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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

COUNTERING VIOLENCE WITH DIALOGUE

GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING MODULE:
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND
MULTI-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

TPO Foundation Sarajevo
Medica Zenica

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COUNTERING VIOLENCE WITH *DIALOGUE*

Gender-based violence and multi-religious dialogue

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Foreword

The Dialogue Against Violence training course originated as part of the “Gender-based Violence and Multi-religious Dialogue” project jointly implemented by the TPO Foundation and Medica Zenica with the support of UN Women. The project was conceived and designed to build on the activities begun by the TPO Foundation in 2008 to promote the CEDAW Convention and UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. After successfully concluding a training seminar entitled “Modification of Cultural Behaviour Patterns of Women and Men in B-H” in 2009, attended by representatives of nine NGOs from B-H, TPO and Medica Zenica decided to continue this type of training, with particular reference to gender-based violence and multi-religious dialogue.

Since women are largely excluded from multi-religious dialogue and peace building in official projects of the state and religious communities, our intention was to draw on the potential and capacity developed by NGOs in B-H since the war, and to strengthen them by means of further training to develop the skills needed to overcome stereotypical cultural behaviour patterns and predetermined gender roles.

This training package is innovative in both content and methodology, analyzing gender-based violence issues and multi-religious dialogue on a comparative, interdisciplinary and gender-sensitive basis. The comparative approach to the gender perspectives of the monotheistic religious heritage of Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity and Islam provides a clearer insight into the arguments and views of universalists and cultural relativists concerning women’s rights, as well as revealing the similarities and differences of these three religious traditions as they define gender policy in their own discourse.

Though we live in a secular society in B-H, religion plays an important part in defining identity and gender relations, and it is vital therefore to include a religious perspective in every area of civil society, taking advantage of the positive potential and arguments of the monotheistic faiths.

Our aim with this type of training is to conduct a dialogue between the religious and the secular, the faith-based and the civil, the theistic and the atheistic, so as to show that it is possible to change people’s awareness of and views on gender-based violence, which is affecting every stratum of society and undermining the sound foundations of family life and society as a whole.

We hope that this training course and the accompanying material will give women in local non-governmental organizations and religious communities greater capacity to respond to the challenges of the context in which we live and the problems faced by the women, children and even men affected by violence.

After completing the training course/seminars, participants will continue working in their own local communities to educate as many women and men as possible on issues of peace, reconciliation, non-violence and dialogue, as vital prerequisites for a life without violence.

We should like to take this opportunity to thank our co-workers, Dr. Milica Bakić-Hayden, Dr. Jadranka Rebeka Anić, Marija Grujić MSc, and Alen Kristić MSc, who worked with us on developing the training course. We are particularly grateful to Marija Grujić MSc, who prepared the workshops for the texts on peace, non-violence and multi-religious dialogue.

Our thanks also go to UN Women for supporting this project, and to the non-governmental organizations in B-H who are helping to publicize and implement the CEDAW Convention and UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

We should like to make it clear that the ideas and views expressed in this book do not reflect the official views of UN Women.

Sarajevo-Zenica, September 2011

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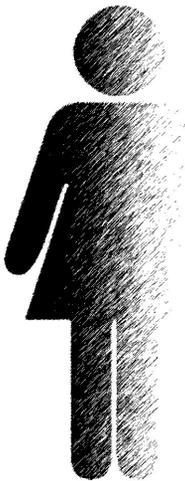
GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE

PART I

Violence¹ based on sex/gender²

Gender-based violence

To address the subject of **violence based on sex/gender** properly, we must understand terms such as sex, gender, gender identity, gender roles and stereotypes. We begin, therefore, with a brief explanation of these terms:



Sex:

Sex is a biological and anatomical determinant identifying a person as female or male (chromosomes, hormones, genital organs). Our sex is attributed to each of us at birth on the basis of the outward appearance of the genitalia. When a child is born, the doctor will usually say, “it’s a girl” or “it’s a boy,” and as children grow up, their parents, school and the community in which they live teach them to be a girl or a boy.

Gender:

Gender refers to the socially, culturally and historically conditioned and learned differences between men and women, such as their appearance, the clothes and adornment they wear, and their role and behaviour. It is what we learn throughout our lives and what dictates our behaviour, and it is acquired by means of our upbringing and education in the family, at kindergarten and school, and in the community. This shapes the gender roles on the basis of which we are said to be male or female.

Gender identity:

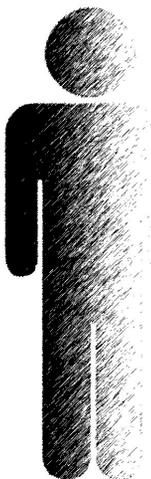
Gender identity is our subjective sense of belonging to a gender category, or in other words, the way we identify ourselves as female, male, or as neither of these. This learned behaviour is our gender identity and determines our gender role.

Gender roles:

Gender roles consist of the expectations, beliefs and behaviours that a particular society or cultural group considers appropriate for males and females on the basis of their biological sex. These roles are learned from our parents in the family, from our peers and teachers at school, from customs, from religion, from the media and so on.

Stereotypes:

Stereotypes are simplistic and often distorted mental images. Stereotypes associated with the **male sex** include the following characteristics: men are physically strong, have short hair, are independent and self-reliant, take risks, and are competitive, ambitious, aggressive and insensitive. The **female sex**, on the other hand, is described by such characteristics as emotional, talkative, gentle, passive, physically attractive, and needing to have children and care for the family.



¹ UN General Assembly Resolution no. 48/104 of 20 December 1993 defines “violence against women” as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

² “Zajedno mijenjamo loše navike” Medica Zenica, April 2007.

It is common in many cultures and societies to give a different interpretation to the same behaviour when it is performed by men or by women. This tells us that society still thinks in stereotypes. The moment we become aware of stereotypes, however, we free ourselves from stereotypical thinking.

► **Do you think that men** are physically strong, have short hair, are independent and self-reliant, take risks, and are competitive, ambitious, aggressive and insensitive...?

► **And that women** are emotional, talkative, gentle, passive, physically attractive, and need to have children and care for the family...?

If you do – get rid of STEREOTYPES, which are often simplistic, distorted mental images.

Reliance on stereotypes and the abuse of gender roles undermines equality between the sexes, and leads to violence.

Gender-based violence is any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms in public or in private life.

Gender-based violence encompasses, but is not limited to:

- violence within the family or home (domestic violence);
- violence within the general community;
- violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, including state-authorized bodies and individuals;
- sex-based violence in the event of armed conflict..

Other definitions of gender-based and other specific kinds of violence can be found in Appendix 1.³

Examples of violence against women throughout the life cycle⁴

PHASE	TYPE OF VIOLENCE
PRE-BIRTH	Sex-selective abortion; effects of battering during pregnancy on birth outcomes.
INFANCY	Female infanticide; physical, sexual and psychological abuse.
GIRLHOOD	Child marriage; genital mutilation; physical, sexual and psychological abuse; incest; child prostitution and pornography.
ADOLESCENCE AND ADULTHOOD	Dating and courtship violence (e.g. date rape); economically-coerced sex (e.g. schoolgirls having sex with “sugar daddies” in return for school fees); incest; sexual abuse in the workplace; rape; sexual harassment; forced prostitution and pornography; trafficking in women; partner violence; marital rape; dowry misuse and murders; partner homicide; psychological abuse; abuse of women with disabilities; forced pregnancy.
ELDERLY	Forced “suicide” or homicide of women for economic reasons; sexual, physical and psychological abuse.

³ “Prekogranična saradnja u sprečavanju nasilja nad ženama i djecom”, Medica Zenica, Zenica, December 2008.

⁴ “Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls,” WHO, FRH/WHD/97.8, quoted in Innocenti Digest (no. 6, June 2000, p. 3): Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls, UNICEF: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/digest6e.pdf>

Preconceptions about violence against women

Preconceptions are accepted assertions, assumptions or teachings about things and relationships that are rarely based on fact, but have a powerful impact on our behaviour. They provide a simplistic explanation for complex social phenomena and, if repeated often enough, come to be taken as fact.

Preconceptions about male violence are intended to maintain and consolidate male domination of women. By breaking down preconceptions about male violence against women, we are helping to combat such violence.

True or false ?

True or false? Domestic violence is caused by poverty or lack of education.

X False: Domestic violence occurs throughout society, regardless of whether those involved are rich or poor. It is often easier to conceal violence when people have money and influential friends, but it happens, just the same. There is no evidence to support the notion that uneducated or poor people are more likely to abuse their wives or partners than those who are better-educated or wealthier. The experience of every organization working with women is that male violence is equally present at every level of society, regardless of education or of economic or social status. It happens everywhere. Violence occurs at every stratum of society.

True or false? Alcohol and drug abuse are the main cause of domestic violence.

X False: Though alcohol and drugs are often associated with domestic violence, they are not the cause. As a rule, men who drink and batter their wives do not beat up people in the street, or their parents or boss – they direct their violence only against their wives. Men who batter women usually go on doing so even if they stop drinking. A wife-beater may use alcohol as an excuse for his violence, or may be unaware when intoxicated of the level of violence he is resorting to, but alcohol is certainly not the cause of violence. More than 70% of cases of violence are committed by men who are not under the influence of alcohol. In general terms, alcohol is not the cause of violence, but it may make it worse. Domestic violence and substance abuse should be seen and treated as separate issues.

True or false? Violent men are mentally ill.

X False: Statistics show that the percentage of violent men who are mentally ill is the same as the percentage of mental illness in the population as a whole. Most violent men function well in the workplace and the community. This preconception is designed to see violence as an individual deviation that absolves the abuser of responsibility. Mental illness is not a precondition for violence.

True or false? A battered woman has many legitimate reasons for staying in the relationship.

