

## **UNESCO Asia-Arab Interregional Philosophical Dialogues: Human Dignity, Justice, Fairness, Youth, Democracy and Public Policy**

15-17 November 2011

Manila Hotel, Manila, Philippines

### **Draft Conference Report**

This dialogue was organised by the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and Pacific, UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Rabat, in cooperation with the Ateneo Human Rights Center at Ateneo de Manila University.

The conference brought together Arab and Asian philosophers.

TUESDAY 15th November

Welcome Words

Prof. Darryl Macer, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO Bangkok

Interregional philosophical dialogues among the Asian and Arab philosophers have been held over the past six years in Seoul, Rabat, Hiroshima, Paris, Bangkok and Malacca of Malaysia. The conference for the year 2011, originally scheduled to be held in Morocco, had to be postponed with further decision to change the venue to Metro-Manila. This is due to the series of demonstrations, protests and civil resistances that have been taking place across the Middle East and North Africa. It is therefore, the theme of this year's conference – Human Dignity, Justice, Fairness, Youth, Democracy and Public Policy – devoted to the aspirations of people especially the youth in their pursuits for justice, freedom and equality; it also reflects moral and intellectual solidarity of Asia region as a part of international community. Furthermore, the theme of the Conference offers more profound, philosophical reflections on different conceptions of justice, fairness and participatory democracy. Under the overall aim of UNESCO programme on Asia-Arab Philosophical Dialogues, this Conference, by bringing together philosophers from Asian and Arab regions, is intended to enrich existing debates on global justice and other central ideas of political and moral philosophy through giving an opportunity for the diverse philosophical schools and thoughts are being voiced and considered. Therefore, Interregional Conference on Asia-Arab Philosophical Dialogues also serves as a forum to broaden intercultural communication and strengthen the role of philosophy in public policy and to promote indigenous philosophical thoughts around the world.

The objectives include

- To provide a forum for philosophical analysis of contemporary issues on global justice, freedom, equality and social justice;
- To assist the establishment of network and academic interactions among philosophers;
- To support philosophy as an academic discipline, for this purpose, encourage participants to produce papers for written proceedings after the conference.

Welcome Words

Ms. Souria Saad-Zoy, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Rabat

Welcome Words

Ms. Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista, Chair, Social and Human Sciences Committee, Philippine Nation Commission for UNESCO

Session 2: Applying Concepts of Gender Equality and Democracy to Public Policy

“The Concept of Gender and its Applications”

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The concept of gender is a dynamic concept that adapts to change and to development from one community to another and from one culture to another. Furthermore, this concept can change within a community itself. Social class, socio-economic background and age are factors that gender the behaviour of men and women in the workplace. Put differently, these elements can determine the role of the sexes as well as the relationship between them. The transition from one community to another automatically leads to a change in the roles that they are granted.

Social gender thus represents the social roles assigned by society taking into account the biological role of both sexes. It is this social gender that will determine their behaviour. And it is based on a system of values and social customs that become a reality over time.

The main objective that has pushed us to study this concept is the liberation of mentalities, prejudices and stereotypes regarding gender, in an attempt to discern the psychological differences established by nature.

Social gender is determined by a series of historical, cultural and social and psychological factors, through which masculine and feminine roles are defined, shedding light also on the relationship between the sexes as well as on the status of men and women within society. The distinction between what is natural and what is cultural, historical, social or psychological leads to a fossilization of social gender and of male and female roles, and brings about an unjust distribution of roles between men and women (for example, the education of children, domestic duties, etc).

“The Effects of Globalization on Industry and Female Employment”

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This study aims at demonstrating the impact of the phenomenon, known since the 1980s as “globalization”, on the industrial sector and on the employment of women in different countries. More precisely, how have policies and institutions that have been attributed to globalization

(such as the World Bank, the IMF and the World Labour Organisation(WLO)) been able to influence the women's social rights and the access of women to the job market?

