social construction of knowledge is relatively a recent development in the history of philosophy, sociology, psychology, and education. Berger and Luckmann (1991) attribute its birth to the coining of the term "sociology of knowledge" (*Wissensoziologie*) by the German philosopher Max Scheler in 1920s. Others attribute most of the development of the thoughts about the social construction of knowledge to Scheler's contemporary Karl Mannheim.

Antiquity. However, some awareness of the social element of knowledge has existed since antiquity (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). A student of history might even find some traces of the concept of the sociology of knowledge in one of the earliest philosophers, Socrates. Amineh and Asl (2015) have referred to Socrates as a historical antecedent of social constructivism because of the value he placed on how the dialogue between teacher and learner can lead to knowledge; however, Boghossian (2006) argued Socrates is not constructivist because Socrates maintained that there is an external and objective "truth" independent of one's beliefs that can be arrived at or at least approached through social dialogue, whereas strict constructivists assert that there is no external truth or reality to begin with and all knowledge, truth, and reality is socially constructed. To this extreme degree, Socrates would certainly not qualify as a constructivist.

Nineteenth century continental philosophy. More recently, much of the development of the social construction of knowledge is rooted in 19th century thought

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among Continental Philosophers, particularly German and French. Berger and Luckmann (1991) cite "the Marxian, the Nietzschean, and the Historicist" as the antecedents of the sociology of knowledge (p. 17). From Marx comes the concept that man's consciousness is determined by his social existence, from Nietzsche comes the complete rejection of idealism and the general uprooting of previous thought, and from the historicists such as Wilhelm Dilthey comes the insistence that no historical event can be understood except in its own terms and context, which directly influenced the development of the social construction of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

Middle Eastern parallels in history. Because of the focus this paper has on applying peace education to Kuwait, it is worth noting some parallel developments in the sociology of knowledge in the Islamic world. The Arab philosopher Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) is sometimes called the father of sociology, and was one of the first people to take the social group as the object of study in his books *Muqaddimah* (the Introduction) and *Ilm Al-'Umran* (Sociology) (Abdullahi & Salawu, 2012). Abdullahi and Salawu (2012) claimed Ibn Khaldun "provided a sociological anatomy of human society before sociology was originally conceived as an academic response to modernity by Comte in the 19th century" (pp. 25–26). They go on to note that some of the main, and groundbreaking, arguments of Ibn Khaldun include that

- society is amenable to change; it is dynamic, not static;
- social events are not haphazardly structure, rather they follow regular patterns and sequential structures;
- social laws operate on the people and cannot be altered single-handedly;

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- these laws can be discovered by applying human reasoning to collecting data through historical records and/or direct observation of ongoing events; and

- these laws are not a reflection of biological impulses, but rather they are sociologically constructed (Abdullahi & Salawu, 2012, p. 30; adapted from Issawi, 1950, p. 9)

This last point is what brings Ibn Khaldun closest to the more recent sociologists who assert that knowledge is socially constructed; however, Ibn Khaldun differs greatly from modern social constructionists and social constructivists in his emphasis on the preeminence of God above all else and as a sort of keeper of ultimate laws, knowledge, and truth (Abdullahi & Salawu, 2012). As Zine (2008) explains, in an Islamic worldview, "not all knowledge is socially constructed" and, by virtue of faith in God, some knowledge has a spiritual or incorporeal source (p. 65). In contrast, most modern social constructionists/constructivists reject any sort of source or seat of knowledge, truth, and ultimate reality. However, social constructionists and constructivists do acknowledge that in order to understand how a culture constructs knowledge, it is necessary to take belief claims regarding ultimate reality seriously because such beliefs can have real consequences (Andrews, 2012).

Contemporary thoughts on the social construction of knowledge. In the area of the social construction of knowledge, there are many perspectives to consider. There are competing philosophical, psychological, sociological, educational, linguistic, and even political perspectives regarding to the social construction of knowledge. When considering the social construction of peace education and its local and global goals, then all of these perspectives are important. The social construction of knowledge forms the

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basis for two main philosophies: constructivism and constructionism. Within each of these philosophies are even more types that vary on the details of the theory. Overall, though, that constructionism primarily focuses on the social/relational element of how knowledge is constructed while constructivism focuses on the cognitive element of how it is constructed. As Andrews (2012) explains,

> The terms constructivism and social constructionism tend to be used interchangeably and subsumed under the generic term 'constructivism' . . . . [However,] Constructivism proposes that each individual mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive processes while social constructionism has a social rather than individual focus . . . . [Social constructionism] is less interested if at all in the cognitive processes that accompany knowledge. (p. 39)

Note that scholars rarely use the term "constructionism" alone and most often refer to it as "social constructionism." In contrast, scholars often use the term "constructivism" alone but occasionally pair it with "cognitive" or "social."

The degree to which knowledge and truth is believed to exist independently of the group depends on how extreme the social constructionist's position is. On one hand, Kuhn (1970) asserted that the social constructionist perspective assumes knowledge is, "intrinsically the common property of a group or else nothing at all" (as cited in Bruffee, 1986, p. 774). However, Andrews (2012) claimed that "being a realist is not inconsistent with being a constructionist. One can believe that concepts are constructed rather than discovered yet maintain that they correspond to something real in the world" (p. 40). Berger and Luckmann (1991), widely considered the most influential scholars in the social constructionist field, avoid the issue of the objective existence of truth, knowledge,

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or reality altogether by stating that it is not within the scope of the field to answer that question. They stated that in the social constructionist field, the sociologist is not concerned with the philosophical question of 'what is reality' or 'what is known' but rather the more sociological question of 'how do societies conceive of reality and knowledge?' (Berger & Luckmann, 1991, pp. 14–15). "In other words, we contend that *the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality*" (p. 15).

In order to conduct practical research in the field, the social constructionist must make some assumptions. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), while the philosopher is professionally obligated to take nothing for granted, the sociologist, by the logic of his discipline, must take some assumptions for granted. Gergen (1985) has outlined four major assumptions social constructionists make:

1. What we take to be experience of the world does not in itself dictate the terms by which the world is understood. What we take to be knowledge of the world is not a product of induction, or of the building and testing of general hypotheses.

2. The terms in which the world is understood are social artifacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people. From the constructionist position the process of understanding is not automatically driven by the forces of nature, but is the result of an active, cooperative enterprise of persons in relationship.

3. The degree to which a given form of understanding prevails or is sustained across time is not fundamentally dependent on the empirical validity of the

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perspective in question, but on the vicissitudes [back and forth] of social

processes (e.g., communication, negotiation, conflict, rhetoric).

4.   Forms of negotiated understanding are of critical significance in social life, as

        they are integrally connected with many other activities in which people

        engage. Descriptions and explanations of the world themselves constitute

        forms of social action. (p. 266–268)

Basically, whereas a philosopher may take truth as his or her object of study, the social

constructionist ignores the question of truth and instead focuses on how groups of people

conceive of and construct truth.

        Constructivism is a concept that was developed by the psychologist Jean Piaget; it

primarily focuses on how knowledge is constructed within the mind. Amineh and Asl

(2015) noted that there are two major strands of constructivism: Cognitive constructivist

(usually simply referred to as "constructivism") and social/socio-cultural constructivist.

Piaget only ever wrote about the cognitive form of constructivism, but his student Papert

is cited as having extended Piaget's theories to the social constructivist realm (Amineh &

Asl, 2015). Boghossian (2006) noted that in addition to these two main types, there are

many other flavors of constructivism. Social constructivism differs from constructivism

in general in that it has "a conspicuously public element. Social constructivism 'sees

consensus between different subjects as the ultimate criterion to judge knowledge 'Truth'

or 'reality' will be accorded only to those constructions on which most people of a social

group agree" (Murphy, 1997, p. 5). It will probably be obvious to the reader that this

definition of social constructivism is almost indistinguishable from the definition of

social constructionism. If there is any difference one can note between social

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constructionism and social constructivism, it is that the latter keeps the cognitive operations of the individual mind in the picture even when primarily focusing on the social element while the former does not even consider the cognitive element at all. Because social constructionists and social constructivists are almost indistinguishable from one another and because they both study the social construction of knowledge, from now on for the sake of conciseness, I use the abbreviation SC to refer to field of study.

The social construction of reality and knowledge. The SC field deals with both knowledge and reality, i.e. epistemology and ontology, even though at times they may be indistinguishable from each other. The difference, in theory, is that reality is what truly exists while knowledge is how we come to understand what exists, but in practice it is difficult if not impossible to separate the two. Berger and Luckmann (1991) define reality as the quality of phenomena that is out of our control, i.e., it cannot be wished away or changed. However, even by this definition, such a reality is not absolute or universal. In other words, what may be impossible for one person or a small group of people to wish away or change may not be for another, so that one reality may differ from another. For example, I may not be able to avoid the reality that I must pay my taxes or face the punishment of not paying taxes, but a supreme ruler does not have to pay those taxes and can change what to me is an unavoidable reality. Thus, reality can vary from locality to locality, making multiple realities (Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

For most SC theorists, reality is therefore socially constructed. An SC position in any discipline assumes that entities we normally call "reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves, and so on are constructs generated by communities of like-minded peers . . . as community-generated and community-maintained linguistic entities—or, more broadly

speaking, symbolic entities—that define or "constitute" the communities that generate them" (Bruffee, 1986, p. 774). SC theorists hold that "what is real is not objective fact; rather, what is real evolves through interpersonal interaction and agreement as to what is 'fact'" (Cottone, 2001, p. 39). Berger and Luckmann (1991) argued "that reality is socially constructed and that the sociology of knowledge must analyse [sic] the process in which this occurs" (p. 13).

Knowledge is the certainty that phenomena are real and possess certain qualities (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). The need for a sociology of knowledge stems from the observable differences between societies in terms of what is taken for granted as 'knowledge' in them" (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). SC theorists hold that there is no universal structure of knowledge, though there is agreement of knowledgeable peers (Bruffee, 1986, p. 776). This agreement among peers as to what is knowledge is what Geertz (2000) called *local knowledge*. Local knowledge denotes that which is believed within a group to be a certainty that phenomena are real and possess certain qualities. In other words, SC theorists assume knowledge is the product of community, shared language, rather than a function of an individual mind (Bruffee, 1986, p. 777), and rather than a function of the natural world.

Language is the primary method used to communicate and construct knowledge within a social group. If knowledge is the house, language is the bricks and the mortar. As Amineh and Asl (2015) state, language is the most essential system through which humans construct reality. Berger and Luckmann (1991) have also asserted that the role of language is paramount. They stated that "language, which may be defined here as a system of vocal signs, is the most important sign system of human society" (p. 51).

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Furthermore, "the common objectivations of everyday life are maintained primarily by linguistic signification. Everyday life is, above all, life with and by means of the language I share with my fellowmen" (p. 51).

However, SC theorists disagree a little on how language works to construct knowledge. Vygotsky saw language as a cultural tool or resource that is used to construct knowledge while Bakhtin argued that language is a living source of insight and renewal (Mishra, 2015). Bakhtin observed that people do not take words from the dictionary but rather from the mouths of other speakers; as a result, people carry with them the voices of others who have used the words before (Mishra, 2015). Thus, for Bakhtin, in the socially constructed "house" mentioned above, language is more than the brick and mortar; it is the living voices of the people inside (Mishra, 2015). Moreover, for Bakhtin, language is always a dialogue, whether with oneself, imagined others, or real others—not a monologue.

The Sociocultural Context of Kuwait

Given this dissertation's fundamental that knowledge is socially constructed, it is necessary to understand the sociocultural context of a region in order to understand how knowledge is believed to be constructed in that location. The focus here is on the nation of Kuwait and the local knowledge, beliefs, values, history, culture, traditions, and language are briefly explored below. This exploration of the sociocultural situation in Kuwait helps contextualize the way knowledge is constructed, which provides a basis for the analysis of the most appropriate approach to peace education for this nation.

Kuwait is a small nation in the Arabian Gulf region of the Middle East. It has a total population of approximately 3.46 million people, but unique among most nations of

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the world, only one-third, or approximately 1.16 million people, are Kuwaiti citizens, while the rest are non-citizen immigrants, migrant workers, and expatriates (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor [BDHRL], 2015). Of the citizens, about 70% are Sunni Muslims and the other 30% are mostly Shia Muslims (BDHRL, 2015). There are also approximately 150-200 Christian citizens, comprising one large highly respected family in Kuwait called the Ghareeb family, whose spiritual leader, Emanuel Ghareeb, is considered "the one and only Kuwaiti priest" and heads the state-sanctioned Church of Kuwait (Qubaysi, 2003). The other two-thirds of people in Kuwait, around 2.3 million, are non-citizens, including a mix of Sunni and Shia Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Baha'is.

Relative to other Gulf countries, Kuwait is somewhat diverse and peaceful, especially considering its precarious position in between more violent nations. To better understand why this is and has been the case in Kuwait, it is necessary to understand its history.

Kuwaiti history. As a nation, Kuwait is both young and small, and has been relatively stable and peaceful. Other than a few historical sites such as Failaka Island, which traces its history to the Mesopotamians in 2000 BCE and was later settled by Ancient Greeks, most of the notable history in Kuwait has occurred over the past 300 years. The first major settlement in modern day Kuwait was in the 1700s by a tribe that emigrated from the Najd region of modern-day Saudi Arabia called Bani Khalid (Al-Awadi, 2014; Al-Nakib, 2016). This tribe did not have a formal government or rulers and settled issues through a sheikhdom system (Al-Awadi, 2014). Kuwait was at that time called Al-Qurain, which means "the high hill" and mostly served as a summer home,

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trading post, port, and storage area for the weapons and supplies of the Bani Khalid (Al-Awadi, 2014). As trade grew, the Bani Khalid built a fort to keep their supplies in safer storage, which gave Kuwait its second name: *kut*, which is Arabic for "fort" (Al-Awadi, 2014). The current name of Kuwait still lends its origins to the *kut* name, and is actually a diminutive form meaning "little fort" (Al-Awadi, 2014).

By the middle of the 1700s, Kuwait had grown to such a size in terms of population, trade, and wealth that it had become a target. Al-Awadi (2014) described how

> In addition to building the fort, the Banu [sic] Khalid were eager to maintain a degree of security in the territories under their control. Security from raids in the desert and piracy in the seaways was a crucial precondition for regular flow of revenue and the supremacy of the tribe. Their success in maintaining overall security eventually attracted more tribes to settle in the region, and the Anaiza, from which the Al Sabah comes, was one of the settled tribes. (p. 592)

In 1752, Sabah I, the patriarch of the ruling family today, took power to govern the small urban nation based mostly on trade because of its strategic location as a port on the Arabian Gulf (Al-Nakib, 2016). From 1752 until today, all of the rulers of Kuwait have been in the Sabah family, which is important to note because the Kuwaiti identity is therefore closely linked to the royal family.

Throughout this period of Sabah rule, Kuwait vacillated between within the Ottoman Empire, British protection, and independence. The history of Kuwait is so closely linked with Britain, in fact, that many scholars such as Tétreault (1991), have called it a British Client State. As Tétreault explained, "Cliency is a strategic relationship between a strong state and a weak state" (p. 567). Tétreault claimed Britain was not

especially interested in acquiring Kuwait as a client at first because they already had agreements with Bahrain and a group of tribes in the Gulf called the "Trucial States" that later became the United Arab Emirates. However, as the Ottoman Turks became more interested in Kuwaiti territory to build part of their Baghdad-to-Berlin train with help from the Germans, Britain became more interested in acquiring Kuwait as a client to increase their sphere of influence in the region in the face of Ottoman and European expansion (Tétreault, 1991).

Kuwait was unofficially a client of Britain for a while before officially signing an agreement in 1899 to become a British protectorate. Throughout the early 1900s, with the events of World War I and World War II in the background, Britain strengthened their relationship and agreements with Kuwait, including promising Kuwait tax-free control of their Ottoman-Turkish possessions after the war (Tétreault, 1991). This relationship proved fruitful for both Kuwait and Britain as Kuwait gained protection and Britain gained access to Kuwaiti oil and strategic territories in the region. As part of the agreements, Britain also helped build institutions in their client state that helped Kuwait establish itself as an independent "constitutional monarchy" between 1961-62 (Casey, 2007).

Reforms that ultimately led to the formation of the National Assembly (a weak parliament-like consultation body), the creation of the constitution, and the independence of Kuwait occurred from the 1930s to the 1960s. In this time period, groups of merchants dissatisfied with the economic situation of Kuwait and some other aspects of the rule of the Emir of that time, Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, established and elected members to a council that they convinced the Emir to accept. This council fluctuated from an advisory

group to a legislative body throughout these years, with Ahmad Al-Jaber dissolving it and

reinstating it multiple times. The British supported these reforms as long as they did not

extend to popular control over the agreements and matters they considered part of their

stewardship and under their control, which effectively meant supporting the Emir as a

stable and powerful channel to maintain their influence (Tétreault, 1991, p. 577). This

tepid and reserved support of reform from the British helped shape Kuwait's identity as a

constitutional monarchy when they finally gained their independence and ratified their

constitution. Figure #1 summarizes the historical lineage of Kuwaiti Emirs within the Al-
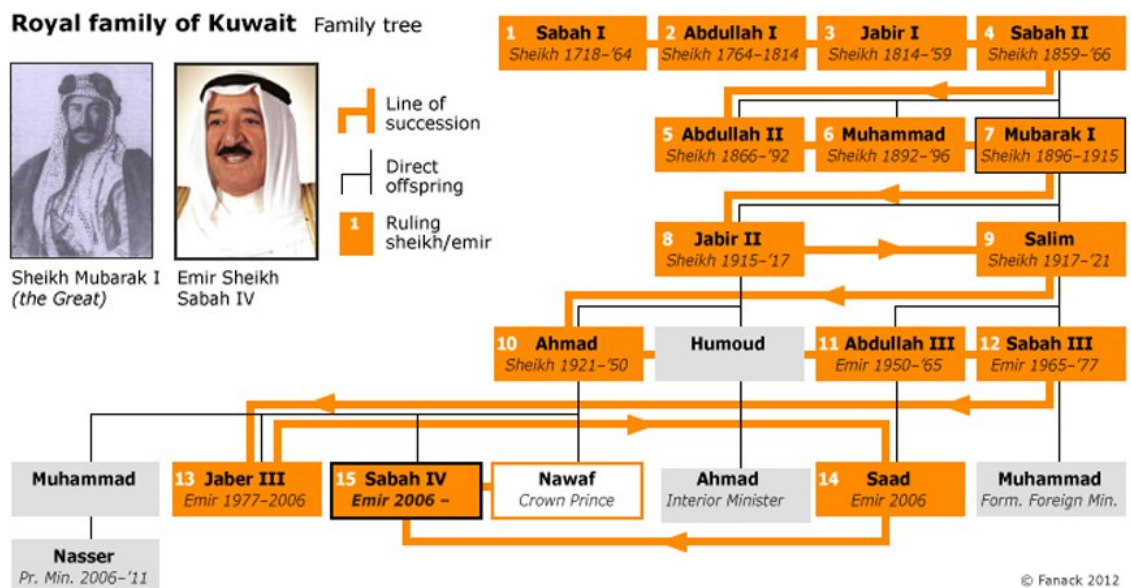
Sabah Royal Family.

Figure 1. The historical lineage of Kuwaiti Emirs within the Al-Sabah Royal Family.
Adapted from "Kuwait" in the Fanack *Chronicle of the Middle East and North Africa*,
2012, Retrieved from https://chronicle.fanack.com/kuwait/governance/

Kuwaiti constitution. Rights in Kuwait are protected by the nation's constitution,

which was created in 1962, suspended during Iraqi occupation of 1990, and reinstated in

1992. Many other Gulf nations, such as Saudi Arabia, claim the Quran serves as the

constitution of the nation, while Kuwait has a separate constitutional document. While the constitution does emphasize the supremacy of the Quran and Islamic laws in Part I, Article 2, stating "The religion of the State is Islam and Islamic Law shall be a main source of legislation," it goes beyond the Quran and does not state that Islamic Law is the *only* source of legislation. Stating that the Quran is a "main source" and not the "only source" of law is an important clause that grants non-Muslim Kuwaitis more freedom than in many of the neighboring Gulf Cooperation Council "GCC" nations. It should be noted that this clause is not without threat from political parties affiliated with religious fundamentalists who want to make the Quran and hadith (narrations and traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) the only source of law.

The constitution includes five main parts that define the structure of the state and system government, the foundations of society, the public rights and obligations, the powers of different bodies of government, and various other general and temporary provisions. Most of the rights are outlined in Part III, and include

- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of press
- Outlawing slavery
- Presumption of innocence
- Right to free education
- Right to healthcare

These rights granted in the constitution are extremely important and are cherished by Kuwaiti citizens.