✓ True: There are many social, economic and cultural reasons for a woman to stay in an abusive relationship:

- she has nowhere else to go
- she has no means of maintaining herself and her children
- she is ashamed of being battered
- she is afraid that friends, family and the community will blame her for the abuse
- emotional or religious reasons
- fear that the abuser will carry out his threats and harm her, himself, the children, friends or family members
- a battered woman is at risk of suffering a severe or even fatal attack if she tries to leave, and she is the only person who can judge the right moment to do so.

True or false? A battered woman leaves her husband several times.

✓ **True:** Contrary to domestic violence theories, which see battered women as helpless, most women in such relationships routinely leave their husbands or partners several times, consciously doing so in order to diminish the level of violence against them and their children.

True or false? Women like it rough.

✗ **False:** Women do not like it rough, they do not enjoy it, and they do not want it. Patriarchal thinking has engendered a preconception about the “desirable” level of rough behaviour by men and about women who “like it rough.” **Women do not like it rough.**

True or false? A man has the right to hit his wife from time to time.

✗ **False:** The patriarchal division of marital roles gives men greater power and more rights. Some men think that gives them the right to beat their wives. **Marriage is not a permit to abuse. No one has the right to abuse another.**

True or false? It is a woman’s lot to keep quiet and endure.

✗ **False:** Society often puts pressure on women to stay married, even when they are victims of extreme violence. Social pressures often mean that a woman does not have the right to choose whether to be married, to live with a partner, or to remain single. Women are free beings, and are not required to “shut up and put up;” they have the right to choose, and do not have to keep quiet and put up with their lot.

True or false? As many men as women are victims of domestic violence.

✗ **False:** Research shows that women are victims of domestic violence in 95% of cases. Women do resort to violence to some extent, but mainly in self-defence. Reports of violence against men are usually exaggerated; the abuser often accuses his partner of violence to detract from his own responsibility. In addition, men who are victims of domestic violence have more opportunities to leave than do women.

True or false? Everyone knows someone who is a victim of domestic violence.

✓ **True:** We all know such victims. World-wide, between a quarter and a half of women experience violence in intimate relationships. Victims of domestic violence may not talk about it, out of shame, fear of being blamed, or the risk of revenge at the hands of the abuser.

True or false? Men who abuse women are bullies because they cannot control their anger and frustration.

✗ **False:** Domestic violence is deliberate, and those who resort to it do not do so because they lose control. Their violence is directed against certain people at a certain time and place. Regardless of how angry they are, they do not attack people in the street. They have their own internal rules of violent behaviour. They usually choose to abuse their partner only when they are alone, and generally take care not to leave any visible marks of violence on her. They also choose their tactics with care – some smash up property, some rely on threats of violence, and some threaten the children. In fact, studies show that the angrier they become, the more controlled they are.

True or false? Domestic violence is a problem, but only in remote rural areas.

✗ **False:** Domestic violence has been recorded in both rural and urban areas. It is a problem everywhere.

True or false? Violence is a personal or private problem for the wife or family.

X False: Family relations are seen as a private matter, in which one should not interfere. When a woman is exposed to violence, it is no longer her own personal problem, since it impacts on society. She is absent from work more often, is less able to perform her professional and social duties effectively, falls ill more often and more easily, puts a greater burden on various social funds, and so on. In addition, children who grew up in a violent family pass it on to their own families, perpetuating the cycle. Violence is a serious social problem.

True or false? The woman is to blame for violence; she “asked for it.”

X False: People often think that women provoke violence by their behaviour or what they say, and have only themselves to blame for the consequences. To blame women for the violence they have suffered is to protect the abusers, who think it gives them the right and the power to continue their violent behaviour. The abuser alone is responsible for the violence.

True or false? A bit of violence is good for a marriage.

X False: This preconception finds expression in the proverb “a woman, a dog and a walnut tree, the more you beat them the better they be.”⁵ A bit of violence (the odd slap) “enriches” marital relations. Women’s experience is that violence causes pain, estrangement and hatred between spouses/partners. Violence is part of a complex pattern of power and control in the relationship.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To educate, inform and raise participants’ awareness of gender-based violence in the family and community through theory modules and practice</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up – breaking the ice • Presentation-lecture • Spontaneous discussion • Group work • Plenary discussion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-based violence • Preconceptions about violence against women <p>Duration: 215 min.</p>

► **Exercise:** Gender-based violence (10 min.)



Before beginning the module dealing with theories of gender-based violence, the trainer asks participants to brainstorm around their notions of sex and gender, and writes down their answers on a flipchart.

The trainer then summarizes their notions of sex and gender and begins the introductory session.

► **Presentation:** Gender-based violence (45 min.)

► **Exercise:** Sex and gender – quiz (40 min.)



Work steps:

- ask participants whether they see the difference between sex and gender
- invite participants to write down numbers 1 to 10 on a sheet of paper

5 Translator’s note: the saying in the original text translates literally as “he who loves, beats”

- the workshop leader will ask the quiz questions (**appendix 2**) and invite participants to write S (sex) or G (gender) against each number, as appropriate. No discussion on the statements to begin while they are being read out
- after reading out each statement, the workshop leader discusses the group's responses to each one

Focus the discussion on the following questions:



- what surprised you?
- do the statements suggest that gender is innate or learned?
- are gender roles different in different societies, cultures and historical periods?
- do age, race and class determinate our gender roles?
- do women experience power and pressure differently in each country?
- have you learned to distinguish between sex and gender?

► **Exercise: Gender boxes (55 min.)**



Work steps:

- begin by agreeing definitions with the group: sex, gender, gender identity and gender roles
- write them down on paper and put them where everyone can see them
- the leader then asks the group what it means to "be feminine" in our society, what kind of messages girls should receive (from parents, the media, school, and their peers), how they should behave, how they should look and what they should do to fit the social definition of femininity. Write down the answers in the middle of one side of a large sheet of paper (using a felt-tip pen)
- ask the group what it means to "be masculine" in our society, what kind of messages boys should receive (from parents, the media, school, and their peers), how they should behave, how they should look and what they should do to fit the social definition of masculinity. Write down the answers in the middle of one side of a large sheet of paper (using a felt-tip pen of a different colour)
- draw a box around each list, and head them "behave like a lady" and "be a man"
- discuss with the group what the boxes represent, how they differ, and whether some of the messages in the box contradict each other
- ask the group whether all women and girls belong in the box headed "behave like a lady." Do all women and girls always belong entirely within the box; in what ways (relating to appearance, behaviour, activities) do some women and girls put themselves outside the box? Write down the answers using a felt-tip pen of a different colour at the top and bottom of the sheet of paper with the "behave like a lady" box
- ask the group in what ways some youths and men (relating to appearance, behaviour, activities) put themselves outside the "be a man" box. Write down the answers using a felt-tip pen of a different colour at the top and bottom of the sheet of paper with the "be a man" box
- ask the group what happens to girls and women who don't fit in the box. What names do people call them, what do they say about them, and what are the physical things (pressures) on girls and women that are seen as outside the "behave like a lady" box? Write down the answers in black between the box and the edges of the paper. You can call this "black list" "verbal and physical abuse"
- do the same for youths and men in relation to the "be a man" box
- discuss with the group what it is like to be in the "man's" or the "woman's" box, or not to be in either.

► **Presentation: Preconceptions and reality (30 min.)**

► **Exercise: Preconceptions and reality (45 min.)**



Work steps:

- make cards with the questions about gender-based/sex-based preconceptions and reality
- the trainer splits the participants into small groups
- the trainer asks participants to choose cards with the questions about preconceptions and reality
- the trainer reminds members of the small groups to be pro-active, actively listening, discussing and keeping track of the process, and to choose a rapporteur to present the group's work at the plenary session
- participants discuss the questions on the cards they picked, one after another, putting their own views and thoughts
- after group work, continue in plenary, with the trainer asking the questions, one after another, and the group rapporteurs responding by presenting the views of the group on each question. When all the rapporteurs have finished with the first question, the trainer reads the answer with an explanation, and then moves on to the next question and so on
- if the trainer runs out of time to take the groups one after another in the exercise on preconceptions and reality, it can be done more simply by the trainer asking the questions, the participants responding as a group, and the trainer pointing to the answer with explanation, or call on participants to read out the explanation.

Conclusion: Summarize Module 1 on gender-based violence and briefly introduce the next steps (15 min.)

APPENDICES

1. Definitions of gender-based and other specific types of violence

The following definitions of violence against women and of specific types of violence are given in the Strategy for Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence in B-H:

► **Violence against women** is any act based on sex or gender that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering for a woman, including threats of such acts, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms in public or in private life.

► **Domestic violence** is any kind of physical, sexual, psychological (emotional) or financial violence posing a threat to the safety of a member of the family or permanent or occasional partner, and/or the use of physical or emotional force or the threat of physical force, including sexual assault, within the family or household. It includes child abuse, incest, spousal battery and the sexual or other abuse of a member of the household.

► **Gender-based violence** is any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms based on the equality of the sexes in public or in private life, including human trafficking for forced labour and restrictions on or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, including rape, spousal battery, sexual abuse, incest and paedophilia.

► **Sexual assault** is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting.

► **Sexual harassment** is any verbal or physical conduct or psychological pressure of a sexual

nature the purpose or result of which is to undermine the dignity of the person or to create an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening or similar situation, motivated by belonging to a different sex or being of different sexual orientation, and constituting for the person affected unwelcome physical, verbal, suggestive or other such behaviour.

► **The B-H Gender Action Plan defines violence as follows:**

Violence means “any act of violence based on sex that results in, or could result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering for a woman”.