The thesis of this research is articulated around two contradictory perspectives. The first perspective believes that policies of construction and cultural reform, which the countries of the South were competing to apply due to external factors – in most cases – had a negative effect on the women working in the South. In fact, this reality has pushed some to talk of the « paradoxes of globalization », which have eliminated traditional social structures, systems of social care and security – thus encouraging implicitly the authority of men – and replaced it with the authority of the existing market based on devastating possessive individualism. Alternately, the second perspective sees that generalising the model of economic liberalism and freedom of exchanges across the globe has contributed to an increase in the possibilities for female employment, to an improvement of their situation thanks to what is known in development literature as “the exportation of experience,” and to a repossession of the experience accumulated by the North in the domains of industry, technology and organisation of human rights dedicated to women in the countries of the South. This has sparked the interest of some and has led to the prediction of “the saving grace of globalization.”

“Medieval Islamic Philosophy: Lessons from the Philippines”

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The relationship between Islam and Christianity in the Philippines has always been complex, and made even more complicated by the strife in Mindanao. As such, the views regarding Islam in the "Christian North" have always been skewed towards suspicion and bias. This paper reflects on the experiences of a class taught in the past school year which engaged the ideas and thinkers of the Muslim world and brought these ideas to bear upon the questions and conflicts of the present. What lessons can students at a Catholic university gain from the wisdom of the Islamic intellectual tradition?

Session 3: Applying Concepts of Human Dignity to Public Policy

“Approaching the Resemblance of God”

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Considering how humans have harmed society and the earth, it would be tempting to believe that evil is a fate which humans cannot surpass. Reality can only affirm this.

The lover of wisdom, the maker of concepts has taken up the challenge by weaving reflections on the possibility of eradicating evil and establish the good between human beings. In fact, although humans are imperfect and justice is a divine attribute, some Muslim philosophers have

arrived at the thesis which says that humans can do the good and can become just through the flight of the soul and by its elevation renders itself like God.

To what extent can this theological-metaphysical conception of justice (which is one of its foundations) be inscribed in the physical and practical life of the individual? Can it take part in the bringing forth citizens aspiring for perfection in the goal of establishing justice?

"From Development to Persecution: Assessing the Fairness of China's Social Policies"

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The social policies adopted by the Chinese state towards the Muslim Uyghur minority of China's Xinjiang province constitute an interesting case-study for a discussion of the expression of justice and fairness in applied state policy. China's "Strike Hard" and "Go West" policies as well as its general stance towards the practice of Islam in China illustrate how – more often than not – the violation of justice and fairness is couched in state policy.

This study will take a social sciences approach to discussing social policies aimed at Uyghurs. First of all will be a clarification of the policies themselves, followed by a discussion of the various reactions these policies have caused within the Uyghur community. Secondly, against the setting of the Asia-Arab Interregional Philosophical Dialogues, the reaction (or perhaps inaction) of the Muslim world and the Arab world vis-à-vis China's social policies towards its Muslim Uyghurs must be addressed. Finally, this study shall conclude with a larger discussion of the relationship between justice, fairness and social policy: while the success of a social policy cannot be measured by such factors as justice or fairness, the justice or fairness within a social policy can perhaps be measured according to an assessment of the "victims" of a given social policy.

"The Destiny of the Rural World: Between Adventure, Biotechnology, and the 'Hunger of the World'"

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The Neolithic revolution has led to important developments for man: a) a space that delineates the "heritage" of an agricultural product, and b) a temporality, punctuated by the cycle of production, to which man must learn to submit, and through which man must manage his needs through planning.

Today, though, man is presented with a double challenge. On the one hand, technical modernity is useful in combating hunger. On the other hand, modernity in its strict sense must re-imagine an agriculture that gives meaning to rurality as an autonomous space, both at an economic and an existential level.

The paradox of our time is that of a seeming inevitable conflict between scientific temporality (the caution towards the multiplication of parameters that compete for the reproduction or the regeneration of an ecosystem) and politico-economic temporality (dictated by both market and ideological pressures). Is man a forced predator?