However, in practice these rights can be suspended or limited by other exceptions and provisions to the law. For example, the Emir retains the right and power to dissolve the Kuwait National Assembly (parliament). Al-Nakib (2012) explained, "The Amir [sic] also has the power to dissolve parliament when the government and parliament cannot co-operate (Article 102 of the Kuwaiti constitution), and this has resulted in four parliamentary elections between 2005 and 2012" (p. 99). In total, the Kuwait National Assembly has been dissolved nine times in 55 years, with only six National Assemblies being able to complete their terms (Toumi, 2017). Furthermore, six of the nine dissolutions have occurred since 2006. Additionally, citizenship can be revoked in extreme cases to justify violating some of the rights of the constitution since they only apply to Kuwaiti citizens. Article 27 states, "No relinquishment or withdrawal of nationality shall be permissible save within the limits of the Law," but everything after "save within the limits of the Law" grants the government room to revoke without any clear check on that power.

The low point for human rights in the 1980s. In 1979, Iran had a revolution that culminated with the instalment of a new religious government (theocracy) based on Shia Islam with Ayatollah Khomeini as their supreme leader (Alnajjar, 2001). Within a year after the new government took power, Iraq, under the control of Saddam Hussein, started a war with Iran, called the Iran-Iraq War. This war put Kuwait in a difficult situation because it sits between Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the Arabian Gulf, with Iran just on the other side of the Gulf. In fact, by land, from Kuwait City, Kuwait to Abadan, Iran is less than 150 miles through Iraq, which is approximately the distance between Toledo to Cleveland, Ohio.

Somewhat in the middle of these warring two nations, Kuwait was in a tough position and had to take sides, and officially sided with Iraq during the war. The tense situation and Kuwait's official stance on the war caused some minorities and marginalized groups to lash out. Internal strife and political unrest rose during the '80s, particularly among the following three groups:

- Shia Minority

- bedoon (stateless people/illegal immigrants)

- Pro-democracy movement. (Alnajjar, 2001)

One group that expressed dissent in Kuwait during the 1980s was the Shi'a minority. Alnajjar (2001) noted that the Shi'a in Kuwait are not one homogenous group but in fact differ in geographic region, religious affiliation, and even ethnicity. Some of the Shi'a minority celebrated the Iranian revolution and also felt empowered by it. As a result, they openly demanded more rights and held several public rallies, which alarmed the Kuwaiti government in these tense times (Alnajjar, 2001). Shi'a supporters of Iran were blamed for a 1985 plot to overthrow the Kuwaiti government organized by 83 members of the military, but the veracity of these claims is unclear because no one went to trial (Alnajjar, 2001). Another group that was blamed for this attack was the bedoon.

The bedoon, which in Arabic means "stateless people" and who originate from all over the Gulf, until 1985 were treated as Kuwaiti citizens though many lacked official status, but after the plot to overthrow the government, the Emir decided that there would be no more people considered "bedoon"; they would be considered either Kuwaiti or non-Kuwaiti (Alnajjar, 2001). In order for those formerly considered bedoon to establish a Kuwaiti citizenship, they had to prove their family had lived in Kuwait before 1920

(HRW, 1995). Otherwise, they would be considered non-Kuwaiti and liable to be kicked out. This decision further marginalized most of the already marginalized bedoon people, so dissenting factions emerged, such as those who may have contributed to the 1985 coup plot.

In response to increasing dissent, protest, violence, and even what might be called terrorist acts from marginalized groups, Kuwait began to implement more restrictive policies and enforced harsher penalties. For example, "In 1986, the Kuwaiti government dissolved the parliament and imposed pre-censorship on the press" (Alnajjar, 2001, p. 192). Pre-censorship involves dictating what may or may not be written about before any such publications even emerge. This repressive state of affairs in the 1980s lead Alnajjar (2001) to conclude, "Conditions of human rights before the occupation of the summer of 1990 reached their lowest point in Kuwaiti history" (p. 192).

The third group emerged because of the increased repression and elimination of democratic institutions. This group differs from the others because instead of having religious, social, or ethnic differences that caused them to be marginalized, this group was purely political and included a mix of Kuwaiti people. This group included anyone part of the pro-democracy movement of the era, though they were not treated as harshly as the other marginalized groups. The pro-democracy movement began in December 1989/1960 when 31 prominent members of the dissolved Kuwait National Assembly held public meetings and demanded the restoration of this democratic institution (Alnajjar, 2001). These meetings grew more popular and gained the attention of the Emir, who cracked down on the movement by arresting 13 of these members, charging 11 of them with holding illegal meetings and the other two of them with distributing leaflets without

a license (Alnajjar, 2001). However, they were all released from jail on bail after four days and pardoned by the Emir in June of 1990 (Alnajjar, 2001). According to Alnajjar (2001), these repressive actions and practices taken by the government "were no the normal state of affairs in Kuwait. They were indications of the beginning of a new trend within the Kuwaiti political system" (p. 195).

Iraqi occupation. In August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. Iraqi occupation lasted for seven months. During this time, the Kuwaiti government was powerless and Iraqi forces wielded their power:

> Following the invasion of Kuwait on 2 August, thousands of people were reportedly arrested there by Iraqi forces, and either detained in Kuwait or taken to prisons in Iraq. They included Iraqi exiles suspected of having links with *al-Da'wa al-Islamiyya* [Islamic Proselytizers] membership of this organization carries the death penalty in Iraq. Hundreds of Kuwaitis, including children, were also arrested, as were former members of parliament, civil servants and students. Many of them were prisoners of conscience, held for their peaceful opposition to the Iraqi occupation. Some were soon released. but hundreds, possibly thousands, were believed still held at the end of the year. (Amnesty International, 1991, p. 124)

As the 1991 Annual Report from Amnesty International explains in depth, there were numerous reports of torture, extrajudicial killing, and rape of women and young men. Although human rights violations at the hands of the Kuwaiti government reached a low point in the '80s, they reached even lower points under Iraqi Occupation.

The liberation of Kuwait came in February 26, 1991, but the human rights violations did not immediately end. Alnajjar (2001) explains how human rights violations were high during that time period from both the retreating Iraqi forces and the Kuwaiti government that was receiving returning prisoners. Part of the repressiveness from the Kuwaiti government occurred because of the confusion and danger that occurs during and after major conflicts like the occupation. Because the suspicion of people aiding Iraqis was high, security became a priority over human rights at that time. This repressive environment helps explain "the development of local activism for human rights and the important role such activism plays in a crisis situation" (Alnajjar, 2001, p. 197).

In times of war and conflict, human rights violations are severe and occur in great numbers. Alnajjar (2001) states, "Human rights violations seem to be an inevitable result of political crisis" (p. 208). After wars, as people try to put their lives back together, reflect on the evils of what had just occurred, and work to prevent these violent events from occurring again, the positive work to promote human rights and sustainable peace begins to grow. As the history of peace education shows, the publications, activism, and legal achievements for peace and human rights increased greatly during the inter- and post-World-War periods (Fink, 1980) as well as during the 1980s as the Cold War wound down (Harris & Howlett, 2013). In Kuwait, "International pressure, particularly by human rights NGOs [non-governmental organizations], played a major role in pushing and paving the way for quick and structural recovery of instruments safeguarding human rights" (Alnajjar, 2001, p. 209). Some of these instruments and achievements in human rights protections since liberation include:

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1. Openness of Kuwaiti society and independent voices (foreign journalists invited in)

2. Work done by international human rights organizations

3. The independent press

4. Return to parliamentary life

5. Kuwaiti constitution – its existence provided pro-human rights groups with legal arguments to advocate for change.

6. Established legal infrastructure

7. Traditional minimal use of violence to settle political differences in Kuwait. (Alnajjar, 2001)

However, although progress has been made, Alnajjar has noted that there is much more room for improvement, particularly among various marginalized and minority groups.

Women's rights in Kuwait. One area of particular concern in Kuwait in particular but across the Middle East and the rest of the Islamic world more generally is the issue of women's rights. One of the major issues in women's rights in Kuwait recently is political rights. Progress has been made in this area over the past decade, but there is room for more improvement in the coming years.

One interesting issue of political rights is how citizenship is granted. In Kuwait, birthright citizenship is passed down only paternally (Al-Nakib, 2012). That means that a Kuwaiti father and any mother (Kuwaiti or not) will have children with Kuwaiti citizenship. However, a Kuwaiti mother with a non-Kuwaiti father means the children will not have Kuwaiti citizenship (Al-Nakib, 2012). Interestingly, under the current law children of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis are treated as Kuwaitis when they

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are under the age of 18. Once they turn 18, they are treated as foreigners and need residence permits to remain unless they are citizens of other Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, and Oman along with Kuwait) ("Kuwaiti Women Still Battling," 2016).

Political rights such as suffrage and the right to serve in Kuwait National Assembly are only recently being gained by Kuwaiti women. In 2005, women got the right to vote and serve in Kuwait National Assembly (Gorvett, 2006). Following this decision to give women the right to vote and serve in elected office, the first election women could actually vote or serve in occurred in 2006, but no woman won any National Assembly seats (Gorvett, 2006). Since no woman won any seats in National Assembly that year, the Emir named the first woman as a minister in his government, which is a non-elected position (Gorvett, 2006). The first time a woman became a member of National Assembly occurred in 2009 when four women won seats ("Kuwaiti Women Still Battling," 2016). However, in 2012, no women won seats in the National Assembly ("Kuwaiti Women Still Battling," 2016). In the last election held in 2016, only one woman won a seat in the National Assembly although 15 ran (Cohn, 2016).

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, beliefs about women's rights do not strictly align with religiosity among Kuwaitis. Meyer, Rizzor, and Ali (1998) surveyed 1,500 Kuwaitis on attitudes towards women's rights in terms of (1) women's ability to vote in National Assembly elections, (2) attitudes towards women holding local political office, and (3) belief that women should have a National Assembly vote. The found that adherence to orthodox Islamic practices did not relate to negative views on women's rights. They found that status and education are more predictive than Islamic beliefs. More important

than religious beliefs, it seems that Kuwaitis who perceive themselves to be of a lower financial and political status held more negative opinions towards human rights, suggestion that such people are more concerned about improving their own status first before the status of others (Meyer et al., 1998).

Current state of Kuwait and its position towards peace. From 2010–2012, Kuwait gave $27 billion USD in relief aid to Arab nations, $8 billion USD to African nations, $12 billion USD to Asian and European countries, and $1 billion USD to Latin American and Caribbean nations (CSB, 2015). For generosity like this and more, in 2014, the current Emir of Kuwait, Sabah Al-Sabah, was recognized by the UN for his humanitarian leadership (Ki-Moon, 2014). This recognition came because of Kuwait's support of refugee relief efforts from the ongoing wars in neighboring nations of Iraq and Syria, as well as more distant nations embroiled in conflicts, such as Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia and Sudan (Ki-Moon, 2014).

Recently, Kuwait has worked closely with the UN to promote peace education. In 2015, the Kuwaiti Minister of Higher Education Bader Al-Essa spoke at a UNESCO conference on the importance of consolidating efforts toward peace education (KUNA, 2015). Al-Essa stated that women are the first pray of marginalization because of war and conflict, and furthermore that violence, or even the threat of violence, is the main obstacle impeding the full equality of women (KUNA, 2015).

Definition of Islamic Terms and Concepts

The primary principle in Islam is the Oneness and Supremacy of God in all things good. The purpose of life is to strive for peace with God's Oneness and Supremacy. Kalin (2005) calls this primary principle the "metaphysical-spiritual" principle of the

Islamic approach (p. 331). The importance of being at peace in Islam is evident in the prevalence of the Arabic word for "peace," which is "*salam*," in the daily worship and remembrance of God. For one, the name of the religion "Islam" shares the same etymological root with "*salam*" and it is a verbal noun meaning submission or surrender. Likewise, the word "*Muslim*" means "one who submits." This shows that in Islam, in order for there to be peace, one must submit or surrender to a higher power, i.e., God. Secondly, one of the 99 names of God in Arabic is *al-Salam*, which means the Peaceful (Kalin, 2005). When Muslims worship the Greatness and Oneness of God, they should remember the 99 names which all describe the benevolent attributes of God. Thirdly, Muslims are required to greet each other with a greeting of peace. The brief greeting is "*Salam*" (Peace), the standard greeting is "*Assalaamu Alaykum*" (Peace Be Upon You), the longer greeting is "*Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullah*" (Peace and Mercy of God Be Upon You), and the longest is "*Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh*" (Peace, Mercy, and Blessings of God Be Upon You). It is best to respond to one's peaceful greeting with a longer version. These terms, names, and greetings demonstrate just how fundamental the concept of peace is in Islam, to the point that it can be argued that peace is the ultimate goal of Islam—although by what means peace is achieved in the Islam needs to be critically analyzed.

The secondary principle in the Islam is what Kalin (2005) calls the philosophical-theological context. Here, peace is placed within the context of Ultimate Good versus Ultimate Evil. By definition in Islam, God is the Ultimate Good, so Evil is everything that is against God. Muslims are called to the following:

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Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. And it is they who are the successful. (Quran, Aal 'Imraan, 3:104)

One may ask: If God is the all-powerful creator and evil exists, then did God create Evil? Or, is God not all-powerful and all-wise and evil is proof of the imperfection of God and his Creation. In the Islamic approach, Kalin explains that evil is the product of humankind and not directly of God. God created all things subservient to his will, but he created humans with a degree of free will. If humans use that free will to seek nearness to, submission to, and peace with God, then they enjoin what is Good and forbid what is Evil. However, if they reject God, fight God, and are distant from God, then they are promoting Evil.

In order to serve God, promote goodness, and seek peace, one must know how to do so. The way to promote peace is part of the third principle, which Kalin (2005) calls the political-legal context: the laws, rules, and conditions of Islam, called *sharia*. Hashmi (1996) explains that this political-legal context, or as he calls it, "the comprehensive ethical framework" (p. 147), arises from the Quran and the Sunnah in Islam. The Quran is the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him [PBUH]) through the Angel Gabriel. It is unchanged, so it is the most reliable source for the legal-political context of Islam. However, the meaning of the Quran is dense and esoteric—in other words, it often needs further exposition and interpretation to understand. That is where the Sunnah comes in.

The Sunnah means following the Prophet's (PBUH) actions and sayings, which are gathered from the study of historical records called Hadith. Whereas the Quran is

perfect but difficult to understand, the Sunnah and the Hadith can be flawed because of human and historical error, but provides more explanation (Mehdi, 2014). When the Quran and Sunnah do not provide adequate information to answer a particular case or question about life, then lesser forms of analysis are accepted to varying degrees depending on the school of thought. These forms of analysis included *Ijma*, which is the consensus of the scholars (Mehdi, 2014). Some restrict consensus to the Prophet's (PBUH) companions (*sahaba*) as well as the next two generations of companions (*salaf*) (Mehdi, 2014). Others allow for the consensus of contemporary Islamic scholars to carry weight as well, but more conservative schools of thought do not. There is also the consensus of the community (*ummah*), which is weaker still, along with the traditions of the culture (*al-'urf*) that do not clearly contradict the Quran (Mehdi, 2014). Finally, when these approaches still do no resolve a particular question or issue in Islam, one may resort to deductive analogic reasoning (*qiyas*) to determine what is acceptable (Mehdi, 2014). For example, drugs are not mentioned in the Quran or hadiths; however, alcohol is explicitly forbidden (*haram*) because of the intoxicative effects it has although it may be allowed for legitimate medical purposes; therefore, other drugs that cause intoxication and have no legitimate medical use are also forbidden. Together, these sources of knowledge form the basis for the legal-political side of Islam, which is.

Within the legal-political issue is the concept of *jihad*. As emphasized in the previous two principles, Peace is the ultimate goal of the Islam, and it involves submitting to God's supreme will, enjoining good, and forbidding evil all by one's own free will. Because of free will, this requires effort. It is a struggle, internally and externally. The word for this struggle in Arabic is *jihad*. It seems strange to emphasize

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jihad when talking about peace, but the concept of jihad is deeper in meaning and more nuanced than most people realize. The common conception of jihad is "holy war." However, as both Kalin (2005) and Hashmi (1996) note, a better translation of the concept is the Western concept of *jus ad bellum* or just war.

Furthermore, *jihad* in Islam is not just the external struggle, which is known as a "holy war" or "just war". It is actually divided into two dimensions: the lesser *jihad* and the greater jihad. While some may think the greater *jihad* is war, in fact in Islam the greater *jihad* is the internal struggle every person deals with. In contrast, the external struggle of war with others is the lesser *jihad*.

The last principle of in Islam is the socio-cultural context. This dimension includes the interaction of amongst Muslims from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims. As Kalin (2005) explained, Islam does not prescribe a particular type of cultural identity. Islam expanded widely quickly and has not had a central religious authority. As Islam spread from Morocco in the West to Indonesia in the East, it absorbed and assimilated with a wide range of cultures.

Moreover, multiple schools of thought emerged in the Islamic tradition. Within the Sunni tradition, there are four main schools of thought: Maliki, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Shafi (Mehdi, 2014). There is also a Shia tradition in Islam and various Sufi groups that follow a more mystical and esoteric version of Islam. For over a thousand years, these diverse groups of Muslims coexisted relatively peacefully with each other as well as with Jews and Christians. Of course, there were wars and conflicts, but wide-scale war was rare.

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Also within the socio-cultural context is education. In the Islamic approach, education is very important. Some reliable hadiths report that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said "Wisdom is the Muslim's lost treasure. He takes it wherever he finds it" and a not-so-reliable hadith that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Seek knowledge even if it is in China" (as cited in Kalin, 2005). Whether these traditional sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) are reliable or not, it is undeniable that during the Middle Ages, the Islamic world was in a golden age of scholarship (Renima, Tiliouine, & Estes, 2016). Islamic scholars preserved and combined ancient Greek and ancient Indian texts, and they created many of their own works as well (Renima et al., 2016). As a result, the study of science, math, philosophy, medicine, and religion flourished in the Islamic world from around 800 ACE to 1300 ACE. Of course, such scholarship was not available to everyone, so very few actually benefited from it.

Conclusion

To understand how peace education might fit in the Kuwaiti classroom, it is necessary to understand how knowledge is socially constructed. In the case of Kuwait, knowledge is social constructed based on the history, traditions, cultural, governing structure, and geopolitical role of the nation as well as on the metaphysical-spiritual, philosophical-theological, legal-political, and socio-cultural contexts of Islam. This chapter has tried to provide the theoretical foundations, socio-cultural context, and vocabulary necessary to understand basis for the rest of the dissertation. The next chapter reviews the various approaches to peace education and the various worldviews, values, and pedagogies of each one so that it becomes clearer which one fits best in the sociocultural context of the Kuwaiti classroom.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

Many people wish for world peace or at least claim to, but few can articulate how that lofty goal might be achieved, and even fewer actually act upon their stated methods to work towards the goal of world peace. However, there is an emerging field that is striving for world peace in some very clear and specific ways, and that is the field of peace education. There are a variety of approaches developing in the field of peace education, but they all share two commonalities: the pursuit of world peace and the use of education as the primary means of achieving it.

When considering the appropriate approach to peace education, one must consider the specific culture in which one intends to implement it. Without cultural awareness and without translating or reconstructing the approach to fit the language—broadly defined—of that culture, the approach is likely to fall on deaf ears. The philosophical and socio-cultural construction of any approach to peace education is influenced by the person's own broadly defined social context, which is to say a philosophy is constructed from within the person's historically and socially defined perspective. Moreover, the effectiveness of a philosophy of education, including a philosophy of peace education, is also contingent upon the social context within which it is implemented. As Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (2004) explained, "Peace education promotes not only peace on macropolitical levels but on micropolitical levels of everyday human relationships in school" (p. 289). In order to understand how to promote peace at the micropolitical level of schools, it is necessary to understand the culture and social

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structure of that specific context. In the case of this dissertation, the focus is on Kuwait as the local context within which peace education is considered.

The research question addressed by this literature review stems from these assumptions, and asks: *Given these influences on the construction of a philosophy of education, to what degree and in what ways should one or more prominent philosophically conceived approaches to peace education (peace education philosophies) be philosophically reconstructed to align with the core tenets of the social context within which it is to be implemented?* The social context considered here is Kuwait. This reconstructive project involves a process of comparative philosophical assessment between philosophies, as well as between philosophies and their social context.

Peace education is an emerging field in academia that aims to promote peace and justice through increasing awareness and understanding and encouraging purposeful and effective actions that help secure peace. Peace education is the social process by which the entire community works together to learn ways of acting that remove oppression and injustice that are obstacles in the way of peace. It also involves war education, in the sense that in order to achieve peace, we must learn about the causes and contributes to violence, oppression, injustice, and war in order to find ways to avoid it and consider alternative ways to deal with them personally, locally, nationally, and internationally. The belief is that better education and mutual understanding as well as attention to the various sociocultural factors that affect peace or lack thereof can help achieve a more peaceful and just world. This field is multidisciplinary and borrows from a variety of other fields of study, such as economics, political science, religious studies, cultural studies, sociology, and psychology.