► **The Gender Action Plan further states:**

Since much violence occurs within the family, it is important to note that from this perspective, violence means “any form of control or domination that threatens or harms the physical or moral integrity of the woman within the family”. (Lukić, 1997)

► **The Strategy Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for the Federation of B-H gives the following simple definition of domestic violence:** *Violence, which includes both violence within the immediate family and violence by relatives, means anything done by one person to another without the latter's agreement*

► **The definition of domestic violence in the Action Plan Against Violence in Republika Srpska is as follows:**

Domestic violence and human trafficking are among the most destructive forms of violence of a markedly gender-based nature. Victims of domestic violence may be of any age or sex, and hence either men or women, though the available data indicates that women and children are the most common victims

► **The definition of domestic violence in the Strategy Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for the Federation of B-H is as follows:**

Domestic violence includes all forms of violence within the family, including the possibility that the perpetrators and victims of violence may be anyone not living within the family but who is a member of the household, such as former partners, relatives and so on. The simplest definition of this term would be as follows: Violence, which includes both violence within the immediate family and violence by relatives, means anything done by one person to another without the latter's agreement. This means that any behaviour that undermines, threatens, harms or humiliates another person constitutes violence and is a violation of fundamental human rights.

► **Definition of domestic violence in the laws of B-H:**

Article 3 of the Gender Equality Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of BiH nos. 16/03 and 102/09) and amendments thereto (Official Gazette of BiH no. 102/09) prohibits violence based on sex or gender, and provides the following definition of gender-based violence:

Gender-based violence is any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms in public or in private life.

Gender-based violence includes, but is not limited to:

- violence within the family or home (domestic violence);
- violence within the general community;
- violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, including state-authorized bodies and individuals;
- sex-based violence in the event of armed conflict.

Article 6 of the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act of the Federation of B-H, enacted in 2005, provides the following comprehensive definition of domestic violence:

Domestic violence is any act that inflicts physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, or acts of omission and failure to exercise due care, that prevents a member of the family from exercising her or his rights and freedoms on the basis of equality in public or in private life

► **Article 222 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of B-H, enacted in 2003**, prescribes the penalties for *anyone whose violent, overbearing or inconsiderate behaviour threatens the peace, physical integrity or psychological health of a member of his or her family* (para. 1) *and who perpetrates such act against a member of the family with whom he or she is living in a joint household* (para. 2)

► **Further definitions are to be found in the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska and the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act. Domestic violence is indirectly defined in section on domestic violence of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska 2000**, as follows: *anyone whose violent, overbearing or inconsiderate behaviour threatens the peace, physical integrity or psychological health of a member of his or her family or family group. The Protection Against Domestic Violence Act of Republika Srpska, enacted in 2005, defines domestic violence as any act that inflicts physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, or failure to act or exercise due care, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms in public or in private life*

► **Article 218 para. 1 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District 2003 provides the following indirect definition of the criminal act of domestic violence** as *violent, overbearing or inconsiderate behaviour threatening the peace, physical integrity or psychological health of a member of the family or family group*

At the time this Manual was being compiled, a new protection Against Domestic Violence Bill for the Federation of B-H was before parliament, and is expected to be enacted shortly.

2. Quiz – sex or gender

1. Women, not men, give birth to children (S)
2. Girls are gentle and boys are tough (G)
3. Young men have stronger sexual urges than girls (G)
4. The average old age pension is less for women than for men (G)
5. Women can breast-feed, men can't (S)
6. Girls diet more often than boys (G)
7. Women are fertile from puberty to the menopause, men are fertile from puberty to death (S)
8. In ancient Egypt, men stayed at home and embroidered, while women ran the family. Women, not men, inherited the family property (G)
9. UN statistics show that women earn just 10% of the world's income but perform 67% of the world's working hours (G)
10. A study of 224 different cultures/societies found five in which men did all the cooking and 36 in which women built all the houses (G)

Theories of intimate partner violence

Intimate partner violence is a combination of physical abuse, coercive control and threats against the person with whom the abuser is in an intimate relationship.

Four million women in the USA are victims of this kind of violence, which is the main cause of injuries among women seeking medical care in hospital emergency departments. 25% of all victims of domestic violence were pregnant at the time. The incidence of attempted suicide is six times higher among victims of domestic violence than in the rest of the population.

Historical overview of domestic violence theories

Attempts have been made over the years to define violence by means of various theories of the relationship between the abusers and the victims/survivors⁶ of violence. The most widely accepted domestic violence theory to date is the **power-control theory**, which suggests that the perpetrator abuses his or her power to gain control over the victim; in most cases, the aim is to control the wife or female partner.

People initially believed that **perpetrators of violence are mentally ill**, and that they required medical and psychiatric treatment. Female victims of violence were regarded as masochists, who enjoyed the role of victim. In the absence of hard data, people also believed that domestic violence was not that common. When abusers and victims were subjected to psychological tests, the results showed that they were essentially no different from other people. Furthermore, the medication prescribed for the female victims or the perpetrators of violence did not lead to a reduction in domestic violence.

The theory of mental illness was dropped, and replaced by the **modelling theory**: men who grew up in families where the parents were violent became violent themselves. Though statistics indicate that men who grew up in violent families are seven times more likely to be violent than those who had not witnessed violence, this theory alone is inadequate to explain every manifestation of intimate partner violence.

The **theory that derives domestic violence from relationship conflicts** assumes that both partners in the relationship are equally responsible. The problem with this theory is that it fails to recognize the difference between "being a bad husband or wife" and "being terrorized," and disregards the power inequalities in partnerships. It gave rise to counselling as a way of preventing violence; but when the partners attend counselling sessions together, the victims are not free to say what they really think or to reveal their feelings, out of fear that the abuser will punish them when they get home for having "betrayed" him.

Anger theory explains violence as the abuser's anger and loss of control over his behaviour when enraged. Rage is ascribed to heightened tolerance of anger among boys while growing up, and to their difficulty in expressing other feelings. This theory equates anger and rage, as feelings, with aggression, which is just one possible behavioural response to such feelings. This theory suggests that it is helpful to teach the abuser how to express anger appropriately, and to teach the victim to recognize violence and avoid situations that provoke anger in the abuser. However, this theory overlooks the fact that the victim may also be angry, but express it differently. It also ignores the fact that most people are able to control their anger: data suggest that abusers choose where to

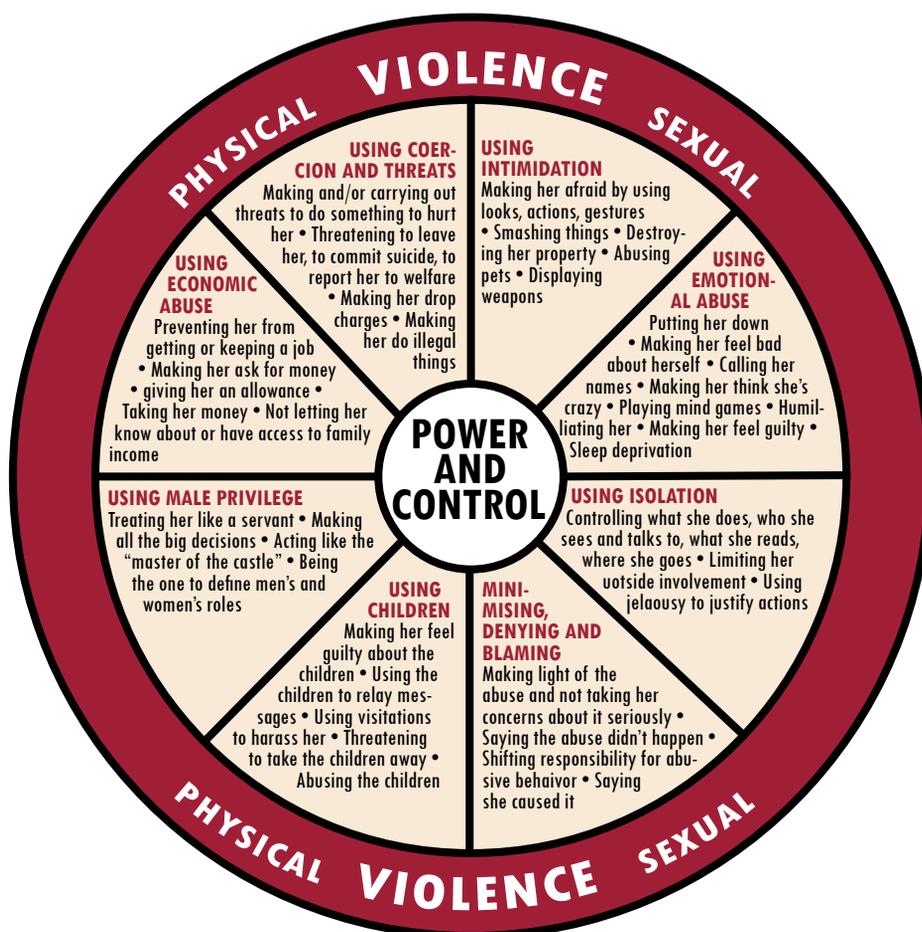
⁶ Treating the woman as a whole, not only as a victim of violence but also as a survivor of violence, enables her to recognize for herself the importance of giving up the passive role of victim in favour of the active role of a survivor who is ready to take control of her own life. This approach to women victims of trauma and violence is integral to the internal documents on the values on which the work of Medica Zenica is based.

batter their victims to minimize the evidence of violence on the victim’s body. Some abusers have spoken of fantasizing that they are killing the victim; but when asked why they did not do so, they reply that they didn’t want to go that far – in other words, they made a choice, and were able to do so. A further argument in support of this is the system by which abusers gradually “installs” violence in the relationship, fully aware that if they took it too far initially, many victims would not stay in the relationship.