However, nothing prevents us from envisaging a less predatory planetary conviviality that would lead to a reduction of inequality. Yet new ecological imperialism and man's inability to manage the Earth at the beginning of this third millenium depends on the debate regarding rationality, of which the West has been a supporter, and contributes to interpreting this concept, which has long been dominant, through ethico-philosophical presuppositions.

“Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in Social and Economic Development in the Modern World”

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As the title indicated, this paper examines the important roles of ancient wisdom and how it could contribute to the social and economic development of a nation in the modern day. Over the past decades, social and economic development in many developing countries including Cambodia have placed an emphasis on capitalism, industrialization and technology which relied too much on the Western knowledge and know-how. There are some successful stories and problems in following this paradigm of development; for instance, Cambodia has experienced the fast economic growth in the last two decades. However, the country is also facing some serious problems such as the development imbalance, cultural and environmental destruction, urbanization etc. that are the results of the misguided development and they extremely affect the quality of life of the people. Seen the outcome of such crisis caused us to rethink, review and re-evaluate our social and development approach and plan. It is realized that we have focused too much on the Western ways of development and just neglected some of our practical ancient wisdoms, the local and the indigenous knowledge and skills, which are also the treasures that could contribute to the harmony, prosperity, dignity and sustainability of a nation.

Session 4: Concepts of Justice and Fairness (Part 1)

“Fairness and Justice”

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There is a higher court than court of justice and that court is the court of conscience. – M. Gandhi

At his best, man is the noblest of all animals, separated from law and justice he is the worst. – Aristotle

Justice and fairness are often used interchangeably, with fairness being the narrow sense of justice, it is the way two (or more) people treat each other socially or conduct business together. While justice has the broader sense, it is when actions are done in accordance with some laws (divine or man-made), because some believe that justice stems from God (his will or command), while others believe that justice comes from rules written by others for the good of all.

Fairness is the state condition or quality of being fair free from bias or injustice, in other words in order for someone to be fair he needs to look at situation from his point view and others point of view. For example when two people face a problem in my opinion (in most cases) none of them is 100% right or wrong, they both share the responsibility but the percentage might vary from case to case. None of us is a saint to be always right, therefore none of us when faced with a problem or situation with other/s should say it is not my fault it's the other person/s. A fair person would say, yes I was wrong for doing this and they were wrong for doing that. How many times we have heard from couples who got divorced by saying it is the other's fault the marriage has broken down, while in fact the blame is shared by both of them, the percentage might vary but at the end result they both are to blame.

“That's not Fair” or “Why Me” we all have heard children very often say these two phrase? Why is that? What makes children say them? David Hume numbered justice among the "artificial virtues." He did so because he thought we were "naturally" inclined to praise and blame certain actions or dispositions, and that this praising and blaming was the expression of a moral sense.

Could it be that during our first 4 years of our life we learn these artificial virtues from our parents? And after the first years we learn from society. It is known that children during their first 4 years of life learn many things (coordination, walking, speaking, etc.), and it is well known too that they observe what the parents and the extended family do, and learn from them. After they go to KG, and they interact with other children and teachers, and slowly they interact with the society. So could it be possible that we teach our children (without knowing) to be unfair individuals?

This paper intends to outline that, fair individuals are just individuals, and if we aim to educate younger generations on this principle, then justice will prosper in this world.

“Justice and Fairness: What Dialogue?”

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Are the notions of justice and equity the two sides of the same coin? Do they mean the same thing? Are they synonymous to each other? Can we take one for the other? Or are they rather degrees and different levels in the scale and sequence of meanings related to the same unit? Can these two notions exist without each other?

The choice between treating justice and equity together or in isolation increases the number of questions and distills the problems. Can justice have a meaning which would neither be confused nor ambiguous without the support of equity?

Devoid of this, how can justice become relevant and effective without deteriorating? And as for equity, is it the accomplishment of all of justice, its farthest limit, the highest degree it can attain or the intention it labours to constantly actualise? Must equity, which doesn't draw its strength from an rigorous exercise of justice, be something other than a superfluous morality and a source of confusion?