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Approaches to peace education can be categorized in different ways. For example, in her review of peace education, Reardon (1999) organized various approaches by educational and social outcomes on which they focus, such as conflict resolution training, disarmament education, human rights education, and multicultural education. Some differently, Snauwaert (2011) categorized the approaches as follows:

Historically, there have been at least three basic approaches to peace education: the reform, reconstruction, and critical transformational approaches. The reform approach is devoted to the prevention of war, including the control and balance of arms. The reconstructive approach seeks to reconstruct international systems, to abolish war, and to achieve total disarmament. Its primary objective is structural and institutional change and the establishment of global conflict-resolution, peacekeeping, and peace-building institutions. The critical, transformational approach aims at the rejection of all forms of violence, including structural violence and injustice. (pp. 328–329)

Another way to categorize approaches to peace education are by their philosophical frameworks, which is the approach used here. The three main philosophical approaches to peace education are the integrative approach, developed by H. B. Danesh; the critical approach, which is based on the educational theories of Paulo Freire and has been further developed as an approach to peace education by Monisha Bajaj and Edward Brantmeier; and comprehensive peace education, which was introduced by Betty Reardon with additional development from Dale Snauwaert. These three approaches are not the only approaches to peace education, but they are the most commonly cited and most developed approaches. For example, these approaches are highlighted in the

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Encyclopedia of Peace Education, edited by Bajaj (2008) and including essays from Danesh, Bajaj, and Snauwaert. It is also possible to categorize approaches to peace education by particular demographics and socio-political identities, such as by race, ethnicity, class, gender, or religion. Two approaches that focus on identity are the gender approach and the Islamic approach to peace education, which are included in this dissertation because of the importance of importance of religion and gender in Kuwait—the case that I focused on in this dissertation. Before addressing these specific approaches, it is helpful to understand the history of peace education and the social movements and theoretical foundations that have influenced the field.

History of Peace Education

The historical roots of peace education run deep and traces back in part to the messages of religious figures such as Jesus and Buddha (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). More recently, Fink (1980) attributes the birth of the movement, at least in America, to the pacifism of major figures in the Unitarian and Quaker churches in the 1800s who worked to expose the horrors of war and promote peaceful causes, particularly Noah Worcester. The publication of books such as *A Solemn Review of the Custom of War*, journals such as *Friends of Peace* and the *Advocate of Peace*, the foundation of organizations such as the American Peace Society, and gatherings such as the Universal Peace Congress are just a few of the examples of the major events in the rise of the peace movement in 19th century America (Fink, 1980).

In the period between World War I and World War II saw a growth in the number of publications about peace education. Bibliographies that catalogued publications about peace education, such as *Education Index*, appeared in this period of time, with the

number of entries increasing drastically from one volume to the next (Fink, 1980). Notable works included Florence Brewer Boeckel's (1930) *The Turn Toward Peace*, Maria Montessori's (1932) "Peace and Education," Albert Einstein's (1934) "Education and World Peace," and Imogen McPherson's (1936) *Educating Children for Peace* (as cited in Fink, 1980).

Building on this body of literature, the movement started to become an academic field of study around the 1950s. In fact, in 1948, Manchester College in Indiana established the first peace studies program in the US (Harris, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Harris & Howlett, 2013). Harris and Howlett (2013) have outlined the various studies, research foundations, and even academic courses and programs on peace education that emerged in the Cold War era. In particular, they highlight the work of Quaker and economist Kenneth Boulding and credit him for elevating the field to the level of rigorous quantitative research with his 1962 work *Conflict and Defense*. Topics and themes covered in the research and courses of this time included disarmament, causes of war, conflict theory, international relations, and military spending (Harris & Howlett, 2013). Leading up to and to the Vietnam War and beyond, these academic peace studies transformed into more activism and the desire to create substantive change to society away from war and towards peace.

Peace education as its own particular area of study separate from the peace movement and peace studies in general came to a head in the 1980s. Most scholars of peace education agree that Betty Reardon is one of the main pioneers in the field of peace education, making a name for herself with the publication of *Comprehensive Peace Education* (1988) (Harris, 2003; Harris & Howlett, 2013). Along with Reardon's book,

other major works of peace education published in 1988 included *Peace Education* by Ian Harris and *Building a Global Civic Order* by Elise Boulding. The fact that these works all emerged in the same year is probably not a coincidence given the escalating fears of war during the Reagan Era just before the collapse of the Soviet Union (Harris & Howlett, 2013). In the years that have followed, the field of peace education is characterized by the growth of various offshoots in the field, such as integrative, critical, gender, comprehensive, and Islamic peace education. As Johnson and Johnson (2005) explain

> With the proliferation of programs, peace education has become quite diverse and difficult to define. Programs around the world differ widely in terms of ideology, objectives, emphasis, curricula, contents, and practices. Reasons for the diversity include the specific problems the society is trying to solve, the availability of education to citizens, the economic resources available, and the society's political structure. (p. 276)

If any single approach to peace education is to work, it must be able to address and accommodate these various local contexts listed by Johnson and Johnson, or if a combined approach is to work, then it is necessary to determine which qualities of each will work in Kuwait. Let us begin by looking at each approach separately in this chapter and in later chapters of the dissertation, I determine the strengths and weaknesses of each.

The Integrative Approach to Peace Education

The integrative approach to peace education proposes an ideal worldview based on ideas of unity, peace, and love inspired from the Baha'i faith. The premise of this view is that, humankind is one, and the worldview emphasizes the oneness of the universe and

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mankind. Danesh (2008) claims the concept of unity comprises the concepts of oneness (one in many) and diversity (many in one) (p. 159).

Purpose of education in the integrative approach. The main purpose and outcome of the integrative approach is the creation of ever-higher levels of unity within the context of diversity (Danesh, 2008). This apparent oxymoron embraces diversity but calls for finding ways to unite.

Curriculum of the integrative approach. The curriculum of the integrative approach is called Education for Peace (EFP). Danesh (2008) has developed this approach to achieve the goal of increasingly higher levels of unity in a diverse world. To achieve this, there are three premises of the EFP integrative curriculum:

1. Unity rather than conflict is the main force in human relationships.

2. The main framework within which all human individual and group behavior develops is considered the worldview.

3. Peace is the main outcome of a unity-based worldview.

In the EFP curriculum, Danesh (2008) defines the concept of worldview as "the framework within which we understand the nature of reality, human nature, the purpose of life and laws governing human relationships," including issues of both personal and group identity and narrative (p. 158).

The EFP curriculum addresses three aspects of learning: critical thinking, emotional insight, and creative experience (Danesh, 2008). Critical thinking encourages revisiting one's personal and group identities and questioning the most cherished, inviolable assumptions and beliefs (Danesh, 2008). Emotional insight is awareness of worldviews, which creates a profound level of emotional alertness and a much higher

insight into thoughts and emotional processes, the most consequential of which is the process of healing physically, emotionally, and psychologically from the consequences of long-term conflict and violence (Danesh, 2008). Finally, creative experience is the process of creating new things in order to stretch the intellect, revitalize the emotions, become socially engaged, invigorate the artistic side, and enrich the spirit (Danesh, 2008).

Pedagogy of the integrative approach. The pedagogy of the EFP in the integrative approach involves infusing the standard curriculum with an awareness of the greater peace and unity. Danesh (2008) explained that students and teachers must engage in the study of diverse subjects, such as science, social studies, math, sports, literature, and the arts with the principles and practices of peace rather than conflict in mind. In order to achieve this, the pedagogy of the EFP calls for processes of critical self-evaluation by all educators (parents/guardians, teachers, school officials, etc.) as well as students regarding each one's respective worldview and its impact on pedagogical practices.

In order to achieve peace within this approach, Danesh (2008) seems to expect people to accept and adopt his worldview. The problem is, this puts the responsibility of each and every individual to accept and adopt this worldview, despite the fact that their preexisting beliefs, traditions, and worldviews may not allow for the acceptance of this worldview. This is problematic because it assumes that the unity worldview is the best worldview and it puts the burden on all people (rather than on certain institutions of systems of power).

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The integrative approach posits that a shift in worldview can happen quickly simply by believing in the unity that Danesh proposes. It is spiritual and metaphysical, and thus is likely to clash and compete with other religions and spiritual views without actually moving people towards a higher level of thinking and acting. It is unclear how this approach could lead to peace, because it fails to explain how people can change their worldview so drastically without consequence. It comes across as marketing and advertising catchphrases and terms, but it lacks substance. It also seems to overemphasize the role of transformative leaders and figures (e.g., Jesus, Buddha, Muhammad [PBUH], MLK, Gandhi, etc.), which is potentially dangerous because it creates a dependence on others to lead the transformation.

The Critical Approach to Peace Education

The critical approach emphasizes the problems with the hierarchical structure of powerful elites and oppressed masses, and the ideological hegemony that maintains that hierarchical system, which is considered structural violence. Whereas reform approaches to peace define violence as political violence and aims for prevention of violence, and the reconstructive approach defines peace as total disarmament, the critical and transformative approaches define violence as structural in addition to political, so peace is the transformation of the oppressive structure of society itself (Snauwaert, 2011). Structural violence in the critical approach is present in the hierarchies of government, economics, and education.

According to Bartlett (2008), there are five key concepts in Freire's model of critical approach to peace education:

1. Education as a political act

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2. Banking versus problem-posing education

3. Dialogue and critical consciousness

4. Democratic teacher–student relationships

5. The co-construction of knowledge

What is the banking model of education? Freire (1970/2003) criticizes what he considers the banking model of education, which is prevalent in societies around the world and constitutes a form of structural violence. According to Freire, the banking model treats knowledge and education like money and a bank. Knowledge is a kind of currency that is compartmentalized and can be deposited from the teacher to the student. It presents knowledge as static and pre-packaged, and poses questions as having right or wrong answers. The teacher and the education system possess the knowledge, and the student must learn to take, accept, and assimilate to that knowledge. All information is presented as just the way things are rather than how they can or should be. Ultimately, the student is treated as an object and not a subject.

The critical approach targets the violence that exists in the social structures. Scholars following the critical approach include Bajaj (2008) and Brantmeier (2010), and they rely heavily on the works of Freire (1970/2003). In fact, the importance of Freire not only to the critical approach to peace education but all of the approaches cannot be overstated. As Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) remarked, "The Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, advocated practice of a dialogic pedagogy of reflection and action that was one of the foundations of critical pedagogy practiced by many peace educators" (p. 91). In the critical approach, the emphasis on the inherent injustice and violence in the structures of society indicates that the structure itself needs to be changed.

The purpose of the critical approach to peace education. The critical approach is based on the assumption that structural violence exists and is inherently unjust; therefore, the purpose is to educate teachers and students to become transformative agents who are empowered to socially *re*construct unjust social orders towards a more just system (Snauwaert, 2011). Likewise, according to Brantmeier (2010), the "main focus of critical peace education is transformation via raising consciousness, vision, and transformative action. Thus, critical peace education is action oriented by promoting social and cultural change toward a nonviolent, sustainable, and renewable future" (p. 13). To achieve this, the critical approach requires close attention to not just physical violence but structural violence as well.

Curriculum of the critical approach. According to Brantmeier (2010), the curriculum of critical peace education is both explicit and implicit. Explicit peace education involves directly teaching peace theory and peace education; implicit peace education, in contrast, is embedded in curriculum choices (Brantmeier, 2010). In contrast to peace*making* curricula, which focus on skills of nonviolent conflict resolution and conflict mediation, the curriculum, instruction, and classroom management of peace*building* education of the critical approach instills dispositions, attitudes, and behaviors that promote nonviolence and peace (Brantmeier, 2010).

Pedagogy the critical approach. The critical approach to peace education "posits a pedagogy that is process-oriented, inquiry-based, reflective, experiential, dialogical/conversational, value-based, imaginative, critical, liberating, and empowering" (Snauwaert, 2011, p. 329). The pedagogy of the critical approach should also be close to

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the students and where they are rather than focusing only or primarily on the perspectives of the teacher.

About the limitations of the critical approach, Snauwaert (2011) concludes, "The philosophical theory of social justice foundational to critical peace education needs further articulation and development" (p. 315) and "if we are to advance the idea and practice of critical peace education, the theory of social justice upon which it rests requires further development" (p. 329). In particular, Snauwaert argues that a theory of justice needs advancement and development because it provides the foundation for a critical approach to peace. Snauwaert asserts that a realization-focused orientation to justice that defines the foundation, orientation, domain, structure, form, scope, process, moral resources, and social conditions of justice can help the critical approach to peace education fulfill its goals. Bajaj (2008) recommends some additional changes that are needed in the critical approach, primarily that, "Depth rather than breadth should be the aim of the critical peace education endeavor. Generalizations, rather than prescriptions, can and should emerge through greater empiricism and methodological rigor in peace education research" (p. 6). She emphasizes the need to be more rigorous and practical in the approach to peace education, which addresses a major weakness in all peace education approaches:

- Depth over breadth
- Human rights are complex and dynamic
- Marginalized groups should not be the only focus
- Transformative agency needs to be analyzed for practical applications

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- Research and practice should focus on asymmetrical power structure in supposed neutral spaces.

- Researchers should develop methods that do not impose violence. (Bajaj, 2008)

The critical approach to peace education has a great deal of potential because it is very keen on the structures of society, which makes it concrete and practical. However, as Snauwaert (2011) and Bajaj (2008) have noted, it needs development before it can be effectively applied.

The Comprehensive Approach to Peace Education

The comprehensive approach to peace education was founded by Betty Reardon, who is a pioneer and world-renowned leader of peace education and human rights. The goal of the comprehensive approach to peace education is to work towards a shift in social values and worldviews—from a paradigm of war to a paradigm of peace (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015).

The foundational values of Reardon and Snauwaert's (2015) comprehensive peace education approach include the following five values:

- universal human dignity and universal moral inclusion;

- violence as dehumanization and the core problematic of peace education;

- a human rights ethical framework;

- a transformational paradigm of peace; and

- peace learning and reflective inquiry. (p. vii)

These foundational values guide the comprehensive approach to peace education.

Out of all of these foundational values, perhaps the most central core of comprehensive peace education approach is universal human dignity. Everything that violates universal human dignity is a form of violence, and the more human dignity is violated, the more violent society is. Additionally, universal human dignity includes the core principles of recognition, inclusion, and fairness. People need to be recognized, included, and treated fairly, so comprehensive peace education strivers for universal recognition, inclusion, and fairness. Conversely, neglect, exclusion, and unfair treatment are forms of violence, and even one person or type of person left without a voice is a sign of more work to be done towards peace.

Achieving the ideals of universal human dignity and moral inclusion given the scope of human diversity is a herculean task. It requires open, impartial scrutiny:

> It requires that everyone submit their values and ideas to open, impartial scrutiny as a test of their objectivity, value, and validity. Given that our perspectives tend to be confined, exposing our positions to open impartial scrutiny is a means of transcending our positional confinement. This call for impartial scrutiny is central to Reardon's advocacy of reflective inquiry and her critique of the narrowness and partiality of the positioning of critical, reflective pedagogies as ideologies rather than as methods of inquiry and educational liberation. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 188)

In this sense, open means it is fully inclusive and cosmopolitan, impartial means it is without bias (or with minimal bias), and scrutiny means beliefs and preconceptions are rigorously analyzed and criticized. In the comprehensive approach to peace education, the classroom holds the most potential as a democratic public space of freedom and as a

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site of open, impartial deliberation (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015). It is the site where reflective responses, proposals, values, visions, and ideals ought to be subjected to open, impartial scrutiny.

Purpose of the comprehensive approach to peace education. The purpose of peace education in the comprehensive approach is to be transformative. The purpose is to shift the process from learning how things work in the current system and start asking if the current system is the most conducive for peace or if there are other systems that are. Changing the process takes the typical purpose of education from learning how things work and learning the skills needed to live in the current world and shifts it to transforming the world to its most peaceful state. Reardon explains

> The purpose of education is generally held to be formative, guiding formations' inculcating information and skills so as to enable the learners to function in the system as it is. The purpose of learning, as peace education seeks to cultivate it, is transformative, drawing from within learners' capacities to envision and affect change and helping them to develop the capacity to transform the existing system. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 159)

So, the purpose of peace education is to shift away from formative learning towards transformative learning. Formative learning essentially involves learning how things are—how they currently exist. Students learn from textbooks and from teachers the way the world works, mostly through mimicking, memorization, repetition, and routine. This formative type of learning fits within a realist school—which strives to describe the way things are. However, a transformative way of thinking strives to imagine how things should be and working to find ways that could be achieved.

How could anything be changed without a transformative approach to education? Reardon explained the problem with the current formative education of young people regarding world politics, claiming

> because they are practically never being asked to evaluate the system itself, they never face the question of whether the system is more conducive to war or peace, nor are they able to consider ways in which the system could be improved.
>
> (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 33)

Without critically thinking, reflecting, and dialogically debating and deliberating about ways the system could be improved, there would be no hope that they ever will be improved. Helping students to start question the status quo and also working towards real change is the only way more peace could be achieved.

Curriculum of the comprehensive approach. The curriculum in the comprehensive approach to peace education is systematic and holistic. It draws from multidisciplinary thinking because the world is multidisciplinary. In the real world, people, nature, technology, physics, and so on do not act and operate separately. They all act on each other in every moment, so a comprehensive approach to peace education that strives for transformative approach to the real world must be multidisciplinary.

Again, achieving the herculean task of a multidisciplinary thinking requires focus and some limits in scope. That is why comprehensive peace education focuses on identifying and establishing interrelationships between people and things. Rather than static objects being the focus, comprehensive peace education focuses on the dynamic relationships. Additionally, this approach focuses on understanding problems and designing responses. For instance, one problem is how to promote the consciousness in

the movement from oppression to empowerment. Students challenged with this problem are as capable if not more capable than their teachers in developing ideas to achieve this transformative goal.

Pedagogy of the comprehensive approach. Because comprehensive peace education strives towards transformative education in pursuit of peace, the pedagogy, or methods, of this approach must force students and the classroom dynamic to transform. There are many methods that can achieve this transformation, but three important ones are as follows:

1. Reflective thinking

2. Dialogic learning

3. Public deliberation in the classroom (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015)

Reflective thinking is an individual method, the dialogic learning is as two-person dynamic, and public deliberation is a group method, but they all force students to transform their thinking.

Reflective thinking involves considering one's own role in relation to others. It requires a stepping back from living life and examining it, questioning it, and considering alternatives to it. As Socrates famously said, paraphrasing his actual words: an unexamined life is not worth living. This approach is still about interrelationships, even though reflection is often a solitary activity. It just requires putting one's mind in the place of others to consider fairness and justice from multiple perspectives, i.e., internalizing values. As Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) explain

Internalizing values is possible through the acquisition of knowledge and the

development of skills if the learning process is mediated through active and

reflective involvement of the learner with the substance of study… This is especially so if the process involves the examination and—in most cases—the challenging of the worldviews of the learners and their societies. (p. 147)

Most people are unable to think reflectively, especially if they are young or have never had to think in such a way before, so their mindset must be challenged. Before reflective thinking might be possible, it may be necessary to start with an external example of multiple viewpoints in the form of dialogic learning.

Dialogic learning involves thinking of alternatives, debating the relative merits of the alternatives, asking questions, and responding to questions. It usually requires an interlocutor of some sort, which is why I mentioned it is a two-person dynamic, although there may be more than two sides. Reflective inquiry and dialogic thinking are similar, but often the dialogic approach must be the starting point before reflective thinking is possible:

Reflective inquiry initiated by the posing of questions is deepened through the consideration of queries. In that it is in essence a process of thinking by interrogation, it is thus essentially dialogic, beginning with focusing on and encountering the subject of the inquiry as the entry point into the process of examination of what is to be further explored. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 190)

How does dialogic thinking work? Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) explain:

One aspect of the dialogic dimension of reflective inquiry is that dialogue is the process through which validation of arguments can be achieved by offering and

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testing of evidence, data, prior experience or related matters, and assessing its

relevance to the problematic. (p. 191)

When dialogic inquiry involves multiple voices, public deliberation is needed.

One place for the public deliberation is in the classroom. In Snauwaert's

concluding reflection, "This pedagogy enacts the processes and substantive issues of

democratic public deliberation in the classroom" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 198).

The classroom should be a site for public deliberation and scrutiny that becomes a means

to transcend our positional confinement. Snauwaert concludes,

> The pedagogy of reflective inquiry that leads to political and social transformation
>
> mirrors the nature of public reason and democratic deliberation. The classroom, as
>
> a democratic public space of freedom, is a site of open, impartial deliberation
>
> wherein the reflective responses, proposals, visions, and ideals of citizens, present
>
> and future, are subjected to open (fully inclusive and cosmopolitan), impartial
>
> scrutiny. The responses that 'survive' such scrutiny are authentically reflective
>
> and dialogical, and qualify as potential transformative propositions. (Reardon &
>
> Snauwaert, 2015, p. 198).