The **cycle of abuse theory** claims that tensions build to the point where abusers act out their frustrations against their partner, followed by a honeymoon phase of reconciliation before tensions build up once more to the point of violence, in a cycle of abuse. This theory partly explains why some women stay in an abusive relationship despite the violence. The problem with the theory, however, is that many women never experience the honeymoon phase. Many eruptions of violence are unpredictable. Nor does it explain why the abusers do not act out their violence against others, but only against their partner and other family members.

The **power-control theory** is based on the experience of many women victims of domestic violence who have joined activists campaigning against domestic violence in the USA. A study of a wide range of recorded cases of intimate partner violence reveals the power-based **mechanisms** used by an abuser to **control the victim** and create the basis for installing various types of violence.

The theory relied upon to explain the causes of domestic violence has a direct impact on the measures taken by society to combat violence and the response of social institutions (the police, the judiciary, social services etc.): if the cause of violence is believed to be mental illness, the abuser’s criminal responsibility for his actions is not seen in the same way as if he is regarded as using his superior power to control the victim, deny her her human rights, and commit physical, psychological,



POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

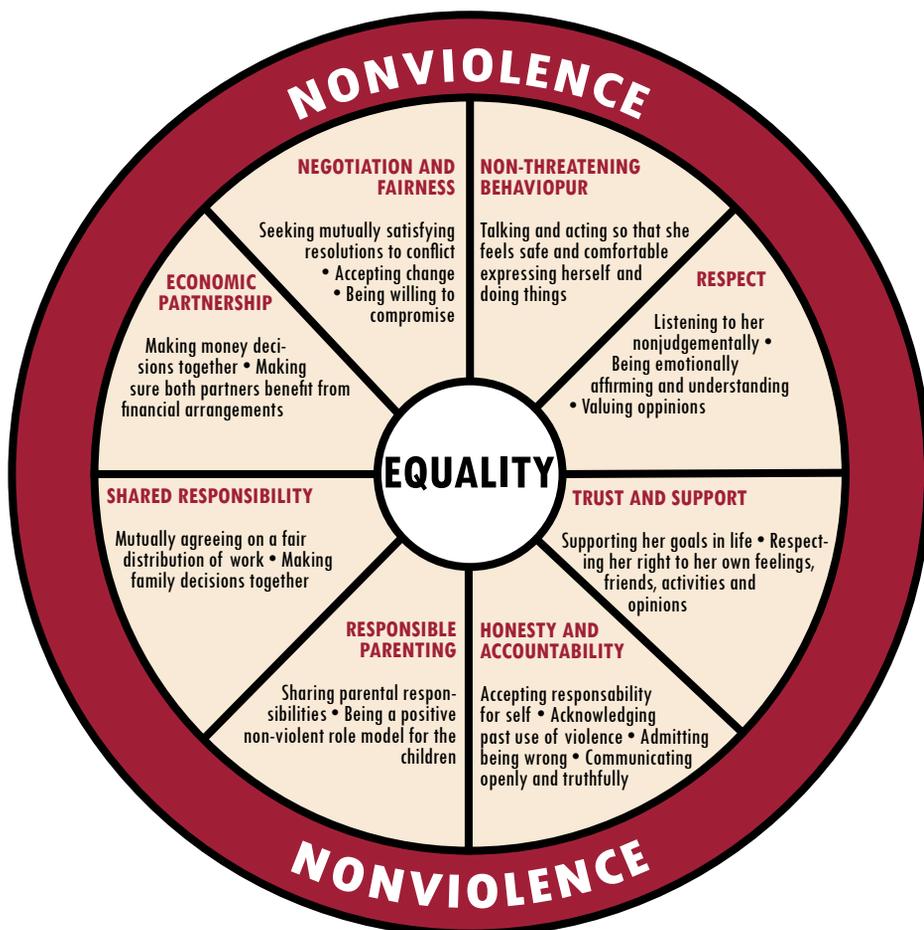
sexual and economic violence against her. Looking to society to respond and find a way to protect its members from the abuse of power by others is in line with the struggle for fundamental human rights for everyone in society, with the struggle for the right to a life free of violence.

The most widely accepted domestic violence theory to date is the power-control theory, which sees abusive relationships as all about power and control. The term “intimate partner violence” relates to a pattern of behaviour occurring over a long period, the purpose of which is control, domination and intimidation. This behaviour includes verbal violence, threats, and psychological, physical and sexual abuse. Each act of violence is not an isolated incident of loss of control, but part of a complex and on-going pattern of behaviour in which violence is an integral part of the dynamics of the relationship.

The abusive partner believes he has the right to absolute power over his wife. The Power and Control Wheel depicts the way power and control are established and shows the situations and behaviour that establish and maintain abusive relationships.

It is important to counter violent relationships, based on power and control, by advocating a non-violent mode of relationships as depicted by the Equality Wheel.

The Equality Wheel provides an alternative view of relationships based upon equality, respect, support, partnership, negotiation, etc. It is the starting point for developing reciprocity and equality in family and partnership relations.



EQUALITY WHEEL

Victims/survivors of violence and the perpetrator of violence

Is there a specific victim profile?

There is no specific victim profile. In 95% of cases, the victims are women, young or old, married or single, employed or unemployed, educated or uneducated, rich or poor, white or black. Any woman or girl can be a potential victim of violence. They are usually characterized by a traditional view of the division of gender roles in the family and by low self-esteem and self-confidence; they often have a history of domestic violence, and believe the preconceptions about violent relationships.

Children are also often victims of violence.

Children who are victims of domestic violence, or who witness it, internalize a model of violent behaviour as they grow up. As a result, boys often later become violent in their own family relationships. Of late, there are also increasing reports of violence against the elderly.

Is there a specific abuser profile?

There is no specific abuser profile. Like victims, abusers may come from any sphere of life. Some may seem to outsiders to be protective, caring fathers and model, law-abiding citizens. Typically, abusers have low self-esteem, are insecure and aggressive, and are often alcoholics or drug addicts. They refuse to take responsibility for their actions, justifying themselves by such claims as "I was drunk," "I don't know what came over me," "It just happened," or "She provoked me." Abusers believe that their acts of violence are justified, and they almost always repeat such acts.

What characterizes the victims and perpetrators of violence?⁷

We need to address the characteristics of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence to increase our understanding of this social problem and to focus social action not only on women but also on the abusers. It is not our intention to exonerate or excuse the abusers: we believe that the responsibility for violence always lies with those who have greater individual and social power, and in the case of domestic violence, it is men.

Abusers must take responsibility for their behaviour. Programmes working with abusers, especially those voluntarily seeking treatment, would help them to resort to non-violent problem-solving and communication methods, to express their emotions in a constructive way, to manage their anger and to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Analyzing and comparing the characteristics of most abusers with those of the majority of victims of violence reveals some similarities, but to say that they have similar or complementary characteristics does not mean blaming the victims or excusing the abusers.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To educate, inform and raise participants' awareness of gender-based violence in the family and community through theory modules and practice</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation-lecture • Structured discussion • Group work • Plenary discussion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimate partnership violence theories • Victims/survivors and perpetrators of violence <p>Duration: 215 min.</p>

⁷ "Nasilje nad ženama u obitelji," Prof. Dr. M. Ajduković, Dr G. Pavleković, Društvo za psihološku pomoć, Zagreb, 2000.

► **Presentation:** Intimate partnership violence theories, historical overview of domestic violence theories, the Power and Control Wheel and the Equality or non-violence Wheel (60 min.)

► **Exercise:** The Power and Control Wheel and the Equality Wheel (appendix 3) – violence and equality (90 min.)



Work steps

- the trainer begins by summing up gender-based violence and hands out Power and Control Wheels to the participants, explaining that the wheel depicts the abuse of power and establishment of control over others, who usually become victims. The tactics used to demonstrate power and establish control include using coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming, using children, using male privilege and economic abuse
- the trainer divides the participants into small groups, each of which receives one copy of the Power and Control Wheel where only two tactics are filled in
- each group is asked to think about the tactics in their copy of the wheel and to explain, in the light of their experience and knowledge, what kinds of behaviour these tactics dictate
- when the groups have finished identifying and naming the tactics in the Power and Control Wheel, each group is given a copy of the Equality Wheel to compare and to see that only equality can prevent violence
- at the end of the session the trainer summarizes, focusing on the social context of violence through the model of domination and the abuse of physical, economic and status-based power, all of which lead to the breakdown of relationships. The opposite of violence is non-violence, created by the social context through a model of cooperation and mutual respect, negotiation and fairness, and the recognition of injustice

► **Presentation:** Victims/survivors and perpetrators of violence (60 min.)