If Descartes's question is "Who am I?" and Kant's "What can I know?", in the area of justice and equity the question would be: "How do I behave to be just or become such if one is not yet so? What must be done to protect it from the powerful temptation of injustice?"

Do will and determination play a decisive role in the learning process and dissemination of justice and equity?

How does one distinguish between the true, the false, and the probable in this area?

It seems that these are perpetually experienced not only as thorny questions, but above all as disturbing and fascinating ordeals which embody an immense difficulty which humanity has come up against ever since.

The subject launches a debate. Dialogue would perhaps be the best way to take in order to break through its opaque aspects, its numerous paradoxes, and render it sufficiently intelligible. Now, this possible dialogue seems to be contaminated by the same difficulties which characterize our subject. The dialogue would be set up not only between justice and equity on the one hand and questions and concerns on the other; it is constantly invited to operate from within the space of justice and equity. This is what risks making of this dialogue yet another difficulty, and one that is not the least of it.

"Justice in the Philosophy of Mencius"

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With the Arab spring in mind, this paper explicates the concept of justice in the philosophy of Mencius.

I or Yi , often translated as righteousness or duty, is aptly equivalent to justice. Ren (Humanity) and I are discussed by Mencius together, just as love and justice are inseparable. Love pertains to being and justice to doing.

Justice for Mencius is doing what is right according to the rights of others. It is other oriented and emphasizes duty rather than rights.

Justice is rooted in the innate goodness of human nature, and therefore internal but cultivated in the family and extended to the community and nation.

Applied to the nation, good governance is governance ruled by love and justice. The ruler has the Mandate of Heaven which is also the mandate of the people. Mencius can be considered to be the first democratic philosopher to justify revolution.

“From Suffering to Injustice”

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The notion of justice has two meanings: a moral sense of what is just, and a legal comprehension of what is right. The first one is Islamic political experience. I would also try to show the interest of such an approach for modern political thought in order to reconcile Arab world with a past that was more universal and cosmopolitical than commonly admitted, and where a non-religious understanding of the power was effective, which is, in my opinion, a duty, in these hours of constitutional rewriting in Tunisia.

“Wittgenstein, Social Courage, and Justice”

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The later Wittgenstein has been known for his contribution to virtue ethics. But his Philosophical Investigations can also be read as supporting a more positive conception of justice that goes beyond mere reciprocity and entitlement. The method of language games provides an alternative account of empathy and caring for others that offers advantages over rule-based accounts of justice. I explain how this is the case for the phenomena Gerd Meyer calls 'social courage' and how such cases of caring for others help advance the concerns of social justice.

## Session 5: Concepts of Justice and Fairness (Part 2)

“Reflections on the Notion of Dignity”

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In my lecture, I will try to contribute a response to the following question: is it possible to rethink the notion of human dignity in light of the changes the Arab world has known without taking account its rootedness in lived experienced? Dignity has well been defined as an absolute and intrinsic human value, which must be considered - following Kant's expression - as an end in itself and never as a means. But the notion of dignity is no less ambiguous. To deal with this concept from a dynamic point of view and to approach it on the basis of its real manifestations such as the demands of justice, equity, and civil rights would allow us, perhaps, to define what human dignity is.

## “Universalism, Democracy and Justice”

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There is an increasing trend to see justice in a monologic perspective. The individual is at the centre of concepts of justice. While principles such as punishment, redress, rehabilitation and safety of society are some of the key factors that determine a justice system, cultural norms rarely if ever figure in the system of justice. Where it is, the system of justice remains a regional variation in need of standardisation rather than an acknowledged system suited to the culture of the region. For instance whereas revenge and appropriate punishment to satisfy the angst of the victim is strong in some systems, the culture of forgiveness and rehabilitation form the fundamental principles in other societies. Yet in some societies, material compensation rather than incarceration of the offender redeems the victim. Even on a bigger scale, different communities react differently to major conflicts. In some regions such as Europe, conflict leads to separation and boundaries while in some parts of Africa, communities get over conflict and move on to coexist in the same territory. The principles of Justice therefore cannot be treated from a universally normative perspective but a diversity of concepts that serve the same purpose but with different outcomes and different ethics.