All of these approaches can help achieve transformative thinking, but not always for the

better. It is possible for questioning, dialoging, and deliberating to create greater

confusion and a collapse into more simplistic worldviews if students are inexperienced

with these approaches and lack some guidance. That is why it is important for the teacher

to be a guide in these approaches. Even though the teacher relinquishes sole control in

this approach, there still needs to be discipline. Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) explain,

the discipline comes down to "the rigorous standards of evidence and reason, central to

responsible critical inquiry" (p. 161). Even when the teacher takes a risk and loses some control of the content and direction of the classroom, these standards of discipline and evidence can guide the discussion in a positive direction.

The Gender Approach to Peace Education

The gender approach to peace education critically analyzes how in most societies, it is almost exclusively men who sit at the top of the social hierarchy, and these male-dominated powers use strict hierarchies, violence, and oppression to maintain that power structure. There are many influential works in feminism and gender studies that inform the gender approach to peace studies, but the author that has focused on both gender studies and peace education the most is perhaps Betty Reardon. As noted in Reardon and Snauwaert (2014), Reardon is a "pioneer of feminism and a gendered perspective on human rights social justice, and its importance for peace research and peace education" (p. ix). Her work is the primary resource for the gender approach to peace education used in this dissertation.

The gender approach takes a critical look at the male-dominated hierarchy common in many cultures around the world, which is called patriarchy, meaning rule by father. The gender approach asserts that gender and the patriarchal system are social constructs and not a natural phenomenon (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). However, although males may dominate the ubiquitous patriarchal systems of most parts of the world, it is not only women who suffer in the system. Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) emphasize how the gender approach argues that patriarchal systems are unjust to men and women alike. They refer to patriarchy as "an 'equal opportunity' destroyer of both women and men" (p. 97).

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Another main assertion of the gender theory is that a patriarchal system prevents peace and promotes violence, so that the patriarchal system must be deconstructed in order to achieve peace. This deconstruction of patriarchy requires critically analyzing and dismantling the latent and manifest social structures, behaviors, and relationships that reinforce the patriarchal system. As Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) state:

> Among some of the feminist scholars and activists who have recognized gender equality as a requisite for peace, the premise of the social construction and cultural derivation of gender is now leading to a more focused inquiry into patriarchy itself and how, as we have noted, it is manifested in various contemporary institutions, in cultural practices, both traditional and contemporary, and in social behaviors and relationships. (p. 106)

Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) explain how the patriarchal system is maintained through a mindset that has prevailed through millennia but also more explicitly through violent force in the form of military, police, and even non-state actors. This system of violence as the primary method of maintaining the patriarchal structure is called militarism. As political theorists have noted and feminists have critiqued, military force works in concert with elected governmental officials and private industry and their interests to form an Iron Triangle, which in this specific case is also called the Military-Industrial Complex.

The way to deconstruct and change the patriarchal system, according to the gender approach to peace education, is through transformative pathways. According to Reardon and Snauwaert (2014), there are at least four types of transformation required: the adoption of a feminist perspective, a fundamental change in worldview that includes feminist values in all levels of society, shifting from national security to human security,

and an increase in self-awareness. For Reardon and Snauwaert, these transformations begin with educational approaches that promote and develop understanding and embodiment of human rights and dignity. The pedagogy requires reflective inquiry that is critical, moral, and contemplative.

It may seem like comprehensive peace education is just a social or political approach and therefore only appropriate in social studies courses. However, as mentioned before, this approach is multidisciplinary because the world is interconnected. Thus, even hard sciences can play a role in this approach. A newer development in this approach is integrating ecological thinking into comprehensive peace education. Integrating ecological thinking into the curriculum involves thinking about the place of humans in nature. Ecological thinking expands the realm of peace education beyond humankind to include the harmonious relationship towards nature in general (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014).

Purpose of the gender approach to peace education. The major purpose of the gender approach to peace education is similar to the purpose of other approaches to peace education, namely a fundamental shift from a paradigm of war to a paradigm of peace (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). New light that the gender approach shines on this purpose is that this shift requires the transformation of the patriarchal system to a gender-equal and socially just society (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). According to this approach, at least four major basic transformations are needed:

1. The adoption of a feminist, holistic, gender-equal perspective.
2. A fundamental change in worldview that involves the widespread inclusion of feminist values into all levels of society.

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3. Shifting the conception of security from national security to human security.

4. Widespread increase in self-awareness among the world's population. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014, p. xvi)

For Reardon, the purpose is "integration of both peacelearning [sic] and gender issues into an overarching conceptual framework that interprets the global system and culture of violence within the framework of a global patriarchal order" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014, p. xix). To this end, Reardon promotes the use of peacelearning cultural action plans. The goal of such action plans is to promote critical consciousness and authentic subjectivity, implement a transformational paradigm of peace, and construct a global, nonviolent, and gender-equal society (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). In order to achieve this purpose, Reardon has sought to create interdisciplinary discussions between women's studies and peace studies practitioners and researchers as well as to convince both feminist scholars and women's activist to adopt a stance towards system change (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014).

Curriculum of the gender approach. The curriculum of the gender approach to peace education includes both adults and children. However, Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) criticized the fact that too much emphasis has been placed on children's education at the cost of adult education. They bemoan the fact that "For generations we have looked to the education of children and to the very young for the development of our desired future," and they go on to warn, "Postponing the changes required to assure the future is a potentially disastrous practice" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014, p. 12). Thus, they emphasize the curriculum for adult education, and in particular higher education.

According to Reardon and Snauwaert (2014), adult education should be concerned with justice and it also demands that adults be trained in futuristics, which is a term that refers to futures-oriented adult education. This approach focuses on transforming the world to achieve a more just and peaceful future. The women's movements are examples of futures-oriented adult education because women are personally involved in action to create their own futures.

Among the adults who should be trained in futuristics, it is especially important to empower women and the oppressed in the formation of a new future because historically they have had little to no part in deciding their own individual futures, not to mention the global future (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). Reardon and Snauwaert asserted that "Adult education concerned with empowering and enfranchising adults must offer futuristics and world order as *essential elements of the curricula* (p. 16, emphasis added). Fortunately, they note that futuristics, world order, and women's studies are being adopted in the schools and universities more and more.

In terms of topics and courses in a curriculum, the gender approach to peace education emphasizes complexity of issues, interdisciplinary dialogue, and the holistic nature of the world. Such gendered curricula would encourage students to think about the complexities of controversial issues beyond what the standard curricula offer, which usually teach students to consider only two major opposing positions on the issues (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). Topics integral to a gender approach to peace education include holistic relationships between ecological balance, alternative futures, education, and teacher training (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). This could be achieved by creating entirely new courses or enriching existing courses in women's studies and peace studies

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with theories and research in the fields of gender and peace, which Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) noted have been "long neglected" (p. 100).

Pedagogy of the gender approach. The pedagogy of the gender approach borrows heavily from the pedagogy of Freire and feminist scholarship. To achieve the purpose and goals of the gender approach to peace education requires pedagogical processes that promote the understanding and embodiment of human rights and dignity (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014). Reflective inquiry is at the heart of these pedagogical processes, which can be divided into three forms:

- *Critical/Analytic*: The discernment of power, analysis of the structural dimensions of social life, critique of social institutions, and awareness of the political and economic origins of violence.

- *Moral/Ethical*: The consideration of questions of justice guided by the principles of a human rights framework, including physical, structural, and cultural violence.

- *Contemplative/Ruminative*: The self-examination of moral and psychological dynamics, contemplation of questions of meaning and value, and envisioning of alternative realities and transformative action. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014)

These three modes of reflective inquiry are empowering pedagogical processes that must be cultivated in most formal and informal educational settings.

The Islamic Approach to Peace Education

One of the newest approaches in the field of peace education is the Islamic approach. Since the late 1980s, a few Islamic scholars and researchers have begun to explore how the Islamic approach can inform the peace education movement. This section of the dissertation is a critical review of the Islamic approach to peace education

as outlined by four essays: Koylu (2004), Hassan (1987), Kalin (2005), and Hashmi (1996).

These four essays cover the topic of peace education from the Islamic approach in different ways, although there is quite a bit of overlap as well. All of the essays spend about half or more of their discussion on defining fundamental Islamic concepts and terms that relate to peace, war/struggle/just ware, justice, education, knowledge, faith, Good, and Evil. Kalin (2005), in his essay "Islam and Peace: A Survey of the Sources of Peace in the Islamic Tradition" provides the most information about the foundation, principles, terms, and concepts of the Islamic approach, but he does not discuss the role of peace education. In the essay "Interpreting the Islamic Ethics of War and Peace," Hashmi (1996) also does not discuss peace education, but he does provide an in-depth explanation of the complex concept of jihad in Islamic tradition, arguing that it is best translated as a corollary to the Western concept of "just war." Hassan's (1987) essay, "Peace Education: A Muslim Perspective," defines many of the same terms as Kalin and Hashmi, but also spends more time explaining the peace education approach and how Islamic teachings can fit within that field. Finally, Koylu (2004), in the essay entitled "Peace Education: An Islamic Approach," focuses on the compatibility of the Islamic approach to the peace education movement.

Kalin (2005) organizes the Islamic approach to peace education into four principles: the metaphysical-spiritual principle, the philosophical-theological, the political-legal, and the socio-cultural. The primary principle in the Islamic approach to peace education is the Oneness and Supremacy of God in all things good. The purpose of life is to strive for peace with God's Oneness and Supremacy. Kalin (2005) calls this

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primary principle the "metaphysical-spiritual" principle of the Islamic approach (p. 331). The secondary principle in the Islamic approach to peace education is what Kalin (2005) calls the philosophical-theological context. Here, peace is placed within the context of Ultimate Good versus Ultimate Evil. By definition in Islam, God is the Ultimate Good, so Evil is everything that is against God. In order to serve God, promote goodness, and seek peace, one must know how to do so. The way to promote peace is part of the third principle, which Kalin (2005) calls the political-legal context: the laws, rules, and conditions of the Islamic approach to peace. Within the political-legal context of peace is the concept of *jihad*, which encompasses both internal "struggle" and external "war," and is arguably best translated as "just war," i.e., war or struggle that is used to maintain a greater peace and justice (Hashmi, 1996). The last principle of the Islamic approach to peace education is the socio-cultural context. This dimension includes the interaction of amongst Muslims from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims. As Kalin (2005) explains, Islam does not prescribe a particular type of cultural identity. In theory, the Islamic approach should therefore accept all people regardless of their cultural or ethnic differences.

Purpose of peace education in the Islamic approach. There are a variety of goals to education that can help achieve peace according to the Islamic approach. One goal of education is to gain a better understanding of history. For instance, studying Islamic history reveals that times in which education, knowledge, and discovery thrived were during relatively peaceful and prosperous times before the Mongol invasions. Education, peace, and prosperity tend to coexist and correlated with each other, although the most important factor of the three is debatable. What is known and what education

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among Muslims and non-Muslims can help more people understand is that in times and places of war, impoverishment, and undereducated masses, peace is absent. The lack of even one of the factors of peace, education, or prosperity can lead to a downward spiral where justice does not prevail and instead oppression and violence thrive. Another goal of education is to be aware of the depth and complexity of the Quran and Sunnah as well as the many schools of thought that have emerged in Islamic history as the Quran and Sunnah have been interpreted. Oversimplifying and having overconfidence in the words of God and the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) leads to false belief in one's own truth and harsh judgment of others who take different interpretations.

Both Islamic extremists and Islamophobes tend to take the same passages out of context and out of the thousands of years of scholarship in order to justify violence without understanding that there are many conditions to every action—especially violent ones—and whenever possible, peaceful negotiations and diplomacy are preferable. The third main goal of education is to empower people to think critically to strive for peace, justice, and prosperity. Koylu (2004) summarizes the three main goals of peace education in the Islamic approach in succinct terms. He argues, "The purpose of peace education should be to cultivate a consciousness in students…"

- of the social, economic and political problems facing the Muslim community and their acquisition of an adequate and authentic understanding of Islamic *jihad* covering military power, the use of sophisticated weapons, religious freedom and tolerance, relationships with non-Muslims within and outside the Muslim world

- of socio-economic development and

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- of individual and social responsibility based on the Qur'an and authentic Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]. (p. 74)

As Koylu's conclusion makes clear, peace education includes political, socioeconomic, and religious elements that must be closely analyzed and dissected in order to increase awareness of how greater peace can be achieved in the Islamic approach.

Conclusion

The various approaches to peace education share many of the same goals, and of course they all share the major goal of promoting world peace. However, they differ in their worldviews, frameworks, curricula, and pedagogical methods. Some approaches, such as the Islamic approach to peace education, have not advanced beyond the level of defining and interpreting the basic concepts of peace in Islam. In order for an approach to peace education to be effective in Kuwait, it needs to have a clear pedagogical method and a means to transform the society into a more peaceful and just nation, in the negative, positive, and transformational sense of the word peace. However, the approach also needs to be sensitive to the unique sociocultural aspects of Kuwait so that the approach can translate effectively. To do this, a cross-cultural understanding needs to be achieved, which is where the hermeneutics method is most useful.

Chapter Four

Hermeneutics Method

In order to better understand how to promote peace education in Kuwait and to understand the social context of Kuwait, I use a hermeneutical approach. Rather than throwing in all the approaches or assuming one approach is the best approach to peace education, it is necessary to understand how the Kuwaiti society might respond to the different approaches to peace education. Hermeneutics is a method that can help translate the Kuwaiti experience to a non-Kuwaiti audience as well as translate the peace approaches to the Kuwaiti culture.

As previously mentioned, hermeneutics alludes to the Greek messenger god Hermes (from the Greek *hermeneuein)* (Pinar et al., 2004). To deliver the messages of the gods to the people, Hermes had to know the language of the gods as well as of the mortals for whom the message was intended (Butler, 1998). Hermes had to understand and interpret for himself what the gods wanted to communication and then had to "translate, articulate, and explicate this to their mortal subjects" (Butler, 1998, p. 286). Hermeneutics first developed as a methodology for biblical interpretation (Maunter, 1996), and later became part of legal, historical, and philosophical traditions (Sikh & Spence, 2016). As the history of the term and methodology shows, hermeneutics involves making the unknowable more understandable, although not perfectly so.

Sikh and Spence (2016) note that hermeneutics has developed from a Western dualistic tradition, and point out that it may not always map onto Eastern, non-dualistic cultures in its current form. Although Islamic culture has dualistic components, such as

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good and evil, heaven and hell, God and mortals, that fit the hermeneutics framework, there may be limitations to its application which emerge from an in-depth analysis.

As a theory or philosophy, hermeneutics is defined as the interpretation of meaning (Butler, 1998; Bleicher, 1980). Today, hermeneutics is a "veritable crossroads where tendencies as diverse as phenomenology and linguistic analysis, semantics and the critique of ideologies, structuralism and conceptual analysis, Marxism and Freudianism come together" (Madison, 1988, p. 25). Coyne (1995) categorized this variety of diverse tendencies in hermeneutics as the conservative, pragmatic/constructivist, critical, and radical/deconstructivist hermeneutics. In a slightly different interpretation, Haggerson (1988) mapped out the various types of hermeneutics as (1) rational/theoretical, (2) mythological/practical, (3) evolutionary/transformational, and (4) normative/critical.

The approach to hermeneutics I use in this dissertation is primarily the pragmatic/constructivist approach with some critical elements. The pragmatic/constructivist approach to hermeneutics is characterized by the works of Gadamer (1976) and Wittgenstein (1953). Here, interpretation involves entering into the interpretive norms of a community, in which meaning is found and operates in the historical context of the interpreter and the interpreted (Butler, 1998; Coyne 1995). The critical perspective, as seen in the work of Habermas (1972) uses interpretation to challenge conventional wisdom in a community to address power asymmetries and to achieve emancipatory goals (Butler, 1998; Coyne 1995). In this dissertation, although I challenge Western and Kuwaiti assumptions, critique some aspects of peace education, and note power asymmetries in order to move towards transformative peace, this aspect of interpretation will be addressed in the last chapter of the dissertation below.

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Hermeneutics first applied to the interpretation of texts but has expanded to include the interpretation of human actions as text. Ricoeur (1981) connects text and action using Weber's concept of "meaningfully oriented behavior" (p. 203). A meaningful action is an expression of an idea and can be treated similar to a text (Ricoeur, 1981). Thus, hermeneutics applies to human actions and social phenomena and involves interpreting the subjective meaning of social action.

Explaining vs. Understanding

"The goal of hermeneutic approach is to seek understanding, rather than to offer explanation or to provide and authoritative reading or conceptual analysis of a text" (Kinsella, 2006, para. 7). Geanellos (2000) has discussed the differences between explaining and understanding in more depth. He defined explanation as stating *what the text says*, whereas understanding can be thought of as exploring *what the text talks about*. Applying this approach to peace education in what he called the *hermeneutics of practice*, Carson (1992) wrote that "an emphasis on interpretation attempts to resist and reform this habit [to impose convictions and improvements on others], urging us to better develop our abilities to hear others" (p. 114).

Carson (1992) explained that hermeneutics begins with the humble and frank acknowledgment that we do not understand. He asserted that interpretation is necessary in peace education because many previously held assurances and certainties begin to break down. "In peace education," Carson wrote, "we really do not have the answers, only the insistent question of the survival of humanity. . . . Admitting that we do not understand, we learn to 'read' everyday life more carefully and attentively" (p. 113). Jardine (1992) suggested that hermeneutic inquiry involves revealing the uncertainty and

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ambiguity in the world and then becoming comfortable with such uncertainty rather than responding to it with authoritative declarations.

The value of hermeneutics for peace education is in this revelation of the limits of knowledge and the problems that come with a lack of such a realization. Smith (1991) locates hermeneutics in society as "a link between social trouble and the need for interpretation" (p. 188), the aim of which is to strive for "human freedom, which finds its light, identity, and dignity in those few brief moments when one's lived burdens can be shown to have their source in too limited a view of things" (p. 189), to "problematize the hegemony of dominant culture in order to engaged it transformatively" (p. 195), and to mobilize "the social conscience of students into acts of naming and eradicating the evils of the times" (p. 196). By breaking down barriers and striving for a larger understanding that incorporates other points of view, hermeneutics can help remove some of the disputes and disagreements that lead to conflict.

Hermeneutics and Social Constructivism

Hermeneutics also has a shared connection with social constructivism, the theoretical framework of this dissertation. Berger and Luckmann (1991) attribute the birth of social constructivism to the coining of the term "sociology of knowledge" (*Wissensoziologie*) by the German philosopher Max Scheler in 1920s and his contemporary Karl Mannheim. The sociology of knowledge posits that knowledge is constructed in a social setting, so it is intimately connected with the social, historical, and cultural contexts of the setting. In this sense, knowledge does not exist outside of the social context as a universal or objective truth; rather, it is constructed from the materials of the social experience, such as language, tradition, beliefs, values, and so on. As Berger

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and Luckmann (1991) contend "*the sociology of knowledge is concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality*" (p. 15).

To remove phenomena, such as knowledge, from its context is called atomization by Mannheim (1936/1954), which is a problematic way of analyzing phenomena. Mannheim claims the isolation of any phenomena from its context threatens the representational validity of the phenomenon. Meaning is lost in the process of isolation, so hermeneutics attempts to avoid atomization and to keep the context and meaning intact as much as possible. Mannheim (1936/1954) asserted "the meanings which our ontology gives us served to integrate the units of conduct and to enable us to see in a configurative context the individual observational elements which otherwise would tend to remain discrete" (pp. 18–19).

Using Hermeneutics to Improve the Understanding of Kuwaiti Culture

Galtung (1994) claims one single tradition obviously cannot work equally well in different cultures. Galtung's idea is a reiteration of Gadamer's (1976) idea of fusion of horizons, because, as Gadamer makes clear, no single horizon sufficiently accounts for the entirety of experience. To highlight the impossibility of applying one single approach across cultures, in the following lines I discuss the divergence in experience and logic between the West and the Middle East, and particularly the US and Kuwait. This discussion explores the barriers between the two cultures in order to demonstrate the need to consider how different approaches are necessary for each.

The process of hermeneutics is difficult in all cases because it requires a mutual understanding through the use of communication and education, which are both based on language and all of its flaws and limitations. In the case of discussing Middle Eastern

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nations like Kuwait and Islamic concepts in the context of a Western culture, hermeneutics is especially difficult. The socially constructed barriers between these two parts of the world and their cultures are perceived as extreme and even unbridgeable in some cases. For instance, there is an influential work in the study of international relations called *The Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington (1996) which claims that conflicts will not be economic or ideological but cultural. Huntington (1996) argued, civilizational identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilizations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and possibly African civilizations. (p. 25) At particular odds are the Middle Easter/Muslim and Western/Christian worlds. This clash dates back to the Crusades and earlier.