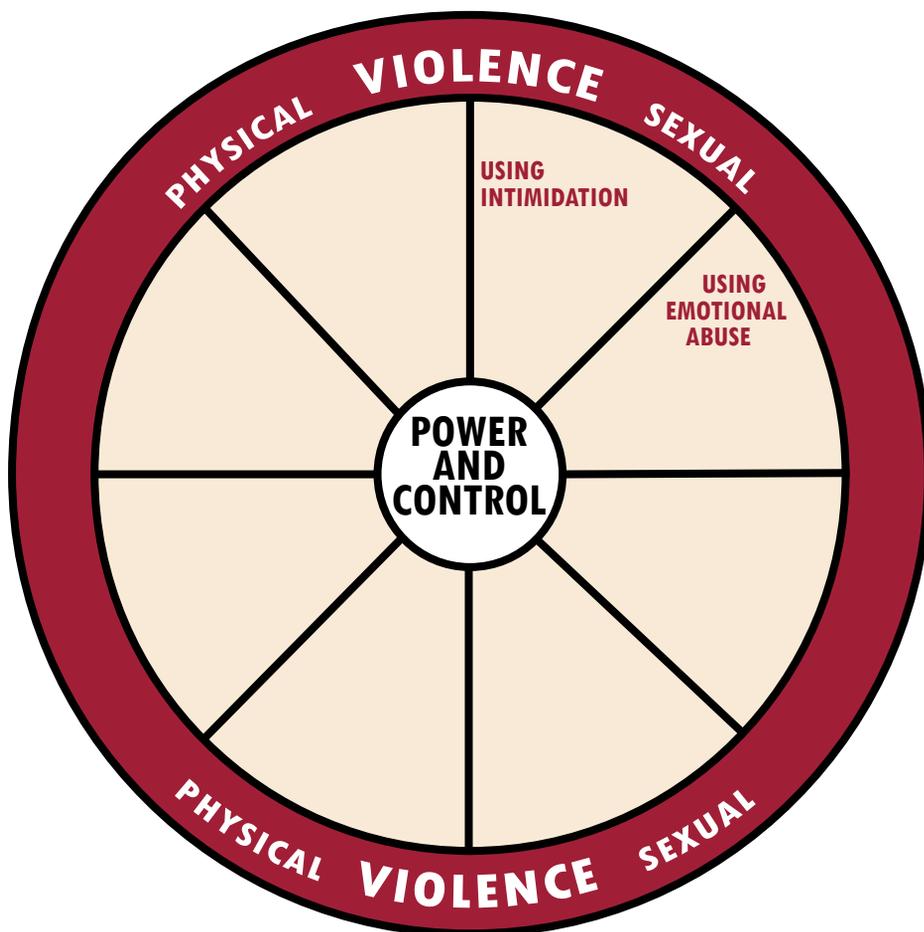
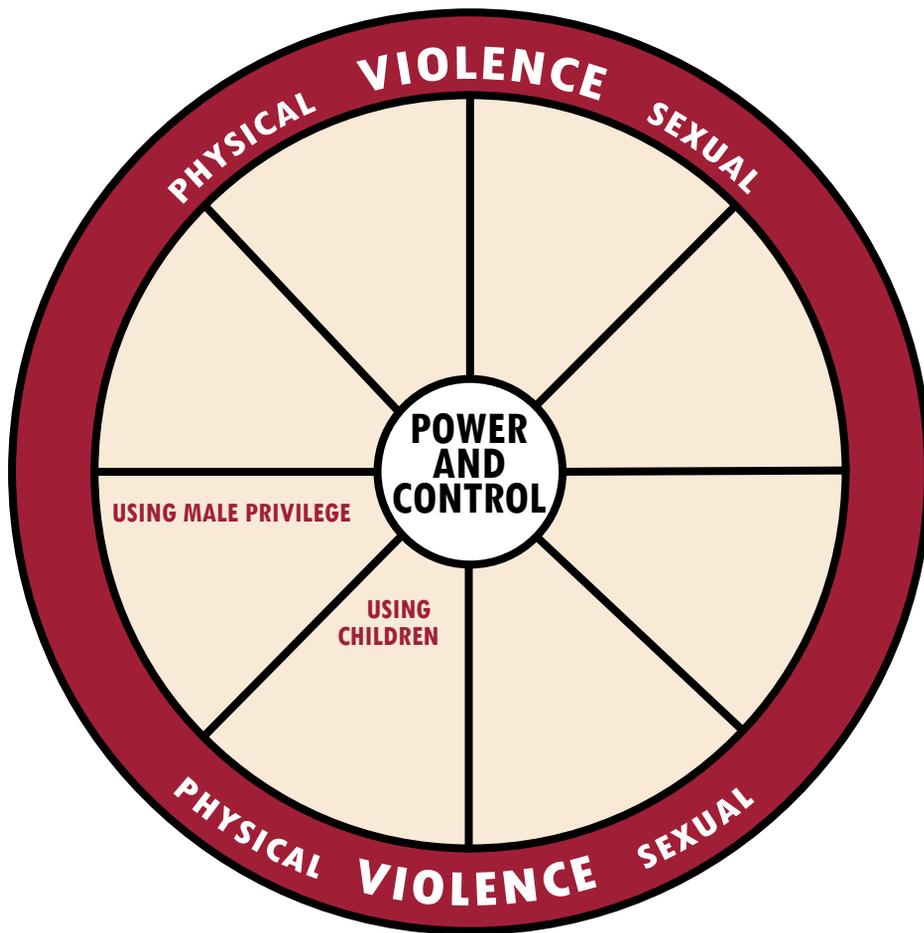
► **Conclusion:** Summarize Module 2 on violent and non-violent relations, focusing on advocating equality in partnerships (30 min.)

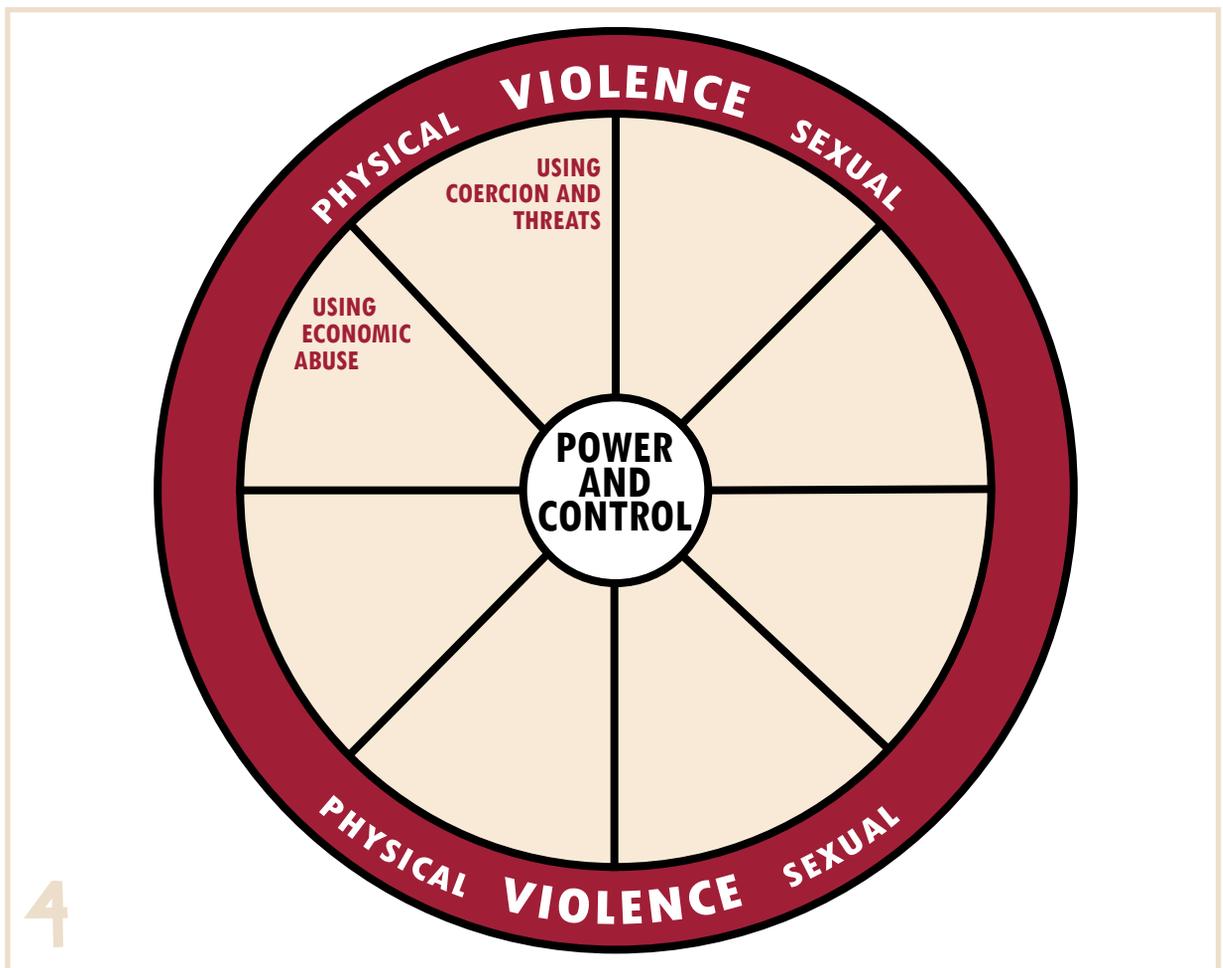
APPENDICES

4 POWER AND CONTROL WHEELS where only two tactics used to demonstrate power and establish control are filled in.

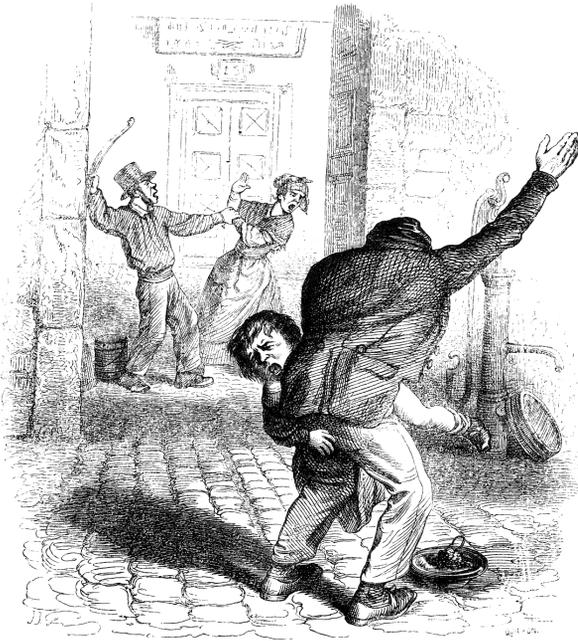
The tactics in each wheel are:

1. using children and using male privilege,
2. using intimidation and using economic abuse,
3. using isolation, minimizing, denying and blaming,
4. using coercion and threats and using emotional abuse.