## “Fair Opportunity and Justice in Surrogacy”

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It can be said that everyone equally has the right to have children. However, the means for exercising that right can be restricted. For example, surrogacy is not prohibited by a formal law but it is not be encouraged positively in Japan. The Japanese Society for Obstetrics and Gynecology stated that surrogacy should be prohibited, and will exclude doctors who offer it from membership of the association.

Today, the possible way of surrogacy in Japan is to find a clinic which offers surrogacy against the society's opinion. In fact, an obstetrician disclosed that he has provided surrogacy services in his clinic. There are cases where an infertile daughter asked her mother to give birth to the daughter's biological child. These inter-family cases can prevent some troubles, especially money issues. However, many other persons would like to use services of non-family members. Another method of surrogacy is to access tourism to a foreign country which admits surrogacy legally or, at least, does not regard it as illegal. While in the past the United States was the common surrogacy destination among the Japanese, now surrogacy tourism to India and Thailand is increasing. In both countries some troubles have occurred, and draft laws are being prepared for the practical problems of surrogacy.

The usage of surrogacy by foreigners in these countries makes us reflect on fair opportunities to surrogacy. Who may access the surrogacy: women with medical indications or every couple without it, including same-sex couples? When some couples try to access surrogacy in Thailand

or India because it is illegal in their home country, should their decisions be respected in order to secure a fair opportunity? These problems are related to substantive justice, that is, it is to ask what practice serves justice. On the other hand, Thailand and India are going to legalize surrogacy and make clear regulations and those approaches can be seen to secure the fairness in the surrogacy process, that is, it is related to procedural justice in surrogacy.

“Human Dignity and Justice are Promoted through Making the Failure of a State to Provide Humanitarian Assistance During Times of Natural Disasters an International Crime”

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Human death and suffering are ultimate expressions of insults to the dignity of life when caused by violence. Similarly, when a State intentionally withholds humanitarian assistance from its people, or any people afflicted during times of a natural disaster, not only is there a degradation of human life and dignity, but also such intentional acts should be recognized as both a failure of a State’s responsibility to protect its people and a crime against humanity.

Examples of such intentional neglect for human life and dignity by a State are not uncommon. For instance, in May of 2008, Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar and devastated the Irrawaddy Delta. The government of Myanmar imposed significant restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid. As a result of both the cyclone and the intentional failure of the Myanmar’s government to respond, 2.4 million people were adversely affected and an estimated 130,000 people died or were reported missing.

Our presentation addresses both the status of humanitarian intervention and the basis of the ‘responsibility to protect’ in customary international law. We also discuss pertinent aspects of the United Nations Charter, principles of humanitarian law and international law, humanitarian intervention in customary international law, and crimes against humanity as defined by Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. We conclude by calling for a recognition of a State’s intentional failure to provide humanitarian assistance during times of natural disasters as an international crime – in this way human life and dignity may be preserved and justice may be achieved.

“Communication and Human Dignity”

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This will be a reflection on two opposing perspectives which currently give rise to the problematic of communication: the first perspective has a negative bearing, and aims to be a transmission of violence, of exploitation, and of practices of subjugating individuals. The second perspective, which has a positive bearing, presupposes the universality of the being human as an ethico-philosophical value acting and orienting the exchange of ideas and cultural practices (in

the most general sense of culture). In the first perspective, we will have to deal with strategies of war. In the second, we will have to work on strategies of resistance. In terms of communication, is it a matter of an intrinsically ambivalent characteristic? How would it be possible for philosophy to present itself as a form of resistance as well as a transmission of human “living well in harmony”?