To Americans and Europeans, the Middle East is perceived as the Other in many ways, and vice versa. Edward Said (1979), in his book *Orientalism*, has outlined all of the ways in which the Middle East has been "Othered" by Western cultures. In fact, Said (2001) responded to Huntington's Clash of Civilizations theory in an article entitled "Clash of Ignorance" which argued that Huntington's theory was dangerous in its misreading and oversimplification of other cultures as well as its depiction of civilizations as static phenomena rather than living, evolving, and changeable things.

Said (2001) claimed that for all of our differences, "there are closer ties between apparently warring civilizations than most of us would like to believe" (para. 12) and later concluded "'The Clash of Civilizations' thesis is a gimmick like 'The War of the

Worlds,' better for reinforcing defensive self-pride than for critical understanding of *the bewildering interdependence of our time*" (para. 15, emphasis added).

The idea that the West and the Islamic world are polar opposites bound to clash with each other is a common one, so the challenge of fusing these horizons through the process of hermeneutics and peace education is a tall order. The amount of ignorance of the other is great, and the amount of education required to reach a level of intersubjectivity and mutual understanding is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, some explanation of the Islamic world in general and Kuwait in particular is necessary so that, at a basic level, some common vocabulary and knowledge can be reached.

Hermeneutics and Peace Education

Carson (1992) has applied hermeneutics to his approach to peace education. His approach to peace education involves action research, which relies heavily on interpretation, i.e., hermeneutics. He has stated, "the peace education project is an example of hermeneutically oriented action research. Interpretation is necessary with a topic as education for peace, where many of the old assurances and certainties of direction begin to break down" (p. 113). In an essay entitled "Comparative and International Education and Peace Education," Burns (2008) noted that methodologies such as hermeneutics came into the fore in comparative, international, and peace education in the 1970s onwards. A variety of hermeneutical studies in the field of peace education emerged (e.g., Altbach, 1991; Crossley & Broadfoot, 1992; Kelly & Altbach, 1986; Welch, 1992; Welch & Burns, 1992).

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The Elements of Hermeneutics

Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015; 2017) have applied hermeneutics to the field of peace education and moral discourse, and have suggested four main elements of hermeneutics that are conducive to the promotion of human rights, democracy, peace, and justice. These elements are as follows:

1. The part and the whole
2. Cultural horizons
3. Fusion of horizons
4. Distanciation (Al-Daraweesh & Snauwaert, 2017)

These elements work in concert with each other in the hermeneutics process to help improve understanding between diverse and disparate individuals and cultures. First, each is explained separately and, second, they are considered in relation to each other.

The part and the whole. The grand scheme of hermeneutics can be understood in terms of the relationship between *the part and the whole.* Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015) call the part and the whole the "first important rule in a hermeneutic methodology" (p. 55). In terms of textual analysis Dilthey (1976) explained, "The whole of the work must be understood from individual words and their combinations, and yet the full comprehension of the details presupposes the understanding of the whole" (p. 115). As previously explained, the *text* or the *work* can be understood as any communicative or creative expression from a person or a culture. Gadamer (1989/1960) also emphasizes the importance of this relationship, expounding, "we must understand the whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole" (p. 291).

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One can consider the part and the whole on different scales and at different levels of communication. It could be a word in the context of an entire work or an individual, such as a citizen or non-citizen, in a particular society or nation, such as Kuwait. It could even be a nation—like Kuwait—in relation to the entire globe.

As Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015) asserted in their book, the hermeneutics concept of the part and the whole offers an alternative perspective to purely relativistic and universalistic approaches. The goal of hermeneutics is to try to keep both the whole and the part in mind when pursuing an understanding. This poses a constant challenge because on one hand the subtle details of the part can get lost in the bigger picture and on the other hand the details can distract one from the most important information–i.e., missing the forest for the trees. Gadamer (1989/1960) explained how this difficult process must work: "It is a circular relationship in both cases. The anticipation of meaning in which the whole is envisaged becomes actual understanding when the parts that are determined by the whole themselves also determine this whole" (p. 291). He further explained that this process can be seen in practice when trying to understand a foreign language, in which the interpreter must *construe* the sentence before trying to understand the meaning of each individual part of the sentence while simultaneously the construal process is affected by the expected meaning from what has come before (Gadamer, 1989/1960). When it becomes clear that the construal has erred somewhere along the line, then it becomes necessary to adjust the understanding, which is an ongoing process (Gadamer, 1989/1960). As long as the part and the whole are in constant conversation and the meaning adjusts in relation to each other, then the process of hermeneutics is working.

In this hermeneutics methodology, the goal is to achieve harmony and agreement between the whole and the part—even where no agreement previously occurred. Gadamer (1989/1960) described how "The harmony of all the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding. The failure to achieve this harmony means that understanding has failed" (p. 291). He clarified this task further on, writing,

> We have seen that the goal of all attempts to reach an understanding is agreement concerning the subject matter. Hence the task of hermeneutics has always been to establish agreement where there was none or where it had been disturbed in some way. (p. 292)

Without achieving some degree of agreement and harmony between the part and the whole, then hermeneutics—and understanding—has failed.

In practice, on a socio-political level this process of achieving understanding, agreement, and harmony between the part and the whole must involve multiple ongoing processes of dialogue, reflection, and public reason. Constant conversation and exchanging of ideas and understandings must occur to keep the whole and the part in mind. In their recommendations for "a pedagogy of reflective inquiry grounded in moral and ethical discourse and hermeneutics," Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2017) described how this approach might employ

- discourse,
- reflective inquiry, and
- public reason

within a moral and ethical context.

Cultural horizons. As previously noted, a horizon in the hermeneutics method represents the limits of one's perspective and viewpoint, which affects how one sees and thinks about the world. This situational limitation to understanding is "a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence an essential part of the concept of situation is the concept of 'horizon.' The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (Gadamer 1976, p. 117).

Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert extend the individual horizon to a historical and cultural horizon in order to apply hermeneutics to the understanding of social phenomena. As they explain,

> To have a historical horizon means to understand the relationship between part and whole, and to be capable of placing this understanding within a cultural framework. This means that the interpreter must think within the culture's ideas, thoughts, and structure, that is, its constitutive rules. To reach an adequate understanding of human rights one needs to place oneself within the historical horizon of the society constituted by its basic rules and norms. (Al-Daraweesh & Snauwaert, 2017, p. 11–12).

When it comes to analyzing how cultural and historical horizons can fuse, it is important to keep in mind that the basic approach of hermeneutics is to interpret the meaning of the text within the context. Hermeneutics derives the interpretation of the meaning of a part of the text from understanding the *rules* that constitute the text as a whole. As Rosenberg (2008) noted, the primary task of interpretation is to discover the meaning of the rules of the text. Again, although hermeneutics began as a method of textual analysis, its principles have since been successfully applied to the interpretation of social phenomena

of the type found in this dissertation. In the context of educational discourse, the interpretation of the meaning of an approach to peace education and its cultural compatibility "is contingent upon understanding the rules that give them meaning" (Al-Daraweesh & Snauwaert, 2017, p. 11). Thus, the hermeneutics approach is applied in this dissertation in order to understand some of the basic rules that create meaning in Kuwait as well as the rules that make meaning in the various approaches to peace education. By doing so, it may be possible to determine which approach to peace education is most compatible to the Kuwaiti culture, in order to achieve a sort of harmony.

One of the main goals of understanding, in a hermeneutics sense, is to achieve *horizon harmony*, "the harmony of the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding. The failure to achieve this harmony means that understanding has failed" (Gadamer 1976, p. 117). However, achieving horizon harmony is not easy as simply combining perspectives. It is necessary to be aware of the sets of rules that give meaning to each perspective and to determine the compatibility between the rules.

Fusion of horizons. As noted above, hermeneutics is the process of making the unknowable somewhat more understandable—to a limited extent. However, there is always a limit to knowledge based on one's situation, position, and point of view. The limit of knowledge, just like the limit of vision, is called the horizon. As Gadamer (1976) explained,

> We define the concept of 'situation' by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence an essential part of the concept of situation is the concept of 'horizon.' The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. (p. 128)

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In order to view a different horizon, one has to change one's vantage point. By viewing the world from different vantage points, different horizons emerge. To make these different horizons into a cohesive worldview, one must fuse them in a hermeneutical process called *fusion of horizons*. According to Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2017) discourse on social justice and peace "requires the interpretation of values-based collective identities situated within diverse cultural horizons *as well as* the fusion of horizons" (p. 14).

Combining any two different points of view can be considered a fusion of horizons, but at the most abstract level, the fusion of horizons involves the synthesis of two opposing philosophies: objectivism, which posits that the understanding of the objectified other occurs through the forgetting of oneself, and absolutism, which posits that universal history can be understood from the perspective of a single horizon (Ricouer, 1981). As defined by Ricouer (1981), the fusion of horizons is:

> a dialectical concept which results from the rejection of two alternatives: objectivism, whereby the objectification of the other is premised on the forgetting of oneself; and absolute knowledge, according to which universal history can be articulated within a single horizon. We exist neither in closed horizons, nor within an horizon that is unique. No horizon is closed, since it is possible to place oneself in another point of view and in another culture. (p. 75)

In other words, when interpreting a text or context, one can neither forget one's own thoughts, perspectives, beliefs, experiences, etc. nor focus only on one's own self. The self and the other interplay with each other.

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Moreover, neither the self nor the other are stable; rather, they are in a constant state of formation (Weinsheimer, 1985). When the fusion of horizons occurs, there emerges the interpreter (self), the interpreted (other), the conjunction of both the self and other, and a fourth new thing that cannot be reduced to any of the other three perspectives (Weinsheimer, 1985). This fourth thing that is produced is completely new and transformative. My hope is to articulate this fourth element of the fusion of horizons by the conclusion of this dissertation.

Distanciation. The process of "distanciation" (Gadamer 1976, Ricoeur 1981) involves distancing oneself from one's experiences to critically reflect on and question one's understanding within one's cultural horizon and the cultural horizons of others. Distanciation requires from the start acknowledging one's own prejudices and predispositions, followed by examining and considering alternatives to those beliefs; it is a necessary process for approaching *impartiality* (Ricoeur, 1981). Ricoeur (1981) described distanciation as "the dialectical counterpart of the notion of belonging" (p. 110). Distanciation must occur in order to improve interpretation and approach understanding because, in essence, interpretation is "to render near what is far (temporally, geographically, culturally, spiritually)" (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 111). By removing oneself from one's own context, one is able to better understand the perspective of another or others, whose ways of being are temporally, geographically, culturally, and spiritually distant.

The elements combined in the hermeneutics process. Together, these elements of hermeneutics—the whole and the part, cultural horizons, the fusion of horizons, and distanciation—can be conducive to peace education when put into practice. In order to

apply these elements, it is necessary to understand how the relate to each other, which is illustrated in Figure 2. However, Figure 2 only shows the static relationship without illustrating the ongoing process that must occur. Thus, Figure 3 illustrates how the hermeneutical process works. The relationship between these elements is dynamic and the process is ongoing. While static figures cannot adequately capture how the hermeneutics process works, they do provide an additional way of looking at the elements in action.
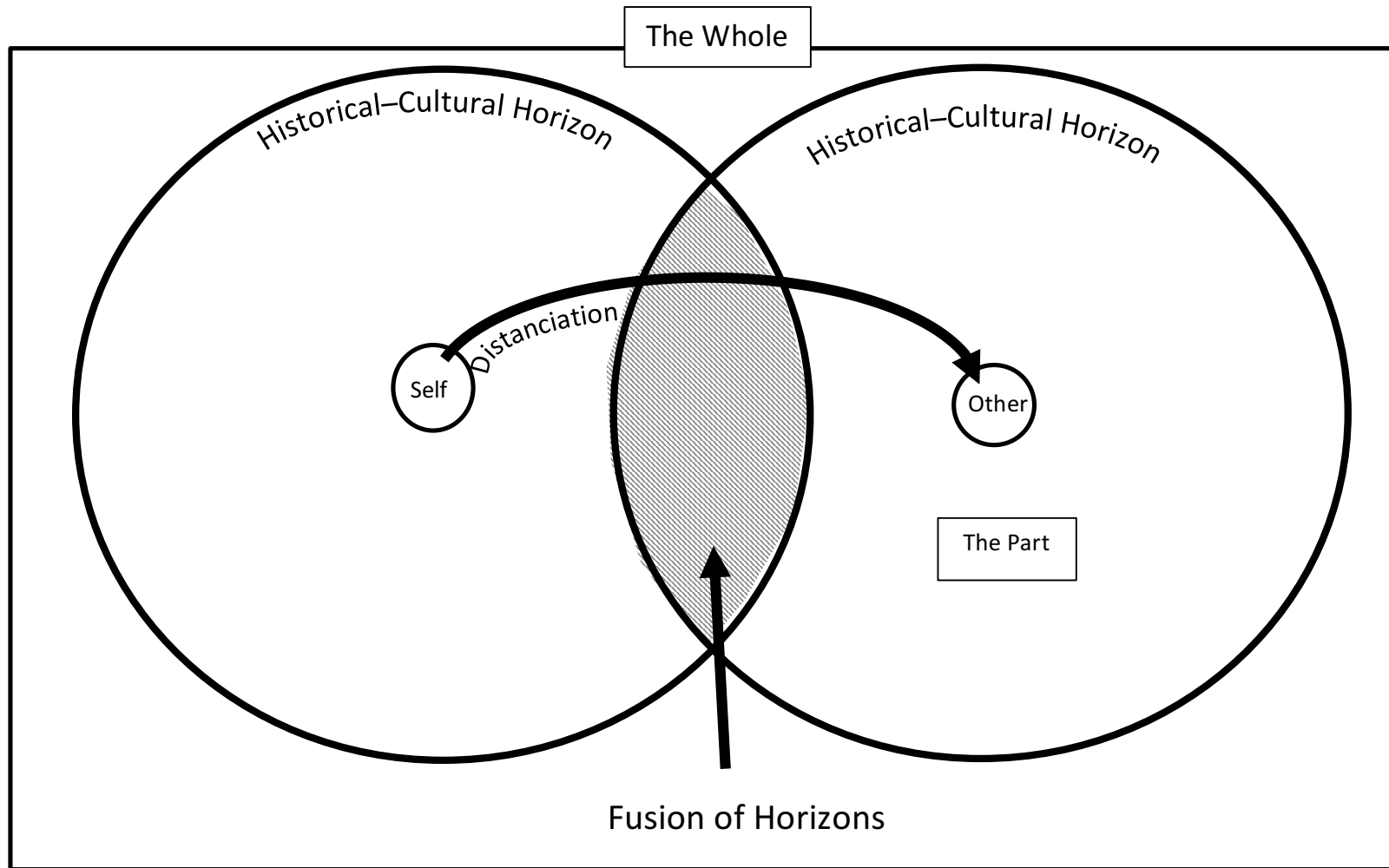
Figure 2. The elements of hermeneutics that are conducive to peace education. The entire figure represents *the whole*, while the Other is the subject in question that represents *the part*. The Self is the one striving to construe meaning, reach an understanding, and achieve a harmonious agreement. This is done through the process of *distanciation*, which helps *fuse the horizons* of the different perspectives.

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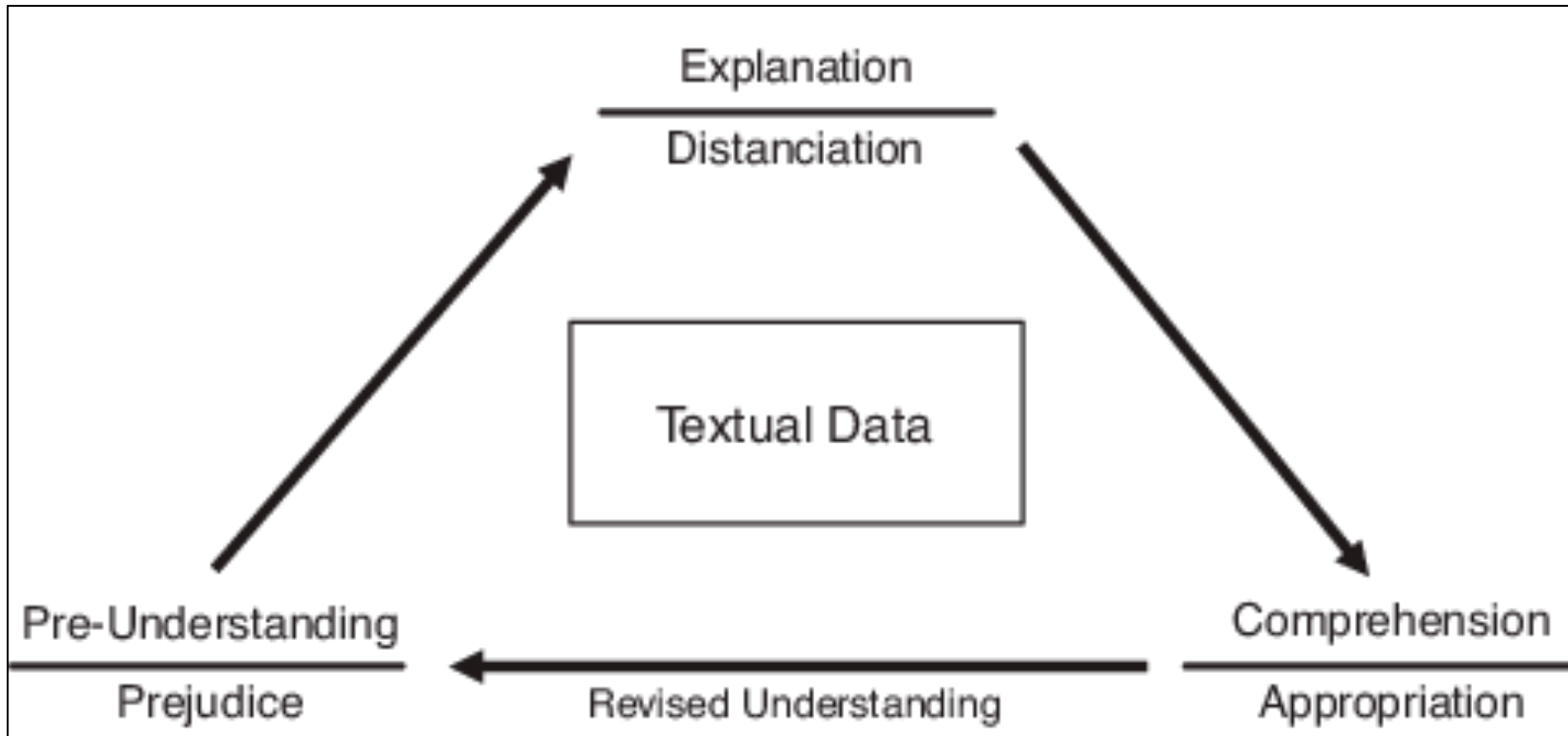
Figure 3. The hermeneutical process. As the figure shows, the process is ongoing and loops in a cyclical pattern whereby understanding gets constantly revised based on new information. The one applying the hermeneutical process begins with a set of *prejudices* and *pre-understanding* that is reflected upon and cross-examined in relation to other perspectives in a process of *distanciation*. By exposing the prejudices to other perspectives, one can achieve some degree of higher *comprehension*, which leads to a *revised understanding*. Adapted from "Hermeneutics and Psychology: A Review and Dialectical Model," by S. J. Sandage, K. V. Cook, P. C. Hill, B. D. Strawn, and K. S. Reimer, 2008, *Review of General Psychology*, *12*(4), p. 356.

Assumptions of Hermeneutics

The hermeneutical methodology is based on two assumptions: comparable validity and dialogical equality (Healy, 2006). Comparable validity involves acknowledging the limitation of one's positionality in relation to others, and requires one to refrain from passing value judgments on others (Healy, 2006). Dialogical equality calls upon the hermeneutical researcher to avoid taking the stand for another culture and presuming one can represent the views of another better than the other is capable of doing him or herself (Healy, 2006). Hermeneutics commits each side of an issue to expose their prejudgments to criticism in order to engage with the cultures and belief systems of others (Healy, 2006). Thus, before considering which approach(es) to peace education would work best in Kuwait, it is necessary to acknowledge one's prejudices about the nation, the region, and the dominant religion; expose these prejudices to scrutiny and criticism; and, finally, consider how beliefs and traditions may make sense from other points of view.

Conclusion

The hermeneutics method provides the tools for interpreting meaning so that a better understanding can be reached. Hermeneutics links the self and others through a fusion of horizons which is neither objectivist (that the understanding of the objectified other occurs through the forgetting of oneself) nor absolutist (that universal history is knowable from single horizon of the self). By exposing the preconceived notions of the self and others, acknowledging the limits of knowledge, and keeping an open mind, the hermeneutics method can remove barriers to understanding. Applying this method to Kuwait can help Kuwaitis better understand what peace education is and how it can help

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transform Kuwait as well as help non-Kuwaitis better understand who Kuwaitis are, how they think and construct knowledge, and how peace education can be implemented in their society.