Domestic violence



Cent Proverbs - Hand-drawn Illustration by Grandville (Source: Wikipedia)

Violence is a serious problem, occurring in every culture and social group. It has a profoundly damaging physical, emotional, financial and social impact on women and children, the family and the wider community all over the world. Violence against women, as an expression of the historically unequal distribution of power between men and women and sexual inequalities, is to be found in societies at every stage of development. Women and girls the world over, regardless of nationality, race or religion, culture, age and status, are exposed to various kinds of physical, psychological, sexual and economic abuse. The roots of violence against women lie deep in the structure of every society where it occurs, and violence is the most common form of sex-based human rights violations. European Union statistics reveal that in 98% of cases, women are the victims of domestic violence. Women spent twice as much

time caring for children as do men, women do 80% of the housework even when they are employed outside the home, and 20% of women experience some kind of gender-based violence.⁸

Data reveal that violence against women is still going on. A 2006 study reveals that between 5 and 25% of women in Council of Europe member states have experienced physical violence at least once in their lives, and more than a tenth have suffered sexual assault, while between 12 and 15% of all women over 16 have experienced violence within the family.

A study of sex-based violence and violence against children conducted in 2007 and 2008 in Zenica and Modriča municipalities by Medica Zenica in association with the NGO Budućnost of Modriča found that 22% of women polled in Zenica and 24% of those polled in Modriča had experienced some form of intimate partner violence of the kinds covered by the study. These data are described as understating the presence of intimate partner violence in the sample, given that those polled were “women who had decided to tell the interviewers about it” and taking into account the fact that those polled had the expected reluctance to speak openly about their experience of intimate partner violence. The conclusion drawn by the study is thus that “at least 22-24% of those polled had experienced one or more forms of intimate partner violence, which is to say that some kind of intimate partner violence takes place in almost every fourth relationship.” The types of violence recorded in the Zenica sample were psychological violence (56.06% of women), physical and psychological violence (23.48%), sexual and psychological violence (12.88%) and psychological, sexual and physical violence (7.58%). The figures for Modriča were 41.67% for psychological violence, 33.33% for physical and psychological violence, and 25% for psychological, sexual and physical violence.⁹

By way of illustration, here are some of the statistics on gender-based violence/violence against women from both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Federation of B-H and Republika Srpska.

⁸ From <http://www.sezamweb.net/hr/diskriminacija/>, accessed August 2010

⁹ “Drugi pogled na vrh ledenog brijega” – a study of sex-based violence and violence against children, Medica Zenica – Infoteka, Zenica, November 2008, pp. 172-175.

According to the Gender Centre of F B-H, the six safe-houses operating in the Federation in 2008 took in 244 victims of violence; during the same period, the three safe-houses in Republika Srpska took in 339 victims of violence. In 2009, a total of 826 victims spent time in safe-houses in F B-H; in Republika Srpska the figure for the same period was 279 victims of violence (women and children). These figures show that the number of victims of violence in the safe-houses of F B-H more than doubled between 2008 and 2009, whereas the figures for the safe-houses of Republika Srpska indicate a slight fall in the number of victims of violence.

In 2009, the 1265 helpline for victims of domestic violence received a total of 2978 calls, of which 2770 were from women and 208 from men – in percentage, 93.02% of calls from women and 6.98% from men. In the same period, the 1264 helpline for Republika Srpska received 2619 calls, of which 2593 were from women and 26 from men; in percentage terms, 99.01% from women and 0.99% from men.¹⁰

Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified a number of international instruments, declarations, resolutions, political agreements, guidelines, recommendations and advisory documents dealing directly or indirectly with domestic violence,¹¹ and has undertaken to protect human rights prohibiting violence in public and private life and domestic violence. It has also undertaken to bring its domestic legislation into line with these instruments and to facilitate the enforcement of the laws and by-laws in order to prevent violence, provide adequate protection for the victims of violence, and punish the abusers. Despite this, domestic violence continues¹² as an egregious form of human rights violation. Chapter II Article 2 of the Constitution of the Federation of B-H states that “the Federation shall ensure that the highest level of internationally-recognized rights and freedoms ... is applied.” Similar provisions appear in Chapter II of the Constitution of Republika Srpska and in Article 13 of the Statute of Brčko District, which has the legal force of a Constitution. The Gender Equality Act of B-H¹³ governs, promotes and protects sexual equality and guarantees equal opportunities for all in both public and private life; it prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of sex. Since 2003, domestic violence¹⁴ has been treated as a criminal offence under the terms of the Criminal Code.¹⁵ The Protection Against

10 Data received by Medica Zenica in August 2010 from the Gender Centre of the Federation of B-H and the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska

11 The UN Charter (1945); the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); the Convention for the Suppression of the Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949); the European Convention on Human Rights (1950); the European Social Charter (1961) and the Revised Social Charter (1996); the Convention on Consent to *Marriage*, Minimum Age for *Marriage* and Registration of *Marriages* (1962); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the general recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (no. 12, 1989, and no. 19, 1992); the Resolution on Violence Against Women (1986); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1989); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); the *Resolution* on the need to establish a European Union wide *campaign* for *zero tolerance* of violence against women (1997); the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1999); the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (2000); Recommendation R (85) on violence in the family; Recommendation R 1450 (2000) on violence against women in Europe; Recommendation R 16 (2001) on the protection of children against sexual exploitation; Recommendation R 5 (2002) on the protection of women against violence; Recommendation R 1582 (2002) on domestic violence against; Recommendation R 1681 (2004) on the campaign to combat domestic violence; Recommendation R (90) 2 on social measures regarding violence within the family; the Resolution on male violence against women (2006); the Road Map, 2006 to 2010 (signposts to equality between men and women).

12 A family is defined as a group consisting of parents and children and other blood relatives living together in a household, relatives by marriage (in-laws), adoptive parents and adopted children, and common-law spouses if living together in a household. Family Law of the Federation of B-H, Official Gazette of the Federation of B-H no. 35/05 and 41/05.

13 Gender Equality Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Official Gazette of B-H no. 16/03 and 102/09

14 Article 3c of the amended Gender Equality Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of B-H no. 102/09) prohibits violence based on sex or gender. Gender-based violence is any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, that prevents a person or group of people from exercising their human rights and freedoms in public or in private life. Gender-based violence includes, but is not limited to:

- violence within the family or home (domestic violence);
- violence within the general community;
- violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, including state-authorized bodies and individuals;
- sex-based violence in the event of armed conflict.

15 A definition of domestic violence is given in Article 222 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of B-H (Official Gazette of the Federation of B-H no. 36/03, 37/03, 21/04, 69/04 and 18/05), which prescribes the penalties for anyone whose violent, overbearing or inconsiderate behaviour threatens the peace, physical integrity or psychological health of a member of his or her family (para. 1) and who perpetrates such act against a member of the family with whom he or she is living in a joint household (para. 2).

Domestic Violence Act, adopted in 2005, sets out the acts for which protective measures are to be prescribed to protect the victims of violence.¹⁶ Domestic violence is directly governed by the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (Official Gazette of RS no. 49/03), where it is treated as a criminal offence, and the victims of domestic violence are directly protected by the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (Official Gazette of Republika Srpska no. 118/05 and 17/08) and by the Families Act (Official Gazette of Republika Srpska no. 54/02). The Criminal Code of Brčko District also treats domestic violence as a criminal offence. The Public Law and Order Acts of Republika Srpska and Brčko District deal indirectly with domestic violence, in that they treat it as a misdemeanour: disturbing and threatening the safety of another person.¹⁷

Case scenario 1:

Šeherzada is a minor, aged 14, and a Roma. She belongs to a dysfunctional family: her mother is a housewife with five children, all born out of wedlock, whose fathers are unknown, as is Šeherzada's. Her mother's way of life is extremely irregular; she displays promiscuous behaviour, has had many partners, and has no permanent residence. About two years ago she began living out of wedlock with a much younger man, with whom she has had a child; since it was born, she has been neglecting her other children even more than before. Šeherzada's family is in very poor economic circumstances; both her mother and her stepfather are unemployed, though her stepfather occasionally collects and sells old iron. They go to the Merhamet soup kitchen every day for their meals. Šeherzada's living conditions are very unhygienic and substandard.

As a result, Šeherzada, our juvenile, has begun to run away from home. For a time she lived with a relative, but she soon ran away from him to her aunt, who helped her to terminate an unwanted pregnancy that no-one knew about. She claims it happened when she was raped. After that her mother "married" her under-age daughter to a boy of 11. On learning about this, the Social Services Centre reacted immediately to break up the relationship. It was not long before the Centre learned that the mother had again "married off" her daughter. The police were notified, as was the Social Services Centre, and the girl was found and brought in for questioning. She claimed that her mother received €500 for "marrying her off." The family with whom she was living forced her to go out begging, and the man she was "married" to often beat her and forced her to have sex with his friends and acquaintances for money. Meanwhile, the Centre was actively trying to place her in a children's home, but every effort was met with rejection and a refusal to provide a place. An application was filed with the Municipal Court to deprive the mother of her parental rights, and criminal charges of child abuse were filed with the municipal Prosecutor's Office. The Social Services Centre and the Medica Zenica Refuge arranged to place the girl in a safe-house, where she was provided with accommodation and care as a victim of human trafficking.

The girl received psychotherapy to a plan drawn up especially for her, which included anger management, assertiveness training and a sewing course. She regularly attends the educational creative therapy workshops provided by the Medica Zenica children's home and acts as a peer educator in the workshops dealing with gender-based violence, communication, non-violent conflict resolution, and children's rights and obligations.