“Ethical Issues of Food Rationing: Typhoon Pedring and Quiel Experience”

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The Philippines was hit by Typhoon Pedring (international name Nesat) on September 27 and Typhoon Quiel (international name Nalgae) on October 1. Massive flooding ravaged many areas of the country and put many people’s lives at risk. The incident also triggered various responses from the different sectors including distributing food rations to the affected communities. This paper looks at the actions done by local government units and agencies, international institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and private institutions regarding food rations and examine these actions based on the following lenses: a) Sphere Minimum Standards in disaster response relating to Food Security, Nutrition and Food Aid; b) Rights-based approach; c) Ethics approach; and d) perspectives of the affected people by conducting key informant interview together with preliminary survey on food security, access to food and adequacy of food rations that were given as food aid.

“Applications of John Rawls' Theory of Justice as Fairness in Philippine Society”

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The paper is an attempt to show possible practical applications of John Rawls' Theory of Justice in the macro- and microcosm of Philippine Society. An exposition on the Theory of Justice will be given focus through the two principles of justice, the difference principle, the original position and veil of ignorance and concerns on overlapping consensus which eventually leads to Rawls' Political Liberalism.

At the outset Rawls' idea of justice seems too ideal in a developing democracy and economically developing nation state such as the Philippines, but it is argued in this paper that even as a young democracy and nation state, the Philippine Society already qualifies as an example of a well ordered society, which serves as a ground and impetus for the effective justification and application of Rawls' idea of justice. It should be pointed out that Rawls' Theory of Justice is politically grounded and does not really work on some metaphysical presuppositions. The socio-economic-political dynamics found in Philippine Society can be used as a test case on the practical side of Rawls' theory.

Applications of the said theory include the problems of inequality, distribution of public goods, protection of basic liberties and rights, the role of the state in a welfare state system/society and the appropriations of justice as realized in the whole society in general and by the individual in particular.

Through these practical applications, the paper hopes to clarify the common misconception that Rawls' Theory of Justice will only work and is applicable only to mature democracies and highly industrialized nation states. While we may find some of Rawls' concepts quite too ideal in some cases, by contextualizing the said principles to local scenarios such as possible convergences of said principles with some cases/examples drawn from the Philippine experience, we hope to bridge the said gap.

THURSDAY 17th November

Session 6: Dialogue, Mutual Understanding, and Culture of Peace: Philosophy among Youth  
“Evaluation Model of Democratic Citizenship Education”

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When we try to apply a democratic citizenship education program based on philosophy at school they ask? about evaluation method? This is an attempt to reply for such question.

During 65 years democracy has been taught in Korea which was a non democratic society. Now we have achieved economic and political development within relatively short time.. If we say it is case of succeed, what is the reason? Can we make evaluation model? what are the evaluation criteria? This question can go to two different dimension one is to policy level the other is curriculum level. First 25 years DCE was contents centered one , second 30years it was focused on virtues diligence , self help and cooperation. Recent 10 years It was focused on skills.

Democracy is a way of life. Strong democracy means citizens have a ability to make a good judgment. Doing philosophy or higher order thinking skill is the necessary to make good judgment. We need skills to understand knowledge of democracy, to practice it as reflective way, skills to communicate and to solve problem reasonably.

“Philosophy for Youth: In Search of Kinship between Cultures”

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This paper intends to discuss the potentials of teaching philosophy for students at the International Baccalaureate level in comparison to teaching philosophy for the under-graduate university level.

The curriculum of the core subject: Theory of knowledge, will be discussed and the objectives will be evaluated, particularly those related to critical thinking, reasoning and above all the concept "Truth and Relativism".

Teaching through the limited capabilities of our different ways of knowledge and venturing through the vast areas of knowledge available will no doubt cast shadows over our relative values, limited knowledge and the problematic justifications needed to upgrade our beliefs into potential knowledge that might be called "truth", at least for the time being!

Furthermore, teaching youth how judgments must be postponed as we move on from one profound truth to another and from one paradigm into a new different paradigm, involves introducing critical thinking, which eventually enhances inter-cultural dialogue on the basis that truth is relative and thus advocating dialogue between two profound truths and opening the way to a philosophy of hope!!

The IB guide puts the aim of the program as follows: "The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet help to create a better and more peaceful world". These aims will be critically investigated in order to uncover the impediments as investigated by Rorty.