Chapter Five

Analysis of the Compatibility of Peace Education in Kuwait

In this chapter, I take all of the information gathered from the literature about peace education, Islam, and Kuwait in Chapter 1–3 and, using the hermeneutics method described in Chapter 4, I analyze the issues in the sociocultural context of Kuwait in relation to the research questions. Throughout this analysis and synthesis, I rely on the assumptions of the philosophical framework of the social constructionist theory of knowledge, namely that reality and knowledge is constructed by the society rather than imposed from some external or higher source. In this chapter, I look more closely at the educational system and how it resembles what Freire (1970/2003) called the banking model of education, along with the challenges that poses. I also analyze the history of Kuwait as a regional peacekeeper, semi-democratic nation, and promoter of human rights, such as women's and minority rights, relative to other Gulf nations. I also address how the Al-Sabah family has served as the royal family for over 250 years, and the significance they have as main factor that has united the identity of all Kuwaitis past and present. However, I also examine the clauses of the Kuwaiti constitution and procedures of governing system in terms of the effect they have on the function of democratic institutions and peaceful transitions of power, what process that Sen (2009) has called seeking "institutions that promote justice, rather than treating the institutions themselves as manifestations of justice" (p. 82). Finally, I analyze the importance of Islam in Kuwaiti culture and the role of peace within the religion.

These topics are organized in relation to the research questions. The main research question is "how can peace education translate to a Kuwaiti culture?" This major

question is based on the following minor research questions that are addressed in this chapter:

- What are the different types of peace, and where does Kuwait fall within the spectrum of peace?

- How can Kuwait deal with differences in religion, culture, tradition, and nationality in pursuit of internal and external peace in a nation?

- What approach to peace education or aspects of various approaches are most compatible to Kuwaiti society?

Each of these questions is addressed and analyzed in light of the prior research from the perspective of the SC theoretical framework and applying the hermeneutics methodology. They build upon each other and ultimately lead to and support the proposed answer to the main research question, regarding the compatibility of peace education in Kuwaiti, which I refer to here as a Kuwaiti Approach to Peace Education (KAPE).

Application of the Hermeneutic Method

When it comes to the implementation of any social systems, laws, and values, there are universalist, top-down approaches; relativist, bottom-up approaches; and relational, hermeneutic approaches in the middle. Despite the existence of a third way, a hermeneutical approach, the debate over issues relating to global peace, justice, and human rights have been dominated by both top-down, universal approaches and bottom-up, relativist approaches have been waging for a long time. As Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015) noted, "One of the most influential debates central to human rights discourse has been the conflict between two diametrically opposed schools of thought on

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human rights: universalism and cultural relativism" (p. 1). However, both universalist and relativist approaches have major problems that a hermeneutics approach can resolve.

Universalist approaches. The problem in general with any approach to peace starting from the top-down with the adoption of a complete worldview is imperialistic in imposing its belief system. For those who already accept the tenets of the overarching system, it is not a problematic way to approach peace. On one hand, for those who do not already accept the overall structure of the belief system, such an approach would be perceived as a potential threat to one's preexisting sets of beliefs, traditions, rituals, and way of life, so that non-believers, so-to-speak, would reject, resist, and fight against the worldview. Instigating such a reaction would lead to potential violence and not peace. On the other hand, for those who already do accept the overall structure of the belief system, these top-down approaches can influence cultural values and move these believers towards peace. Universalist approaches fail to accommodate multiple voices and minimize individual differences, expecting people to simply fall in line.

One criticism of top-down approaches comes from Freire. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he articulated his criticism of the top-down banking model of education that

> …turns [students] into 'containers,' into 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education, in

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which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits). (Freire, 1970/2003, p. 72)

These quotes capture the Frierean idea that students in the classroom and people in society need to generate knowledge and meaning, not have it imposed on them from above. Universalist approaches in general tend to do the same thing on the larger scale of societies and nations, turning them into receptacles that are demanded to accept the universalist point of view. Even well-meaning universal declarations, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, can face the problem of not incorporating all viewpoints, and thus doing and injustice to those who may disagree. Ideally, as Sen (2009) noted, a universal declaration would have input from as many points of view as possible within a forum of "open, impartial scrutiny" (p. 387). Thus, a potentially more constructive—and ultimately successful—approach to peace education must build from the ground up and use the preexisting social constructs and cultural materials. In other words, peace education must speak the language of the people.

Relativist approaches. There must be elements of peace education that do not depend on adopting a top-down worldview in order to move towards transformative peace. It is necessary to emphasizes institutions, documents, processes, and methods for promoting peace that do not start with the conclusion, but rather with the preexisting beliefs that individuals hold. As Friere (1970/1990) asserted, "The starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people" (p. 85). Perhaps bottom-up, relativist approaches that privilege local knowledge can serve as the starting point.

Applied to the particulars of this dissertation, the bottom-up approach means that in order to promote peace education in Kuwait, it is necessary to start with the Kuwaiti people. What are their aspirations, their current situation, their existential state of being, and their concrete experiences? So, the approach the teacher takes in the classroom should be the same approach the administrators take with the teachers, the ministers and secretaries of education take with the school administrators, and the worldwide promoters of peace education should take with the ministries and secretaries of education. The idea of local knowledge—that education should be relevant and grounded in the experiences and interests of students—has become a core principle of critical pedagogy, peace education, and, in general, progressive education (Bartlett, 2008). Bartlett (2008) stated that Freire advocated that teachers should begin with and respect students' knowledge while remaining humble about the limitations of their own knowledge.

A potential problem with bottom-up, relativistic approaches, thus, is that it makes it difficult to criticize the opinions, beliefs, and practices of groups and it can devolve into an anything-goes attitude. There is never any basis for changing, reforming, transforming, or intervening in a relativist approach. For example, Sen (2009) pointed out that it does not make sense to point to a repressive regime as a counterpoint if that regime itself does not allow for open and impartial scrutiny:

The force of a claim for a human right would indeed be seriously undermined if it were possible to show that it is unlikely to survive open public scrutiny. However, contrary to a commonly offered reason for scepticism [sic] and rejection of the idea of human rights, the case for it cannot be discarded simply by pointing to the fact – a much-invoked fact – that in repressive regimes across the globe, which do

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not allow open public discussion, or do not permit free access to information about the world outside the country, many of these human rights do not acquire serious public standing. (p. 387)

In other words, without some process for allowing external points of view to influence and interact with a relative perspective through dialogue—or, as Sen calls it, open, impartial scrutiny—then states or groups of people would be immune to criticism for their perceived injustices and human rights violations.

Relational hermeneutics: A better path? Even those who promote relativist approaches over universalist ones acknowledge the limitations of both and the need to bridge them somehow. For example, Hellsten (2006) has promoted bottom-up approach to constructing peace, arguing that

In order to overcome the existing structural injustices and in order to give people ownership in reconstructing impartial framework for justice, there is a need to pay more attention to the bottom-up approach to peace-building that can foster a climate of interrelated understanding between the ethnic, cultural and religious divides from which violence has stemmed in the past. (p. 8)

However, Hellsten furthermore added,

there is a need to build a bridge between bottom-up grassroots social reconstruction and formal, top-down institutional reconstruction of post-conflict society in a manner that gives people in post-conflict societies more ownership of the reconstruction of the principles of justice and their implementation and acknowledges the social complexities involved. (p. 2)

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As Schugurensky (1998) noted, even Friere critical of purely relativistic, bottom-up approaches. In fact, Friere warned about the dual threat of elitism and basicism, the former referring to the rejection of popular knowledge as backward or simplistic and the latter meaning the exaltation of local knowledge (Schugurensky, 1998). Local knowledge is neither to be dismissed nor elevated beyond criticism. In *Pedagogy of Hope*, Freire (1994) stated that local knowledge is not sufficient by itself, writing "it is unacceptable to advocate an educational practice that is satisfied with rotating on the axis of 'common sense'" (p. 58), in which common sense refers to all of the pre-conceived, unchallenged notions of people. Responding to criticism that his emphasis on local knowledge came at the cost of students' awareness of global systems, he asserted, "never…have I said that these programs…ought to remain absolutely bound up with local reality" (Freire, 1994, p. 86). Instead, they should simultaneously empower local reality and challenge it with competing realities, which is exactly what a hermeneutics approach can do.

Hermeneutics can resolve the problems of both relativist and universalist approaches. Hermeneutics fuses the horizons between these two extremes and promotes a third space: intersubjectivity. Hermeneutics helps fill in the space between the relativist and universalist extremes. Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015) proposed a relational hermeneutic as an alternative approach to global justice that goes beyond universalism and relativism, or perhaps more accurately, that finds harmony and agreement between the extremes. As they remarked, "Although the distinction between universalism and cultural relativism has received far more attention, finding a common ground between these two lines of reasoning has received far less attention than, we believe, it deserves" (p. 1). Al-Daraweesh and Snauwaert (2015) stated,

In the course of our inquiry, we shall argue for a third conceptualization of human

rights that is based on efforts to reconcile the dichotomy that informs the debate

between Universalists and Cultural Relativists. While acknowledging the

necessity for global awareness of human rights, we must consider, at the same

time, negotiating with cultures to embrace the human rights corpus, through local

cultural conceptualization. (p. 3)

The purpose of a relational, hermeneutic approach is to avoid the cultural imperialism of

a universalist approach and the tolerance of injustice in the relativist approach and to,

instead, promote a rationalist approach guided by the methods of hermeneutics that

emphasizes reflection, dialogue, and the fusion of horizons.

As explained in the methods section, applying a hermeneutics method,

particularly the distanciation step, involves three steps: acknowledging one's own

prejudices and predispositions; followed by examining and considering alternatives to

those beliefs; and approaching impartiality. These three steps are similar to the Hegelian

thesis-antithesis-synthesis dialectic. However, in his hermeneutic approach, Gadamer

(1989/1960) expanded the Hegelian dialectic from a solitary monologue of reasoning to

the social process of dialogue—a dialogic dialectic. This dialogic dialectic approach

within the hermeneutics method describes how the social construction of knowledge

occurs as opposed to the Hegelian belief that an individual can alone reason out

knowledge through a dialectic monologue. The three steps can be summarized with

language from different schools of thought as follows:

1. Thesis – the horizon of the familiar, pre-existing beliefs identified through

reflection.

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2. Antithesis – the horizon of the alien, challenging ideas that emerge from social interaction and dialogue.

3. Synthesis – the fusion of horizons, harmony between the part and the whole

However, as Weinsheimer (1985) noted, a fourth thing also emerges that cannot be seen as a sum of the previous three parts. When the fusion of horizons occurs, the following elements emerge: the interpreter, who is the self and the self's thesis; the interpreted other, who is alien to the self and poses an antithesis to the self's previously held thesis; the conjunction of both the self and other, which is the fusion of these two horizons and can be called the synthesis; and, finally, a fourth new thing emerges that cannot be reduced to any of the other three perspectives, a thing that is completely new and transformative (Weinsheimer, 1985). In order to apply this hermeneutic method in order to determine the compatibility of various approaches to peace education to Kuwait, I attempt to fuse the horizons of the major approaches to peace education introduced in Chapter Three and then identify the values, institutions, and documents in Kuwaiti and Islamic culture that are conducive to those elements of peace education that can form the KAPE as well as those that may pose some challenges to it.

Fusion of Peace Education Horizons

All of the approaches have some validity and can contribute to KAPE. A hermeneutic analysis reveals how and where the horizons of these approaches fuse. For this analysis, three approaches to peace education receive the most focus: the integrative, the critical, and the comprehensive approaches. The Islamic approach is not included in the hermeneutic analysis because the approach is too new and underdeveloped, and the authors in this approach focus only on Islamic terminology. Unfortunately, no substantial

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development of peace education within an Islamic framework exists, so it would be impossible to analyze it. Additionally, the gender approach is not included as a separate approach for two reasons: one, it is assumed to already be a part of the other approaches to peace education, especially the comprehensive approach since the same scholar, Reardon, has developed both; and, two, since gender is just one social/identity component, if it is included, then other components of social identity should arguably be included as well, such as class, race, ethnicity, and religion among others. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to analyze peace education from all of those perspectives separately, so it reasonable to assume that these components can be emphasized within the three major approaches to peace education: integrative, critical, and comprehensive.

This is an effort to hermeneutically fuse the horizons of the various approaches to peace education and Kuwait itself, to achieve what Brantmeier (2010) called "the possibility of a higher form of communicative rationality" via "the context of the dialogic process of intersubjectively shared commonality" (p. 39). Figure 4 illustrates the process for the hermeneutic analysis of these three approaches using a Venn diagram, in which the central part where all of the circles overlap represents the fusion of horizons.
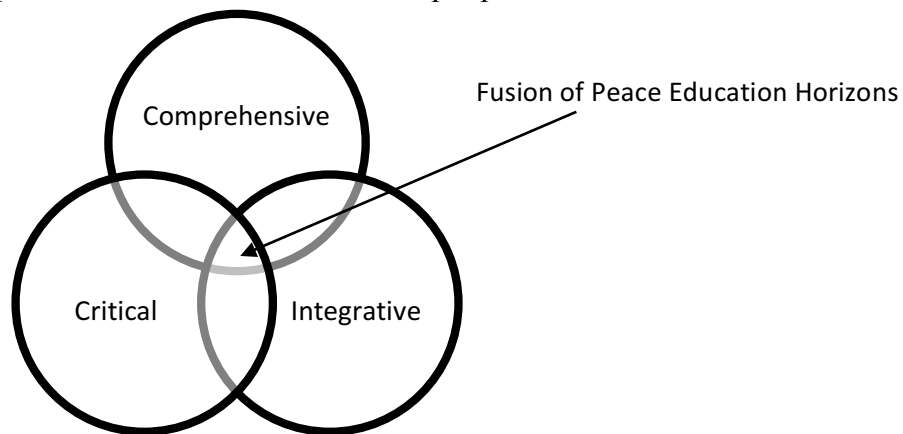
Figure 4. A Venn diagram of the comprehensive, critical, and integrative approaches representing the fusion of horizons.

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Integrative. The Education for Peace (EFP) curriculum of the integrative approach addresses three aspects of learning: critical thinking, emotional insight, and creative experience (Danesh, 2008). Furthermore, when the EFP curriculum was applied to the specific case of post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, Danesh (2011) reported that three key factors in the process of transformation towards greater peace were

- New knowledge: Familiarization with the EFP conceptual framework;
- Self-reflection: Critical examination of one's attitudes about self, others, and the world; and
- New experience: Verifying the principles of peace by putting them into practice. (p. 51)

In the integrative approach, Danesh (2011) also emphasizes self-evaluation and self-knowledge. He calls these practices "two essential requisites for positive attitude and behavior change" (p. 145). He calls for a "common language of discourse and dialogue" among hitherto alienated and conflicted individuals, and emphasize the need for a "map for action" to transform communities from conflict-based to peace-based worldviews (p. 145). In an analysis of the key components of the integrative approach, some concepts appear frequently throughout the works of Danesh and others, notably reflection, dialogue, creativity, and action. An analysis of the critical approach yields similar results.

Critical. In his explanation of the learning processes involved in critical peace education, Brantmeier (2010) emphasized five stages in particular:

1. raising consciousness through dialogue;
2. imagining nonviolent alternatives;
3. providing specific modes of empowerment;

4. transformative action; and

5. reflection and re-engagement. (Brantmeier, 2010, pp. 12–13)

Here we see some of the same important elements to peace education found in the integrative approach, such as dialogue, action, and reflection. Furthermore, both approaches emphasize the importance of transformative elements in the approach. Transformative action, also known as transformative agency, is "rooted in Freirean critical consciousness and praxis" and aims to "advance equality, participation, and social justice" (Bajaj, 2008, p. 6). Summarizing all of the elements of the critical approach, Snauwaert (2011) explained that the critical peace pedagogy "is process-oriented, inquiry-based, reflective, experiential, dialogical/conversational, value-based, imaginative, critical, liberating, and empowering" (p. 329). This educational process stands in stark contrast to the authoritarian, banking model found in most societies of control, and also happens to be a process promoted by the comprehensive approach to peace education as well.

Comprehensive. In the comprehensive approach to peace education, Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) have emphasized that the core ideas are

- universal human dignity and universal moral inclusion;

- violence as dehumanization and the core problematic of peace education;

- a human rights ethical framework;

- a transformational paradigm of peace; and

- peace learning and reflective inquiry. (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. vii)

In particular, the educational process in the comprehensive approach emphasis reflective inquiry as well as dialogue. Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) explained that reflective

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inquiry involves "issues for reflection as queries rather than questions" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 197), in which the open-endedness of queries calls for "conditional, speculative responses" while direct questions call for "definitive, descriptive answers" (pp. 196–197).

Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) stress that reflective inquiry is not just a means to achieving a more globally conscious mindset for peace, but is actually an "*ethical requirement*" and a "*constitutive element*" that must be present in order for the "transformative social and political agency" needed to actualize a powerful peace to take hold (p. 198). However, reflective inquiry cannot remain introspective and still impact society. At some point, attention needs to turn outward. As Reardon and Snauwaert explained,

> While it is possible for the process to remain inward and still be productive of learning, the practice of reflective inquiry as peace education—learning toward social and political change—must become outwardly dialogic in the form of a learning discourse through posing queries to elicit the individual reflections of all who comprise the learning community (or class). (pp. 190–191).

Thus, a dialogue needs to occur in addition to reflection. This dialogue can occur in any democratic space, but Reardon and Snauwaert have described how it looks in classrooms in particular:

> The classroom, as a democratic public space of freedom, is a site of open, impartial deliberation wherein the reflective responses, proposals, visions, and ideals of citizens, present and future, are subjected to open (fully inclusive and cosmopolitan), impartial scrutiny. The responses that 'survive' such scrutiny are

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authentically reflective and dialogical, and qualify as potential transformative

propositions. (pp. 198)

The rigorousness of the dialogic process becomes apparent in this passage, in which authentic reflections that have transformative potential must "survive" open, impartial scrutiny. Reardon and Snauwaert assert that this pedagogical method is "most consistent with the transformative goals of peace education" (p. 158).

Not only are reflective inquiry and dialogue necessary in the pedagogy of the comprehensive approach to peace education, but also are more action-oriented and creative steps. Indeed, peace learning is a creative process rather than a receptive/retentive process (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015). Moreover, peace education according to the comprehensive approach must also possess political efficacy, which is defined as "the capacity to engage in transformative political action," action that depends on and emerges from "the cognitive, ethical, and self-reflective capacities of citizens" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 185).

Fusion. Based on the hermeneutic analysis of the three major approaches to peace education, the common elements of all three of these approaches is the emphasis on the following four processes: reflection, dialogue, creative learning, and action. These elements comprise the common mechanism for achieve transformative peace, a sort of seed of peace education that potentially can be planted in Kuwait, and from which the Kuwaiti people can grow their own compatible type of peace education that stays true to the fundamental elements of all approaches to peace education. In addition to these four processes is the shared goal of all three approaches to peace education, which is to achieve some form of transformation towards a higher form of peace: a morally just and

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positive form of peace. Table 1 summarizes these common elements that emerge when the horizons of the three major approaches to peace education are fused.

Table 1

Summary of the Fusion of Horizons among the Approaches to Peace Education

Integrative	Critical	Comprehensive	Common Meaning
Emotional insight & critical thinking	Reflection and re-engagement	Reflective thinking	Introspective thinking about self in relation to others.
Consultative mode of decision-making	Raising consciousness through dialogue	Dialogical inquiry	External discussion, debate, deliberation, and dialogue between diverse people and points of view.
Creative experience	Imagining alternatives	Creative peace learning	Fusion of various horizons of self and others gained from reflective thinking and dialogue.
Map for action	Transformative action/transformative agency	Political efficacy	Putting the fusion of horizons to work towards transformative actions.
Purpose is to create unity and peace.	Realization-focused orientation towards justice.	Universal moral inclusion	In all approaches, the end goal of the transformative action is morally just peace.

These common elements of the peace approaches, which emphasize reflection, dialogue, creativity, and transformative action to achieve a higher level of peace with justice. It is now time to turn to Kuwait and determine how these common elements that emerge from

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the hermeneutic method can apply to Kuwaiti society. To do this, the compatible factors in Kuwaiti society must be identified, as well as the potential barriers to compatibility, with particular focus on the education system, the democratic/consultative institutions, and the legal documents in Kuwait and even Islamic culture that are conducive to the elements of reflection, dialogue, creative, and transformative action. In other words, the culture horizon of Kuwait must be fused with the approaches to peace education to create the KAPE.

KAPE: Finding the Compatible Elements of Peace Education in Kuwait

Because knowledge is socially constructed, Kuwait needs to construct its own version of peace education using other approaches as the material with which to construct their approach. This process takes time and goes through various developmental stages that cannot be skipped to try to catch up to an external standard. In other words, the approach cannot be externally forced. To see the problems with trying to force an external idea of peace, justice, and democracy onto a Middle Eastern nation, look no further than the situation in Iraq for the past decade and a half. Because Iraq did not develop its own processes in its own time, the people responsible for creating and maintaining peaceful, just, and democratic government do not know what they are doing and do not necessarily understand and value the institutions and processes necessary for a peaceful democracy. Thus, Kuwait needs to define for itself the meaning of peace and justice how to implement them, but not in isolation from other definitions including universalist definitions. Kuwait does not exist in a vacuum, yet it also has a unique identity that cannot be ignored in pursuit of global justice and peace.