16 The various kinds of protective measures are set out in Article 9 of the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act of the Federation of B-H. The following protective measures may be prescribed in the case of domestic violence:

1. a restraining order removing the perpetrator from the flat, house or other place of residence and prohibiting him from returning to the flat, house or other place of residence
2. a restraining order requiring the perpetrator not to approach the victim of violence
3. the provision of protection for the person exposed to violence
4. a restraining order prohibiting the perpetrator from harassing or stalking the person exposed to violence
5. mandatory psychosocial treatment
6. mandatory treatment for rehabilitation from addiction

17 From Prekogranična saradnja u sprečavanju nasilja nad ženama i djecom, Zenica, December 2008, p. 150, and Finansiranje sigurnih kuća u BiH, Banja Luka, October 2009, p. 7.

Types of violence within the family and the community

Domestic violence includes violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, and manifested through: ¹⁹	
PHYSICAL ABUSE	slapping, beating, arm twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threats with an object or weapon, and murder. It also includes traditional practices harmful to women such as female genital mutilation and wife inheritance (the practice of passing a widow, and her property, to her dead husband's brother)
SEXUAL ABUSE	coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing sex with others
PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE	behaviour that is intended to intimidate and persecute, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation
ECONOMIC ABUSE	denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, etc.
NEGLECT	withholding or preventing access to food, education and health care

Abusers almost always use a combination of two or more different types of violence against their victims, e.g. physical and psychological abuse.

Psychological or emotional abuse

Emotional abuse, being invisible and insidious, demands particular concern on account of its impact. Whereas physical and sexual assault leave physical evidence, emotional abuse manifests itself as the slow, long-term transformation of the victim's personality as a result of her constant efforts to adjust to the abuser's demands in the hope of reducing the pressure on her or of avoiding immediate danger. As she does so, she is not aware of the changes that result, or of how she is losing her own sense of self. She lives under constant stress and pressure, never sure if what she is doing is good enough and whether she has eliminated the threat, perpetually suppressing or disregarding her own needs and opinions, all of which may affect her health. The methods of manipulation she is exposed to leave her unable to identify the cause of her problems; as a result, the only language left to her is that of physical or psychosomatic symptoms and unconsciously seeking refuge in illness. Physical illness is often the only thing to which the victim still has the "right," since every other way in which she might have expressed her problems has long since been denied her by the abuser. She becomes a permanent invalid, undergoing repeated tests for health problems of which the cause cannot be identified. The denigration she has already suffered is compounded by being dubbed a permanent invalid or a hypochondriac, which constitutes further evidence, in the abuser's eyes, of her worthlessness; for her part, it seems to her that he is the only man who would still want her, and that she will have to make do with whatever he offers her.

Emotional abuse comes in many and surprisingly imaginative forms, of which the following are just some (see NiCarthy, 1986):

- ▶ **Isolation** deprives the victim of all social support and of all information other than that which serves the abuser's purposes. Isolation leaves the victim alone, at the mercy of and dependent on the abuser
- ▶ **Monopolization of perception**, a series of steps by which the abuser fixes the victim's attention on his moods and his wishes and demands, expressed or implied. The victim is under constant pressure to "react properly," and not to draw attention to herself and thereby provoke a

¹⁸ Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls," WHO, FRH/WHD/97.8, quoted in Innocenti Digest (no. 6, June 2000, p. 3): Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls, UNICEF: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/digest6e.pdf>

further reaction by the abuser. The victim's attention is thus fixed on her immediate predicament and on living from one moment to the next. She changes, losing her own sense of identity and the ability to stand back from and understand her circumstances and to do something for herself

▶ **Induced debility and exhaustion**, resulting from being told by the abuser what and when to eat, rest and so on, and when, what and how to work. The abuser thus manages to undermine her health and weaken her mental and physical ability to resist

▶ **Threats** of what the abuser is able to and what he will do if create a sense of insecurity and of constant tension and anxiety in the victim, exacerbating her feelings of worry, fear and exhaustion and keeping her in a state of heightened stress

▶ **Occasional indulgences**, a manoeuvre used by the abuser to further confuse the victim and make her try to understand what is happening to her. Occasional indulgences also send a message to the victim that he is completely independent and that he sets the rules of the game; all that is left her is to comply

▶ **Demonstrating omnipotence**, by telling her she is nothing without him and that he has ways of controlling her and of finding her wherever she may seek refuge, which suggests to the victim that resistance is futile and can only make things worse

▶ **Humiliation and degradation**, consisting of repeated assaults on the victim's self-esteem, leading her to believe that she is responsible for everything that is happening to her and that she deserves nothing better

▶ **Enforcing trivial demands**, making the victim ever less able to ask why and to use her common sense, and increasingly develops the habit of unquestioning compliance.

Why do women put up with abuse?¹⁹

The fact is that many women remain in abusive relationships. Family, friends, neighbours and even specialists fail to understand why women put up with abuse. Research and experience show that the reasons most commonly given by women for accepting a life of abuse are those that fit the widely-accepted preconceptions about abuse.

The most common reasons given for staying in an abusive relationship are fear, the children, feelings of shame and guilt, lack of self-esteem, isolation and exhaustion, economic dependence, lack of information on procedures and rights, and violence in the primary family.

Putting up with abuse is the result of both social attitudes and a range of psychological factors. Part of the explanation may lie in the most common type of abusive relationship in which violent phases, during which power is completely in the hands of the abuser, alternating with remorse, at which time the woman has the illusion of power and of being in control.

Family and friends, and often even specialists, feel helpless, unable to provide the woman with support. Those close to her often openly express their inability to understand why she puts up with abuse, and may even be angry with her for failing to seek help, or to accept it when offered. It is important to understand that the decision to change things is not easy to take, and is always preceded by a long and difficult process requiring time, support, encouragement and understanding to help her make her own choice.

19 "Nasilje nad ženama i posledice za zdravlje," health care programme, Autonomous Women's Centre, Belgrave, by Divna Matijašević and Stanislava Otašević.
Source: http://www.womenngo.org.rs/zensko-zdravlje/Prirucnik_za_zdravstvene_radnike.pdf

WOMEN VICTIMS OF ABUSE:	ABUSIVE MEN:
1. believe all the preconceptions about abusive relationships	1. believe all the preconceptions about abusive relationships
2. hold traditional views on the division of gender roles in the family, certain that the man is the head of the family and that they alone are incapable of caring for the children and themselves	2. hold traditional views on the division of gender roles in the family, and believe in male dominance and superiority
3. have low self-esteem and self-confidence	3. have low self-esteem and self-confidence
4. believe they are responsible for the anger and violence expressed by the abuser	4. blame others for their behaviour
5. agree to unwanted sex to please their partner	5. use sex as an act of power and control
6. put up with long-term psychological and physical abuse and disregard the health consequences	6. have a low tolerance threshold, are frustrated and explosive, and flare up easily
7. are ashamed of their problems and become increasingly introverted	7. do not see any reason to alter their behaviour or to be accountable to anyone for their abuse
8. believe no one can help them	8. expect immediate gratification of their desires, are impatient, and do not know how to say thank you or to apologise
9. think about suicide as a way out	9. threaten suicide if their wife tries to leave them
10. often have a history of domestic violence, having witnessed abuse of their mother by their father or themselves been a victim of it	10. often have a history of domestic violence, having seen their father abuse their mother or themselves been a victim of abuse
11. have no sense of their own boundaries, are poor at assessing threats, and thus expose themselves to danger	11. do not respect their wife's boundaries, and take no responsibility for their own actions
12. have children in the hope that it will bring the two of them closer	12. are abusive in the presence of children or abusive towards them. Use the children to maintain control over their wife
13. keep hoping that one day things will miraculously be better	13. believe that their behaviour is for the good of the family; a firm hand is what is needed
14. in some cases, need to find excuses for their husband or partner's behaviour	14. think they own their wife

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective</p> <p>To educate, inform and raise participants' awareness of gender-based violence in the family and community through theory modules and practice</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation-lecture • Spontaneous discussion • Case study • Group work • Plenary discussion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence • Types of violence within the family and community <p>Duration: 215 min.</p>

► **Presentation:** Domestic violence (45 min.)

► **Exercise:** Case scenario (45 min.)



Work steps:

1. divide **participants** into two or three groups, depending on numbers
2. each group receives a case scenario and answers the questions that follow it
3. each group should read the other scenarios so that they can more easily follow the group answers during the plenary presentation
4. participants should give their answers to the questions and conclusions on the basis of their own opinions and experience and on the knowledge and skills acquired during the training course (**see appendix 4**)

Questions for case scenario 1:



1. in what way are traditional gender roles evident in this story?
2. is Šeherezada a victim of gender-based violence?
3. what is the mother's role in this story? Can her actions be seen as gender-based violence? If so, why? If not, why?
4. what is the role of society in this story? Who is responsible for Šeherezada?

► **Presentation:** types of violence within the family and community (40 min.)

► **Exercise:** why is it hard to leave an abusive relationship (40 min.)



Work steps:

- participants are asked to consider why it is hard for women to leave an abusive relationship
- participants are provided with material giving reasons why it is hard to leave an abusive relationship (**appendix 5**)
- each participant chooses the 10 reasons they think are most commonly given for its being hard to leave an abusive relationship
- the trainer may either ask some of the participants to read out their reasons, or ask the groups to agree on 10 reasons and then read them out as a group response
- at the end of the session the trainer writes down the reasons given by all the groups so as to identify those that are most common in our society

► **Presentation:** the characteristics of the victims and perpetrators of violence (30 min.)

► **Conclusion:** summarize Module 3, recognizing domestic violence and ridding oneself of the traditional view of the role of the woman in the family (30 min.)