On the other hand, under-graduate university courses in philosophy are usually short and intensive in such a way that not much time is allocated to teach critical thinking or to put the different pieces together, which is vital to conceive shifts in paradigms and perceive the historical development of human thoughts in a collective dimension.

Finally, we hope that lessons can be learnt from this comparative study to direct teaching philosophy at all levels of education.

“Matching Aims to Methods in Philosophy with Youth”

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The value of engaging young people in philosophy depends upon how we teach it. If our aim is to encourage dialogue, mutual understanding and a culture of peace, then we need to employ dialogue and other teaching strategies that develop mutual understanding and peaceful ways of dealing with differences and disagreements. This presentation shows how collaborative and inquiry-based teaching and learning can harness the spirit of philosophy to achieve these ends. It will be illustrated by examples from the classroom.

“Notes on the Theme of Child Dignity”

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I understand by the word “Child”, the period between birth and adolescence , prior to the period of maturation. It is characterized by changes, both among the child himself and in his immediate environment.

We can sum up all the human rights in a crucial one, which is the right for dignity. We can also notice that the word dignity was mentioned 8 times in the United Nations convention on the rights of the child of 1989.

In the child dignity teaching, the field model, as the American philosopher John Dewey clarified in his famous book Democracy and Education, is better than advice.

Educating children on dignity is not confined with a special stage of childhood. It rather starts since the child’s birth and continues up to the adolescence stage. It’s a mistake to assume that schools and preschool’s institutions are the only responsible for forging the child’s dignity, since all the surrounding elements of the child’s environment are concerned with this type of education. Nowadays our ministry of education has signed up a treaty with the Arabic institute of human rights in 19th of October 2011 , by which the ministry will reform all the primary school programs to introduce the human rights awareness among the children.

Personally, I have created my own way of initialing the child how to acquire his dignity. It consists on providing some literal writings. However, this way won’t be successful unless democracy takes place in our society.

“Just War in the Arab Philosophical Tradition”

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The classical Arabic philosophical conception of “just war” has long suffered a double marginalisation: on the one hand, western philosophical literature dedicated to this theme has long been neglected. One can keep on tracing the history of this concept—from St. Augustine to Richard Walzer—while concealing the contribution of Arabic philosophers. On the other hand, even when it happens that western specialists deal with this theme in Arabic tradition, they focus on texts bearing on Islamic Jurisprudence (theology of “Jihad” and ethics of war). The purpose of this paper—which aims to be analytical and critical—is to evaluate this contribution, and this from two angles: 1. The thematization of the theme of just war in classical Arabic philosophy (Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Averroes)—the fundamental texts and their limits; 2. The problematization of the theme: the conception the “just war”—acknowledged from “the Virtuous City” to “the Perverted Cities” in the name of proper values—being too idealist and absolutist, does it not risk being at fault by its lack of realism and making us reflect of some current wars which are being waged by the “good side” and the “bad side”.

“Al-Andalus as a Bridge of Knowledge from Europe to Asia”

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Al-Andalus was the Islamic socio-political reality established in the Iberian Peninsula from 711 to 1492. As an European Islamic culture, Andalusian Civilization developed singular qualities as bridge between the East and the West. Classical knowledge, philosophy and science were translated into Arab language, and through al-Andalus this heritage reached Christian Europe to lead the Renaissance. At the same time, al-Andalus had a deep impact in the commercial route connecting both edge of the Islamic world, from the Iberian Peninsula to China, and it is possible to speak about Muslim Iberian presence in the Far East (even in the Philippines) before the arrival of the Christian Iberians, i.e., before Magellan. Nowadays, the concept of al-Andalus has been use by modern thinkers and politicians to develop modern social programs, as Malaysia proves. In sum, we will describe the importance of al-Andalus as a bridge of knowledge between nations from the Medieval Era to the present, from Europe to Asia.

#### Session 7: Environmental Justice and Future Generations

“Is Environmental Justice Possible?”