Kuwait's educational system and the potential for KAPE. It appears that no other research has explored how peace education can fit within the Kuwaiti education system and society in general. One recent similar study by Standish and Talahma (2016) analyzed the presence of themes of peace in the National Curricula of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), but they also claim that there's was "the first inquiry into the presence of peace education content in mandatory curricular statements from an Arab country in the Middle East" (Conclusion section, para. 5). Based on their analysis, Standish and Talahma concluded that as a means of cultural transmission, "the mandatory education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia . . . only minimally teaches peace" (Conclusion section, para. 4). While it does mention violence and peace, the KSA curricula only addresses the prevention of direct, physical violence and does not recognize structural or cultural violence; therefore, it cannot be said to promote positive or transformative peace (Standish & Talahma, 2016). It is reasonable to assume that a similar conclusion would be drawn in an analysis of peace in the Kuwaiti curricula.

Most studies about Kuwaiti general education as well as Islamic education note that Kuwait's educational system is very hierarchical and resembles the banking model of education. Al-Kandari (2004) looked into the role of Islamic education in Kuwait. Islamic education is an important part of the Kuwaiti education system. In general, Islam is important because it is one of the sources of law. In 1991, after the liberation from Iraq and in an attempt to reestablish its identity, the government formed a committee tasked with improving how Islam is taught and how Islamic laws are enforced (Al-Kandari, 2004). As a result, all public schools teach Islam, from a Sunni perspective, although around a third of the population is Shi'a. However, private schools exist which can teach

Islam from different perspectives as well. In her analysis of Islamic education in Kuwait, Al-Kandari (2004) recommended adding more dialogue in Islamic education to peacefully coexist in a globalized world. She argued that Islamic schools

must follow a path of creating open channels of communication with the outside world in order to dispel misconceptions and permit 'outsiders' to understand more accurately ideal Islamic practices. . . . Opening dialogue with others, as well as introducing their own students to others, would eliminate the skepticism and answer inquiries that might exist. Removing the barriers that currently exist between Islamic and non-Islamic [people] would be a great step forward. (p. 135)

Al-Kandari also recommended that "Creating a healthy Islamic environment based on mutual acceptance and understanding of other religions could help dispel the misconceptions of critics" (p. 136).

Al-Azemi (2000) also wrote about the implementation of the Islamic Educational Curriculum (IEC) in Kuwait, how it is organized, and what values and outcomes it teaches. Although he did not use the term, Al-Azemi found that Islamic education in Kuwait follows a banking model of education, writing that "The teaching methods used were found to be centered on the teacher's role and to focus on lecturing and question-answer techniques, the overall purpose being to deliver to students the concept and sub-concept contained in the textbook (p. 261). Al-Azemi found that most IEC topics were traditional, general, and basic, such as "God is one, God created the universe and so on," and furthermore noted that "Topics related to the students' present world, such as problems, needs, and interests, were either very limited or merely presented in summary fashion in the textbook. There was a notable [absence] of topics related to the nature of

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contemporary society and its problems" (p. 261). Finally, Al-Azemi concluded that "Despite the fact that activities involving students' participation are, generally speaking, very important in teaching as they introduce a more practical approach to the subject, such activities were hardly ever used" in Islamic education in Kuwait (p. 262).

In a study that is more closely relevant to the subject of this dissertation, Al-Nakib (2012) explored an educational approach in Kuwait with some similarities to peace education called the Kuwaiti Constitution and Human Rights (CHR) curriculum, which was introduced in Kuwait in 2005 but was scaled back in 2010. In her analysis of how this curriculum was implemented in one school in Kuwait, she described the characteristics of the school, which are common characteristics in schools throughout Kuwait:

> buildings are old and run-down like most other Kuwaiti state schools. The walls in most of the classrooms are bare, and there is no technology at all in the majority of rooms. The individual desks are mismatched and covered in graffiti dating back years. The teachers' desks are old and centred at the front of the room, with students facing them in straight rows. There are no spaces for students to easily congregate during break times, and the national 'fixed classroom' policy sees them remaining in their bare classrooms for most of the day. Over 90% of the students at Fatima are Kuwaiti citizens and 100% are Muslim. The school day begins, like all state schools in Kuwait, with the patriotic flag-raising and hailing of the Amir, and a reading from the Quran. These elements make Fatima a representative case within the authoritarian school system. (Al-Nakib, 2012, p. 105)

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Here we see how the typical school in Kuwait is structured to reinforce the society of control. Based on my experience teaching in Kuwait, her description is very typical of Kuwaiti schools. More discussion-friendly, circular seating arrangements are extremely rare if they exist at all.

Based on her findings, she concluded that the school's implementation of the CHR "offered a glimpse into the potential of the CHR module – potential that has the power to further Kuwait's democratic evolution at a time when its citizens are demanding it on the streets" (p. 110), and in so doing, also offers a glimpse into the potential for KAPE. She noted that the module promoted

- "a curricular space for a critical engagement with rights frameworks";
- "a value system anchored in the universality of rights";
- "active learning that honed the skills for democratic participation"; and
- "democratic education within an authoritarian school system, with students developing agency, questioning the status quo and taking action." (p. 110)

However, Al-Nakib lamented the fact that Kuwait reduced the CHR module reduced to one year, which she argued shifted the balance back to "a controlled authoritarian system that inculcates loyalty by promoting nationalism at the expense of criticality," which promotes "passive citizens dependent on the State" (Al-Nakib, 2012, p. 110). The goal of KAPE, thus, would be to recapture what Al-Nakib found in her analysis of the CHR: the framework of the universality of human rights, critical engagement, and democratic participation and education.

Al-Nakib wrapped up her study with a summary of the context of Kuwait and some recommendations for similar educational projects, stating,

With the multiple layers of divisions and tensions in Kuwait discussed earlier, this

is a challenge that needs the support of a solid education that is built in

partnership with young people, who can see beyond what already exists—an

education that prefigures the democratic ideal rather than mirrors and perpetuates

the status quo or supports the 'societies of control'. Its interpretation of the CHR

curriculum coupled with its student-led, action-based UNESCO projects certainly

offered a 'waystation'. This was a 'case of viability'…. (Al-Nakib, 2012, p. 110)

Just as Al-Nakib's study of one school in Kuwait provided a case of viability for the CHR

curriculum, so too does it provide a case of viability for a KAPE.

Kuwait's external peace. Throughout its history, Kuwait has been a major

proponent of external peace. As a small nation based on trade, it is in the best interest of

Kuwait to stay on good terms with its neighbors and trade partners and to not start any

major conflicts. As an analysis of Kuwait's governance from Fanack's (2017) *Chronicle

of the Middle East and North Africa* website explained,

On the regional diplomatic level Kuwait's priorities are twofold. First, it has to

prevent its powerful neighbours from finding any pretext for meddling in the

country's internal affairs – or worse. Second, regional conflicts should be settled

peacefully, in order to keep the Gulf sea lanes open and safe for trade. In order to

achieve these two major policy goals, the country needs to appear strictly neutral

in the face of regional conflicts and power struggles. (Foreign Policy section,

para. 2)

Similarly, Cordesman (1997) noted that Kuwait has rarely taken sides in quarrels

between its Gulf neighbors, has focused on its own peace and security, and has promoted

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more cooperation between the GCC to maintain security in the region. Kuwait has also been extremely generous in humanitarian aid to countries destroyed by war, famine, natural disasters, and so on. In fact, Kuwait's work towards humanitarian relief and promoting peace shows that the nation values peace, as further evidenced by the fact that the Emir of Kuwait was recognized by the UN for his humanitarian leadership (Ki-Moon, 2014) and the former Kuwaiti Minister of Higher Education spoke at a UNESCO conference to promote peace education (KUNA, 2015).

Kuwait's internal peace and justice. Although money through trade and humanitarian relief has helped Kuwait maintain peace with its neighbors, it is not likely that it is a sufficient solution to deal with issues of internal peace, particularly a just form of peace. Currently, the social and political system of Kuwait reinforces too much structural violence to be considered just and peaceful in the sense of positive peace.

Among the various minority groups that need their justice secured in order to maintain long-term stability and peace are the Shi'a and bedoons. A lack of justice for minorities can pose a long-term threat to stability. For example, in his analysis of the Gulf region after the Gulf War but before the events of 9/11, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the Arab Spring, political scientist Bahgat (1999) predicted that post-Gulf War presence of the U.S. Military would limit interstate conflicts and wars, but internal injustices and conflicts would arise. This prediction has turned out to be true, as can be seen in the revolutions of Tunisia and Egypt; the civil wars of Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen; and the protests of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. One dimension of internal strife that Bahgat emphasized in his essay was the issue of Shi'a rights. He argued that the issue would not be religious in nature at its core, but socioeconomic. His analysis found

that most grievances of the Shi'a minorities in the Gulf nations of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain were based on perceived lack of political, social, and economic equality and justice. He pointed out that until such grievances were legitimately addressed, then long-term stability would not be achievable. While short-term peace could be achieved through force and power, such stability would not be long-lasting (Bahgat, 1999). Bahgat concluded that an orchestrated effort

> needs to be made in order to address the socio-economic inequality between the
> two communities [Sunni and Shi'a]. This would facilitate their peaceful
> assimilation in the society and would, eventually, contribute to long-term political
> stability and lay the foundations for a durable peace. (p. 88)

However, Bahgat did not include Kuwait in his analysis, perhaps because the Shi'as there have more political, social, and economic rights, voice, and justice. That does not mean, however, that the situation is perfect. Justice still needs to be on the minds of Kuwaitis if they want to establish and maintain a more comprehensive and long-term peace.

Injustice can lead to violence as a last resort for desperate peoples. For example, recently in Kuwait, a bedoon man committed self-immolation in front of a police station, presumably because of frustration over lack of rights. On September 21, 2017, the Kuwait Times news reported:

> A bedoon man set himself on fire in front of the AlNaeem police station in
> Kuwait today. The motive for the man's action was not immediately clear. There
> are more than a hundred thousand stateless Arabs living in Kuwait without
> passports or nationality. They are known as 'bedoon' meaning 'without', and
> many of them are unable to go to school, work legally or travel due to their

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irregular status. This is the first incident of self-immolation. No official statement

has been issued by authorities regarding the incident. ("A bedoon Man," 2017,

paras. 1–2)

This recent event is a sign that Kuwait needs to reflect on its internal system and evaluate

the degree of peace and justice that exists for these minority groups.

In previous chapters, I have referred to different types of peace. These types of

peace found in the literature include negative peace, positive peace, just peace, and

transformative peace. Some of these types of peace are superficial and unstable, while

others are more robust and stable. I categorize the former as *weak* and the latter as

powerful peace (see Table 2). Weak peace tends to be temporary and is subject to fail

because underlying social issues that might contribute to violence are not addressed.

Powerful peace, in contrast, is characterized by not only a *lack of violence* but also a

presence of justice that theoretically makes the peace robust, sustainable, and more

pervasive in society. However, all of these terms describe static states. In order to change

the state of peace in a nation, a process of transformative peace must occur.

Table 2

Weak and Powerful Peace

Weak	Powerful
Absence of Violence	Presence of Social and Economic Justice
Unjust Peace	Just Peace
Negative Peace	Positive Peace

Transformative peace: peace that changes society from a weak peace towards a more permanent, pervasive, and powerful form of peace.

So, what is the state of Kuwait in terms of peace and how might it begin to transform

towards a more powerful and robust form of peace? Currently, Kuwait is a quintessential

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example of weak, or negative, peace. Negative peace is defined as "the absence of organized political violence and 'positive peace' as the presence of social and economic justice" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2014, p. 196). Kuwait has negative peace in that Kuwait has low crime, is not militarily aggressive, often takes peacemaking and peacekeeping approaches to diplomacy with its neighbors, and promotes humanitarian work globally.

Kuwait can be said to be very peaceful but not particularly just in terms of the social and political rights of minorities, migrant workers, women, and citizens in general. Promisingly, though, the *World Report* issued by the Human Rights Watch (2017) noted continuing improvements in Kuwait in these regards, but it remains to be seen how permanent these changes are and if justice will continue to improve. Kuwait has room to transform towards a more positive peace, which in part might be achieved with KAPE. The history, foundation, and cultural context of Kuwait show that it is receptive to and desires peace. This peace, however, suffers from weaknesses, so the future of peace in Kuwait should focus on moving from peace as absence of violence towards a just peace. To do this, a transformational approach to peace education, as advocated by Reardon and Snauwaert (2014), is needed. The most appropriate approach to a Kuwaiti peace education is up to debate, although there are some aspects are more conducive to peace and justice in Kuwait than others, and these are explored next.

Institutions and documents that promote dialogue and agency. To maintain peace and promote justice, it is necessary to identify the existing mechanisms and institutions for debate, discussion, and participation that have transformative potential and promote them. The goal is to get more power and more of a voice to people in a

reasonable way. Such an approach aligns with the ideas of the social construction of knowledge, relational hermeneutics, and the comprehensive approach to peace education.

In contrast, not utilizing existing institutions and structures and pushing change beyond what the current system is capable of can lead to conflict, violence, and destruction. However, simply keeping the current system because it is stable and peaceful now runs the risk of leading to conflict in the future because of structural violence and injustice. Thus, transformative peace must occur, but on Kuwaiti terms.

However, based on the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed, and given the dialogic nature of the hermeneutic method, it would be difficult for one person, such as me, to make a decision about the best approach to peace education on behalf of all of Kuwait. The issue would need to go through the process of dialogue, deliberation, and reflection through various channels in the nation. This is a similar argument Amartya Sen has made in relation to human rights in his capabilities approach. For Sen (2004), to create definitive list of capabilities as a measure of adherence to human rights would be like creating mausoleums that do not represent current living reality (Sen, 2004). He argues that creating fixed and final lists "deny the possibility of fruitful public participation on what should be included and why" (Sen, 2004, p. 77). He further clarifies his position:

> What I am against is the fixing of a cemented list of capabilities, which is absolutely complete (nothing could be added to it) and totally fixed (it could not respond to public reasoning and to the formation of social values). (Sen, 2004, p. 78)

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Additionally, Sen (2005) is cautious of "displacing the need for continued public reasoning" (p. 157). For Sen, the existence of a method for public reason is the most important and perhaps only measure of a nation's adherence to justice. So, Sen would resist a statement that solidifies a fixed human right or universal human right indicator because cultural differences and individual differences make it nearly impossible to do so; however, he would say it is necessary to ensure as many voices are heard as possible. Here, public reasoning refers to a forum or system of forums in which the public can participate in open, impartial scrutiny of beliefs, values, and laws as well as take part in the comparative assessment of justice (Sen, 2004; Sen, 2005).

The ideal places for this process of knowledge construction and public reason to occur are through the schools, the parliament, the votes, and the courts. Media, including social media, and the freedom of press are important elements, too, but the challenges to democracy, peace, and justice that media poses as well is another dissertation in itself. In short, the media remains an effective way to voice differing opinions, but it tends to be one-sided—a monologue more than a dialogue. Indeed, the problem with media being it is not only not very dialogic but also not very deliberative or reflective—the three of which are essential critical processes that should occur in constructive forms of dissent, disagreement, and debate.

As much as possible, different voices and perspectives need to be included in some constructive, transformative fashion. Obviously non-Kuwaitis cannot directly participate in the process of voting and debating in National Assembly, but they need to have a way to add their own input given the size of their population and the importance of their interests and well-being. Additionally, current restrictions and laws make purely

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open and impartial scrutiny in public debate difficult because certain topics are off limits; however, it is important to identify where the process of public reasoning has the most potential to occur.

The combination of these systems for promoting dialogue, deliberation, and reflection using concepts from Freire, Sen, Nussbaum, and others is what Snauwaert (2011) calls "realization-focused theory of justice" which he argues "can serve as a robust organizing foundation for critical peace education theory and practice" (p. 315).

Balance of powers. In Kuwait, the major political bodies of power are the Emir, the Prime Minister and his Ministries, the Constitutional Court, and the National Assembly. There are a few checks and balances that help distribute power somewhat, but the Emir holds the most power and the National Assembly is very weak. The Emir is the commander-in-chief of the military, has the power to dissolve the National Assembly, and unilaterally appoints the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is considered the third most powerful person in Kuwait after the Emir and the Speaker of the National Assembly. The Speaker is the highest elected position in Kuwait. Finally, the only political body that can challenge an order from the Emir is the Constitutional Court, which can also dissolve the National Assembly.

National Assembly. Only Kuwaiti first-class citizens are represented and can participate in the National Assembly. The promising developments in recent years include extending that right to a larger population of Kuwaitis, namely women. Still unrepresented are the bedoon, the stateless people, although advocates on their behalf do occasionally win seats in the Assembly.

Despite its imperfections, the National Assembly is the body that most closely represents the ideals of public deliberation. Since public deliberation is one of the major keys to promoting justice in a society, the National Assembly has the most potential to promote and maintain long-term internal peace and justice. However, the National Assembly needs to have more stability and not have to worry about the threat of dissolution. They representatives in the Assembly need to answer to the people they represent more than to the Emir, but that arguably not the case currently.

Kuwaiti court system. Both citizens and non-citizens can appeal for their rights in the Kuwait courts. For example, in a recent case involving female Egyptian expatriate teachers claiming to have had their rights violated when they were not paid for housing arrangements won a court case in the Kuwaiti constitutional courts, although the Ministries of Education and Finance have fought the decision and the extent of the compensation ordered ("Kuwait's Expat Teachers," 2016).

The highest court in the land is the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court members are appointed by the High Judicial Council. This Council includes a representative from the executive branch, the Minister of Justice (Choudhry & Bass, 2014), the President and Deputy of the Court of Cassation, the President and Deputy of the Court of Appeal, the Attorney General, and the President of the al-Kulliyya Court (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2008).

The Constitutional Court has quite a bit of power in Kuwait. For example, it can dissolve the National Assembly, as can the Emir, but the Constitutional Court can invalidate the Emir's decree to dissolve the assembly:

Kuwait's 1962 Constitution called for the creation of a Constitutional Court, but it took 11 years for Parliament to pass the necessary legislation to establish the Court. A judicial council, composed of senior judges and government officials, appoints the members of the Court. (Choudhry & Bass, 2014, p. 29)

However, the Constitutional Court's autonomy has been questioned at times. Choudhry and Bass (2014) has claimed,

The perceived legitimacy of the Court has ebbed and flowed over time, and many view it as being under the control of the Emir. Its rulings in many politically sensitive cases have favoured the executive or have avoided a decision by dismissing the cases on procedural grounds. (Choudhry & Bass, 2014, p. 18)

Still, the Constitutional Court of Kuwait is widely considered the most powerful and independent court in the Arab world (Brown, 2001). This Court represents the most effective avenue for the people of Kuwait to make appeals all the up to the Emir, and probably best represents the principle of reflective inquiry.

International law. On the international stage, various state and non-state actors, groups, agencies, and organizations can contribute to the dialogue but not control or oppose a singular external view. As Sen (2005) has explained,

Intellectual interactions across the borders can be as important in rich societies as they are in poorer ones. The point to note here is not so much whether we are allowed to chat across borders and to make cross-boundary scrutiny, but that the discipline of critical assessment of moral sentiments—no matter how locally established they are—requires that we view our practices inter alia from a certain distance. (p. 164)

None of this is to justify the point that outside perspectives must be accepted, only considered and responded to.

International courts remain a last resort for non-Kuwaitis to express their voice and fight for their rights. This is an important forum for proponents of peace education and human rights to use for deliberation and debate. The ability to enforce decisions is another matter and depends on whether the Kuwaiti state agrees to honor the decisions and whether any international forces want to enforce the issue in the case of non-compliant.

Level of compatibility of peace education in Kuwait. Kuwait seems to fit the definition of what Rawls (1999) calls "decent people," which is a society that is hierarchical and non-liberal, but which meets certain criteria that leads it to respect human rights and peace. The six criteria Rawls sets for decent people are

1. All groups must be consulted.

2. Each member of a people must belong to a group.

3. Each group must be represented by a body that contains at least some of the group's own members who know and share the fundamental interests of the group.

4. The body that makes the final decision must weigh the views and claims of each of the bodies consulted, and, if called upon, judges and other officials must explain and justify the rulers' decision.

5. The decision should be made according to a conception of the special priorities of the nation, such as what might be codified in a constitution.