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When perceiving environmental agendas, such as the "Ozone Layer" depletion, and how it has been tackled successfully since the Montreal Protocol 1987, one wonders why the international community succeeded in preserving the Ozone layer, through reducing and then eliminating the ozone depleting substances, such as chlorofluorocarbons, yet, the issue of Global Warming is still shifting from a discussion over reducing Green House Gases into adaptational measures, particularly after the Copenhagen Summit 2009 (Cop 15).

We think that tackling such a question: "Is Environmental Justice possibly?" would require discussing how far international forums recommendations over the environment, in its advisory form, has been practiced? Why has it failed, we must ask too? Where did it succeed and how? What makes an act ethical and compulsory at the same time? How can different nations of contradictory conceptions over environmental issues get closer together to make a compromise? Is this possible in a world controlled by trans-border multi-national cartels?

The outcome of this discussion will not prescribe a solution for environmental integrity, it will only attempt to answer the question whether environmental Justice is possible by discussing the different criteria that formulate an impediment to environmental Justice.

“Linear and cyclical models of Energy Production and the problem of Distributive Justice”

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This paper will show that the inefficiencies of linear energy production lines are inherent in the mass production technologies of energy and that a more efficient model are now being made available from cyclical patterns of production that imitate the laws of nature. These new technologies, moreover, can be produced and consumed at the local level and therefore will not be susceptible to the inefficiencies of mass production. They also empower consumers instead of becoming dependent on capital-intensive energy production technologies. Examples from the Asia-Pacific Region will be cited.

“Environmental Justice: Importance of Integration and Assimilation”

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Every inhabitant of the planet earth has the right to a healthy environment. This is reflected in the environmental justice movement that has its emphasis on public health, toxic exposure, and related issues in the context of race and class discriminations. This movement is now well ensconced in USA and other industrialized nations. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has defined Environmental Justice as “...the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EPA has this goal for all communities and persons across this Nation. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.” The concept of environmental justice has mostly revolved round issues like exposure to and/or inadequate protection from toxic, xenobiotic substances of poor citizens, ‘blue collar’ workers in mines and industries, and other similar groups. As the principle of justice takes under its arm the ‘underdogs’ of the society, the question arises whether the other ‘underdogs’, i.e., the non-human components of the environment should also come within its ambit, thereby integrating the much championed ‘human rights’ approach with that of ‘ecological rights’ as well. Intricately linked with this is the spread of environmental awareness and education among children and youth, especially in biodiversity-rich areas of the south and among vulnerable sections such as plantation labour exposed to pesticides and other agrochemicals; urban workers exposed to noise pollution; communities not having access to safe drinking water and basic healthcare; and communities losing their traditional knowledge and ecocentric culture. This paper attempts to provide the ecological basis of as well as the philosophical ‘defense’ for a more inclusive premise of environmental justice in order to make this concept less overtly anthropocentric and consequently more ‘just’.

“Between Freedom and Tradition: Inter-Generational Conflict in Buddhist Ethics”

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This paper offers an analysis of the discussion of the Buddha on the question of inter-generational relationship, basically between father and son. It bases its analysis on two main suttas, namely the Agganna Sutta and the Sigalaka Sutta. It argues that the two young Brahmins in the Agganna Sutta represent a situation where the young aspire to make a radical choice against their tradition. While the Brahmin son in Sigalaka Sutta represents a case when the son aspires to strictly follow the tradition of his father. After discussing the two cases, this paper argues for a “middle path” approach to the question of inter-generational conflict in Buddhist ethics by proposing that the Buddha offers a replacement of cosmological narrative to foster new moral imagination for the two young Brahmins, while offering a replacement of rituals with moral actions for Sigalaka. These two ways of “replacement” indicate a middle-path of substituting new “content” or “meaning” of a choice or an action while keeping the “symbolic modes of expression” of both the creation myth in the first case and of the ritual of six directions in the latter.

#### Session 8: Philosophical Dialogues for Shaping the Future of Society

“Bioethics is Love of Life”

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“Reflections”

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#### **DRAFT STATEMENT**