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6. These special priorities must fit into an overall scheme of cooperation, and the fair terms according to which the group's cooperation is to be conducted should be explicitly specified. (Rawls, 1999, p. 77)

Rawls imagines a hypothetical Muslim nation that might fit these criteria that could be called a "decent consultation hierarchy" (p. 77), a nation which he calls Kazanistan that, while not *just*, is at least *decent*. Rawls's imagined nation is very similar to Kuwait, which is hierarchical with the emir at the top but that includes consultation from the people via the National Assembly and various sub-assemblies. It also respects non-Muslims and has a long history of tolerating and protecting a diverse population. In fact, Doyle (2006) included Kuwait as one of a few possible real-world examples of decent peoples, claiming:

> If we take these criteria seriously but not absolutely, one can … identify a handful of such states. Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE, and maybe also Bhutan are among them (p. 115).

In his analysis, Doyle interprets Rawls's definition of decent peoples using the following criteria:

- Consultation hierarchy in which rulers are obligated to reply to demands that are properly made;

- Non-aggressive foreign policy;

- Human rights secured;

- Everyone is a responsible part of the cooperative effort; and

- Sincerely belief held by judges and ministers.

Doyle has claimed that Kuwait meets most of these criteria and considers it a good real-world example of a decent peoples that is evolving towards democracy. However, he did not find strong evidence in Kuwait for the fourth criterion on his list (which is also the first criterion on Rawls's list). That is, *not everyone is a responsible part of the cooperative effort*; all groups are not consulted. In particular, the bedoon and the two-thirds of the nation that are non-citizen residents are not adequately consulted. Additionally, it was only recently, around the same time Doyle's work was published, that women have been part of the consultation process, and arguably they are still not fully represented. Finally, even if everyone in Kuwait had a fair representation in the National Assembly, the fact remains that the National Assembly's power and influence is severely limited.

To improve its status as a decent people, and perhaps to achieve more beyond decent people status and achieve a greater positive peace, Kuwait needs to include everyone as a "responsible part of the cooperative effort" (Doyle, 2006, p. 115). Doyle's recommendation aligns with the principles of peace education and justice endorsed and promoted in this dissertation, which includes a greater degree of dialogue and open, impartial scrutiny.

However, looking at examples of monarchies that have shared power with the people, there is likely a reasonable middle ground that cannot be reasonably rejected. On the spectrum closer to Kuwait, there is the Kingdom of Morocco where, in 2011 during the era known as the Arab Spring, King Mohammed V made sweeping changes to the system of government by instituting a new constitution that gave more power to the people, more power to the parliament, and more power and rights to women and other

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minorities (Ottaway, 2011). This was a move in the right direction, but as Ottaway (2011) concluded at the end of her article, "How far the king's top-down reform will go may well depend on the strength of a bottom-up push by political parties and protesters" (How Much Change section, para. 4). On the more liberal extreme of the spectrum, there is the constitutional monarchy of the United Kingdom, in which the royal family retains very little political power but maintains their status and wealth, as well as the Queen's position as the symbolic leader of the country, while the UK Parliament and the Prime Minister hold the most power. The historical role of the Kuwait as a client state of the UK and the influence of the UK on the system of Kuwait points to the feasibility of at least moving in the direction of the constitutional monarchy seen in the UK. Within this range of monarchies, there are reasonable concessions of power that could be made in Kuwait that would secure the long-term peace and prosperity of the nation while maintaining its identity and system of government without placing an unreasonable burden on the royal family to which the nation owes so much.

Compatible values and values that limit compatibility. Certain Kuwaiti values and beliefs can promote KAPE, while others can potentially hinder it. Because the core of the KAPE will be based on reflective inquiry, dialogue, creativity, and action with a focus on justice for all, aspects of Kuwait that value these components must be identified and promoted. As evidenced in the prior analysis of Kuwaiti society, a variety of compatible values and beliefs emerge. To begin with, the Emir and Kuwaitis in general value peace and diplomacy because it is a small country based heavily on trade in which citizens are a minority in their own diverse country. Additionally, women have been gaining more of a voice since 2005, so there is an existing belief that women's opinions

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need to be considered in the dialogue. Moreover, there is some receptivity to the kinds of educational efforts that the KAPE would promote, as seen in the Kuwait Constitution and Human Rights (CHR) module included in the state's curriculum (Al-Nakib, 2012). Finally, there is a strong culture and tradition of dialogue and consultation in Kuwait and the Gulf region in general, such as the traditional gatherings known as *dewaniya* or *majlis*, where dewaniya is focused more on local and national politics and is traditionally for men only (although women are claiming the tradition now as well) and majlis is more for family, neighborhood, and social issues. At the national level, there is the National Assembly, which is known as the *majlis al-ummah*, and there are *majalis* (plural for majlis) at all other levels including local governance, neighborhoods, and family homes. In fact, the Emir even opens up a *dewaniya* to the public on special occasions in which the general population can voice support and concern and ask questions which the Emir responds to and takes into consideration.

However, there are also strong values in Kuwaiti society that can pose challenges to KAPE and similar pursuits. For example, in Kuwait there is a great amount of respect for and deference to social hierarchies in terms of people who are older, male, and in positions of authority. While respect for elders and those in authority has its benefits in terms of the greater peace and order of society, it also threatens the democratic values of open, impartial scrutiny that flatten hierarchies. This hierarchy also contributes to the overall patriarchal structure of Kuwait. Similarly, because the identity of Kuwait is so closely tied to the Al-Sabah family and their governance, Kuwaitis feel a strong allegiance to them and especially the Emir and are strongly against criticizing him anyway, even without legislation specifically outlawing it (Article 18 Constitution).

Criticizing the Emir is quite often seen as criticizing Kuwait. Thus, disrespect shall not be tolerated and some rules limiting this kind of speech should remain. Kuwaiti people also stress the importance of traditional values, which can prevent new, foreign, alien, challenging, alternative, and creative ideas from being considered. As the hermeneutic analysis of peace education revealed, considering alternatives, especially alien ideas, is necessary in order to achieve a fusion of horizons and achieve higher and more transformative forms of peace and justice. Finally, a major threat to the KAPE is the hierarchical, centralized, and banking model of education that is very strong in Kuwait. This hierarchical system threatens student-centered approaches to education that emphasize input from students in the form of reflection, dialogue, deliberation, scrutiny, and critical inquiry. As Al-Nakib (2012) found, changing this banking model towards a more dialogic model of education in Kuwait is a daunting task.

Summary of KAPE and a Tentative Answer to the Major Research Question

The answer to the major research question is that it is necessary to get the dialogue on peace education in Kuwait started, since the discussion currently is not occurring. Such an answer may seem small, but it is a significant step in the right direction. That is to say, a hermeneutic compatibility of a conception of peace within the Kuwait horizon cannot be comprehensively defined in this dissertation. Like Sen (2004), I am against "the fixing of a cemented list" (p. 78), and instead I simply promote a basic framework of elements that must exist for KAPE to have value and potency in our society, but the manifestation of which must occur with the full and complete participation of Kuwaitis so that everyone is a responsible part of the cooperative effort.

To get the discussion started in Kuwait, I offer a framework of elements that must be included in KAPE in order to adhere to the principles of peace education. While the details of what KAPE would look like and how these principles will be fleshed out will depend on the involvement and consultation of all Kuwaitis with the buy-in of the Emir, the basic framework needs to exist to structure the dialogue. The major elements are as follows:

- *Reflection*: Introspective thinking about the self in relation to others.
- *Dialogue***:** External discussion, debate, deliberation, and dialogue between diverse people and points of view.
- *Creative learning***:** The fusion of various horizons of self and others gained from reflective thinking and dialogue, also known as synthesis or critical thinking.
- *Action***:** Putting the fusion of horizons to work to achieve transformative agency.

In addition to these elements, the end goal of the transformative action is a morally just peace in Kuwait beyond the negative peace that currently exists. As noted, the purpose of KAPE will be to promote both peace *and* justice (i.e., just peace) through a process of transformative peace. I discuss each of these elements and their application to Kuwait in greater detail below.

Reflection. In order for mutual understanding to occur, it is necessary to consider the subjective perspectives of others and to work towards intersubjectivity, which can be achieved through reflection. Reflection is arguably the *most important* criteria for learning *how* to think in a morally just and responsible way rather than learning *what* to think (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 185). Reflection can be considered an internal dialogue between imagined interlocutors and alternative points of view. Because it is an

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exercise in internal dialogue, it can set the foundation for actual dialogue as it opens the mind to various possible alternative horizons. By considering alternatives an internal, reflective process, each individual can determine ahead of time what they truly know and believe, and what they are less certain about, able to concede, and willing compromise over. According to Reardon and Snauwaert's (2015) definition, there are three types of reflective inquiry: critical/analytic, moral/ethical, and contemplative/ruminative (p. 185). Critical/analytic reflection concerns the discernment of power. Moral/ethical reflection focuses on questions of fairness and universal moral inclusion. Contemplative/ruminative reflection is the broadest of all and addresses the "full scope of the complex systemic, dynamic interrelationships comprising our natural and humanly constructed environments" (Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015, p. 186).

While reflection is an internal process that is virtually impossible to identify and measure, it can be promoted in classroom lessons through guided but open-ended queries (rather than direct questions). Al-Nakib (2012) has already discussed how reflection was a part of the CHR curriculum in Kuwait, describing how students reflected on their learning in school about the concepts of citizenship, human rights, and democracy and whether they felt their school supported these concepts. Al-Nakib pointed out that having students reflect and record their reflections ensures "student perceptions of their own experiences were not overshadowed by those of their teachers or the researcher" (p. 102). The CHR curriculum demonstrated that it is possible to promote reflection on critical, moral, and contemplative issues in Kuwait, but the later minimization of the CHR curriculum indicates that there is a cause for concern and reveals a remaining need to promote reflection more.

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Dialogue. I contend that in the spirit of hermeneutics and social construction of knowledge, no single person can define peace and peace education on behalf of an entire culture or nation. Thus, constructing a hermeneutically compatible conception of peace and peace education in Kuwait must involve all Kuwaitis and even as many of the two thirds of the population who are non-Kuwaiti residents as possible. This dialogic process must

- Constantly evolve;
- Be open and public;
- Occur in a variety of forums, including forums with political power and influence such as the National Assembly as well as throughout classrooms around the nation;
- Adhere to and survive the standards and scrutiny of evidence and reason.

The last criterion above is essential in order to keep the open-ended nature of this pursuit of socially constructing a hermeneutically compatible conception of peace education in Kuwait from devolving into chaos.

Opening up the dialogue to as many voices as possible carries with it risks that often people in positions of power are not willing to take. In order to develop greater dialogue, we also need to increase our capacities for risk. As Reardon and Snauwaert (2015) explain in the context of teaching peace education in the classroom:

We also seek to develop our own capacities for risk, perhaps preparing ourselves for the courageous creative politics of peace, but more professionally relevant, to undertake a similar process in our classrooms. When teaching from open ended queries, and deliberately cultivating multiple and varied responses, the teacher

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relinquishes sole control over the content and direction of discussion, a situation many educators find intimidating…. It is communal creativity without limits; but . . . is not without form and discipline; in the case of teaching the discipline and form are the rigorous standards of evidence and reason, central to responsible critical inquiry. (p. 161)

The classroom dynamic described here can also map onto other forums as well, such as the Kuwaiti National Assembly and in the media. Without open, impartial scrutiny in the National Assembly and without free press in the Kuwait media, making the changes in the classroom as described above would ring hollow for the students. In order for changes in the classroom to carry meaning and significance, Kuwaiti society in general needs to be more comfortable with the risks and benefits of open-ended dialogue, debate, and even disagreement. In particular, as long as disagreement is taken as a sign of dysfunction and reason to dissolve the National Assembly, which is currently the mindset in Kuwait, then there is little to no chance for peace education to flourish

Creative learning. In order to achieve greater creativity in learning, the overall education system in Kuwait needs to move towards more decentralization, empowering local administrators, teachers, parents, and students to participate little by little. In other words, the Kuwaiti system of government needs to move away from the Banking Model of education and towards a system with more creative learning in which knowledge is perceived as something constructed rather than simply delivered from on high.

These changes do not need to occur overnight, and of course people need to still show they are able to manage their education responsibly. For example, Buyukduvenci (1994) argued that of the problems with Turkish educational reforms during the early 20th

century is that they were highly centralized, even though John Dewey had advised Turkey to decentralize their education system. By legislating reform and secularization from the top-down in a centralized system, Turkey set itself up for a backlash from the people who may not have agreed with all of the reforms, the way the reform occurred, or the rate at which it occurred. By decentralizing the system and granting more power and input from the people, not only does it change the banking model of education, but it also allows people to feel invested in the process and in control to some extent.

Additionally, part of moving away from the banking model and towards creative learning means moving towards problem-posing education. The goal of problem-posing education is praxis, which is "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970/2003, p. 33). In addition to problem-posing education, classroom pedagogy needs to promote dialogue, reflective inquiry, and public deliberation. The literature on peace education makes it clear that people, whether students in the classroom or citizens in the civic environment, need to have a voice and the ability to debate, deliberate, and reflect on information, experiences, and knowledge.

Action. It is impossible for one person to say exactly what action should be taken and how it should look because action depends on the outcome of previous three elements that involve multiple voices. However, what can be said is that KAPE must result in some form of transformative action if it is to be of any value. Reflection, dialogue, and creative learning with no resulting action is impotent and futile. At the same time, it would be rash to expect immediate action given that the previous three elements require a great deal of rumination. Thus, transformative action/agency is a long-term goal, one which we must be patient of persistent about. While the transformative

actions of KAPE require input from everyone, a few possible action-based outcomes that I suggest to include in the discussion are as follows:

- Reform Kuwaiti education away from the banking model and decentralize it; while Kuwaiti teachers can promote some more reflection in the classroom, the overall system needs to experience a paradigm shift away from the banking model as well, something that goes beyond a single teacher's agency and takes a great deal of time and concerted effort.

- Enact structural changes to the governmental system to reduce structural violence and injustice, notably by promoting the power of the National Assembly; reflection and dialogue in the classroom will carry more meaning and significance if Kuwaitis believe it can have real-world impact, which is something the National Assembly potentially achieves.

- Achieve a more robust, sustainable, and transformative peace through greater minority rights and representation based on a relational hermeneutics approach to justice.

These proposed actions are up for debate, but they are ones I feel strongly about based on the principles of peace education.

This KAPE curriculum must address all ages beyond K-12 education. An approach to peace education that is robust should address multiple levels of education and even outside of the education system. Peace education in Kuwait should address all of the developmental stages of the learner, from early childhood to adult education. Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) lamented the fact how many proponents of peace education focus on early and middle childhood education, which in many cases can be

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too late to effect change in time to avoid or minimize impending conflicts; thus, they advocate for adult peace education. Reardon and Snauwaert stressed how focusing on adult education

> puts the responsibility for the future where it belongs, in the hands of adults who have direct experience with the overwhelming problems of the present, and the crucial need for change. . . . For generations we have looked to the education of children and to the very young for the development of our desired future. Postponing the changes required to assure the future is a potentially disastrous practice. (p. 12)

So, in addition to a K-12 KAPE curriculum, higher education institutions should also incorporate the principals of KAPE. Ideally, KAPE could also take the form of professional development workshops and training sessions in companies, organizations, and governmental ministries. By addressing students from young to old simultaneously, KAPE would be investing in the future while not deferring change to the next generation, something that Reardon and Snauwaert (2014) have strongly advised.

Conclusion

At this point, it is clear that Kuwait is a peaceful nation, but it seems to be peaceful in the sense that it has negative peace with little physical violence. That is, Kuwait is generally peaceful in terms of a lack of violence and war. Additionally, Kuwait's entire history has been dedicated to maintaining peace internally and with its neighbors because of the importance of trade and its relatively small size. However, this kind of peace can be called negative peace because it is largely measured in terms of the lack of physical violence, but there is very little room for Kuwaitis to voice their

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concerns, dialogue, and transform society through a strong, consultative system. These qualities make Kuwait similar to what Rawls defines as a decent people, but it is not yet a liberal, democratic state. To achieve positive or transformational peace, Kuwait would need to reduce structural and cultural violence and promote justices. Such a *just peace* is defined as peace with justice as opposed to an *unjust peace.* For instance, though Kuwait is peaceful, it arguably lacks justice for minorities, immigrants, women, and stateless people (bedoon), as Alnajjar (2001) has explained. In order to promote peace, the aspects of the government, religion, and educational systems that can potentially promote dialogue, reflective inquiry, and public deliberation must be strengthened.

Practical implications. The Kuwaiti documents, institutions, systems, and traditional beliefs and values compatible to peace education must be a means to a just peace, not the end. The fact that they exist does not automatically mean that peace or justice exists. They must be used and strengthened in ways that promote dialogue, reflective inquiry, and public deliberation. As Snauwaert (2011) noted,

> Thus, while the realization-focused orientation of justice includes institutions in its analysis as necessary conditions for justice, it views institutions instrumentally, as a means to the end of human flourishing rather than as an end in itself. In other words, while the choice of institution is in fact crucial, 'we have to seek institutions that promote justice, rather than treating the institutions themselves as manifestations of justice' (Sen 2009, p. 82). Institutions are not ends; they are not good in themselves. Social institutions are means to the realization of social goods (Sen 2009, 83). Institutional reform should be sought as a way of moving a

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society toward a greater realization of justice, including the removal of injustice,

rather than as the realization of justice itself (Sen 2009, 26). (p. 324)

In other words, just because Kuwait has institutions like National Assembly and courts,

documents like a constitution, and systems like elections and education does not

automatically mean it has peace and justice. Likewise, just because Islam includes

historical documents that promote peace and justice between different faiths and nations,

promotes consensus among scholars and the people as a principle for jurisprudence, and

has many clauses and rules that limit warfare to the most extreme cases and last resorts

does not mean Muslims will follow such precedents. Those institutions and documents

have potential to work for justice, but people need to ensure that they are actually

operating as such—as means and not ends to just peace. In order to ensure these elements

compatible to peace education are identified and used to their fullest potential for

transformative purposes, the KAPE proposed here must be implemented and developed

with the full participation of the Kuwaiti people.

In order to move towards a more peaceful and just society both externally and

internally, there need to be solutions that go beyond money. There need to be structural

changes that secure long-term peace and address the issues of injustice in Kuwait. To this

end, the following transformations need to occur:

- Keep the existing structures and systems – of government, religion, and education
  – but find where there are pre-existing forums and processes for dialogue,
  reflection, and deliberation and strengthen them.

- Empower the mechanisms for debate, dialogue, and open, impartial scrutiny that
  already exist in Kuwait, in Islam, and in the educational system.

- Emphasize the respect for diversity of opinions that are pre-existing rather than trying to impose those from an external point of view.

- Use teachings and documents from Islam itself to promote peace education because that is how knowledge is constructed in Kuwait.

- Apply a relational hermeneutic rather than universalist or relativist approach.

- Created from within the Kuwaiti culture by Kuwaiti people, but it also must include and address external ideas, approaches, and criticisms.

- Move away from banking model of education – which also promotes understanding rather than explaining and is potentially transformative.

Towards this end, future efforts need to focus on continuing the dialogue on this topic. Ways to achieve this can involve presenting the idea at conferences across the country, discuss the elements and concepts of KAPE with education faculty at Kuwait University, meeting with the Education Minister and his staff to propose the idea, and sending letters to representatives on the National Assembly (especially members of the Education Committee) to get a dialogue started so they can debate and deliberate over the KAPE initiative.

Research implications. As a philosophical argument for a compatible peace education in Kuwait, this dissertation has explored and analyzed the ideas, reasoning, and prior research on the topic. Not only is more philosophical development of the KAPE idea needed, but also empirical research will need to be conducted to determine what actually works and does not work in practice. Thus, research on how the elements of reflection, dialogue, creative learning, and action apply to the Kuwait classroom is needed. Such empirical research can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, with a

focus on learning outcomes related to the ability to maintain a respectful and peaceful dialogue over a variety of sociopolitical topics, especially controversial topics such as gender equality, minority–majority rights, and citizen–non-citizen relations. An action research approach in particular would help to determine more detailed compatible elements of peace education as applied to Kuwait, similar to Carson's (1992) peace education project, which serves as a good example of a hermeneutically oriented action research to guide future peace education research in Kuwait. I especially would like to see action research focusing on the status of the stateless bedoon people, because their existence and statelessness is an inhumane black mark on Kuwait's reputation. Furthermore, these elements of peace education emphasized in the KAPE should be explored and analyzed for compatibility in other similar countries, most notably other Arab Gulf countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain and Oman) as well as other Middle Eastern nations.

Ultimately, it is necessary to keep in mind that transformation cannot occur overnight. If the Emir gave up power tomorrow and the people had to be more responsible for running for office and electing representatives to run the government, it would be a mess. Education for both children and adults, time, and slow reforms are needed to prepare people to get more involved while maintaining the Kuwaiti identity and the respect for and power of the Emir and the Al-Sabah Royal Family. We do not want to create a chaotic situation as seen in most of the Arab Spring nations such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, because that leads to more injustice, violence, and violations of human rights in the short term and no guarantee for improvement in the long-term.

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