APPENDICES

1. Possible responses to the questions in case study 1:

1. The story reveals tradition gender roles in that she sold the girl, trying in her own way to avoid her problems by pushing her into a “marriage” in which she saw the solution to the girl’s problems, of which she as her mother was the main cause. She did not sell her sons...
2. Šeherzada is a victim of gender-based violence, as a victim of human trafficking, given that her mother sold her; on the other hand, it is the custom among poor Roma families to sell their daughter to the men they are marrying them off to. Traditional customs undermine human and women’s rights and promote abuse, as is clear in this case – using the girl for sexual exploitation and begging is gender-based violence, for which everyone working to combat abuse and provide direct assistance to the victims of abuse should assume the responsibilities that fall within their jurisdiction
3. The role of the mother in this story is that of abuser (neglecting the basic needs of Šeherzada and the other children, exposing the children to pornography and risk by her promiscuous behaviour, selling her child). Since she sold the girl, this is gender-based violence; but her other forms of abuse are not, because all the children were exposed to it
4. The role of society in this case is to be a corrective factor in the girl’s development, and provide her with services that can replace her dysfunctional mother. Medica took on the role of providing the girl with psychological, physical and existential help, in line with its mission and capacity to provide support, while institutions caring for children without proper parental care should assume responsibility for the girl’s continued rehabilitation.

2. Some responses to the question why it is hard to leave an abusive relationship

1. financial dependence on the partner
2. fear of being battered or killed
3. love for the partner and wishing to stay together
4. fear of losing a child
5. hoping that things will get better in time and she will be able to control the situation
6. fear that separation/divorce will have traumatic psychological consequences for the children
7. fear of being treated as a loser by family, friends or society
8. religious convictions
9. feeling of despair and helplessness (“nothing helps”)
10. adverse reaction by society to the problem as a whole (existing preconceptions)
11. inappropriate attitude by officers of the relevant state institutions in solving the problem (police, judiciary and social services)
12. blaming herself for the abuse (“I asked for it; it’s my fault”)
13. fear that the partner may do something to damage her professional or social image, or harm her close relatives or friends
14. need to take enough time to plan her get-away

15. her conviction that she is in no condition to live alone, because she is not capable or is insecure...
16. fear and uncertainty when thinking about the future
17. fear of losing home or property (nowhere else to live)
18. fear of ending up alone
19. wishing to conceal the abuse from those around her
20. exhaustion caused by chronic psychological stress ("I'm too tired to change things")
21. fear for her children's future
22. culturally-determined acceptance of the concept that the woman is responsible for the family atmosphere (and by extension for everything that happens within the family)
23. pressure from relatives ("he's your husband, the father of your children")
24. desire to keep the family together
25. nowhere to go and no money to rent a place to live
26. complete absence of social and legal support
27. limited physical capacities making the woman depending on the other person

Factors that perpetuate domestic violence²⁰

Cultural

- ❑ gender-specific socialization
- ❑ cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles
- ❑ expectations of roles within relationships
- ❑ belief in the inherent superiority of males
- ❑ values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls
- ❑ notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control
- ❑ customs of marriage (bride price/dowry)
- ❑ acceptability of violence as a means to resolve conflict

Economic

- ❑ women's economic dependence on men
- ❑ limited access to cash and credit
- ❑ discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands, and maintenance after divorce or widowhood
- ❑ limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors
- ❑ limited access to education and training for women

Legal

- ❑ lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice
- ❑ laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance
- ❑ legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse
- ❑ low levels of legal literacy among women
- ❑ insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary

Political

- ❑ under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions
- ❑ domestic violence not taken seriously
- ❑ notions of family being private and beyond control of the state
- ❑ risk of challenge to status quo/religious laws
- ❑ limited organization of women as a political force
- ❑ limited participation of women in organized political system

²⁰ Heise, 1994, quoted in Innocenti Digest (no. 6, June 2000, p. 3): Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls, UNICEF: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/digest6e.pdf>

Since violence and abuse are a problem in all cultural and social strata, it is important to consider the question of domestic violence from the perspective of the Catholic, Orthodox Christian and Islamic traditions. To ensure a proper understanding of the topic and to combat violence, it is desirable to involve every part of the community, including religious communities. This is corroborated by the texts relating to domestic violence and gender relations within the family in a book entitled *Both Believers and Citizens*.²¹

The impact of abuse on women's health

Women's health²²

Historically speaking, women's health has been defined through the lens of the family and society within the context of culture, tradition and narrow professional medical practice, where the decision-makers are mainly men. The view was long held that the differences between men's and women's health were the result only of biological sexual differences. The consequence of this view was that women's health was considered solely in the context of her reproductive role – pregnancy and childbirth – and is still to a large extent approached in this way.

However, health has a gender aspect too. As already noted, the term "gender" covers those characteristics of women and men that are social constructs, whereas "sex" relates to the biological determinants of their differences. Biologically, people are born female or male, but gender roles are learned and shaped as we grow up in a given family, community, culture, religion and society. All these factors ascribe specific roles to women and men which, broadly speaking, are reflected in the division of labour into women's and men's work and manifest themselves specifically at various levels in the form of gender discrimination:

- violence against women
- lower remuneration for work of equal value
- higher unemployment levels
- the pressures of family and professional responsibilities²³

Socially accepted gender discrimination impacts on women's health. Gender-sensitive analysis reveals how to address the problem of inequality between the different roles of women and men and the unequal distribution of power between them as it impacts on their lives, health and well-being. In most societies, power inequalities mean that women have less access to and control over health-care resources, and fewer opportunities for involvement in decision-making relating to their health. Gender analysis of health often reveals that inequality places women at a disadvantage, and prevents them from addressing the restrictions on their right to health care, instead of finding appropriate ways of overcoming the problem.

Thanks largely to the world-wide movement for the emancipation of women, the gender-specific approach has moved on from vision to gradual implementation in the health care system dealing with women's physical and psychological health. In this vision, doctors and therapists need to consider the whole woman in the given social context: her experiences, her attitude towards her own needs, the extent to which she looks after herself and her health, what responsibilities she assumes, and so on, are associated with her upbringing, her status, her social and religious background, the values she absorbed in the family and at school, her profession or occupation and education, and the way the society she lives in treats women. All these factors combine to make the woman what she is

21 I vjernice i građanke, Zilka Spahić-Šiljak, Rebeka Jadranka Anić, Sarajevo 2009

22 "Nasilje nad ženama i posledice za zdravlje," health care programme, Autonomous Women's Centre, Belgrade, by Divna Matijašević and Stanislava Otašević.
Source: http://www.womengo.org.rs/zensko-zdravlje/Prirucnik_za_zdravstvene_radnike.pdf

23 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979



Dessins - Hand-drawn illustration by Martin van Maele (Source: Wikipedia)

when she visits her doctor. Social factors, personality and environment, family and community as a whole play a large part in the way a woman lives, how she sees herself, and how she resolves problems relating to her mental and physical health.

Many women are resigned to poor health as their lot, ignoring their symptoms and ailments, because they are expected to carry out so many duties. These views reinforce social taboos and preconceptions, making women believe that their health problems are associated with or caused by their behaviour.

The demands of comprehensive health care for women mean that standards for the promotion of women's health must be developed and incorporated into national legislation governing health care policy as it affects women, including the common factors that relate to their health and to the health-care services and conditions that impact on the health and well-being of women.

The right to health is every woman's human right. Health is not merely a personal matter, but one that concerns every society individually and the international community as a whole. The state must

therefore take responsibility for introducing systems and services capable of meeting the required standards and address the political and social implications of this aspect of women's lives.

It is vital, therefore, to encourage women to participate actively in programmes relating to their own health, that of their family, and the community as a whole. Particular attention should be paid to the role of men and to defining their responsibility for achieving gender equality and recognizing women's health and health-care needs.²⁴

The impact of abuse on women's health²⁵

Physical and psychological abuse has serious consequences for women's health, which may present in a variety of ways and may be multiple in nature. Women themselves often fail to recognize the impact and consequences of abuse on their health, or underestimate its significance.

Many abused women will sooner or later need medical attention, either for specific injuries or for the psychological trauma of abuse, which they are unable to overcome without expert help and support.

Abuse is unquestionably associated with consequences for their health, ranging from acute to chronic symptoms and from non-fatal to fatal outcomes. Though violence and abuse have direct health consequences, such as injuries, the victims of abuse are also exposed to the risk of poor health in the near or longer-term future. The poor lifestyle of abused women may also be regarded as a risk factor for a range of illnesses and conditions. Research indicates that women who suffered abuse in childhood, but also as adults, are much more likely to suffer from poor health than women

²⁴ Platform for Action, Beijing, 1995 [Translator's notes: despite careful searches, I have been unable to find passages in the Platform for Action that correspond to these paragraphs, and therefore assume that the reference is to the spirit of the Platform for Action rather than to a specific clause.]

²⁵ "Nasilje nad ženama i posledice za zdravlje," health care programme, Autonomous Women's Centre, Belgrade, by Divna Matijašević and Stanislava Otašević
Source: http://www.womenngo.org.rs/zensko-zdravlje/Prirucnik_za_zdravstvene_radnike.pdf

who have never experienced abuse (Heise, Ellsberg and Goettemoeller, 1999). Abuse increases the risk of depression, attempted suicide, chronic pain syndrome, psychosomatic disorders, injury, gastrointestinal disorders and a range of conditions associated with their reproductive health. The significance of the connection between health problems and abuse is that the impact of abuse on women's health and well-being persists long after the abuse comes to an end. The longer the abuse continues, the greater the consequences for the abused woman's physical and mental health, and as long as it continues, the health consequences are cumulative.

The health consequences of violence against women may be fatal or non-fatal. Fatal outcomes include homicide, suicide, maternal mortality and death from HIV/AIDS. The clinical manifestations of abuse include injury, a range of health problems, chronic problems associated with the stress of living in an abusive and dangerous environment, reproductive health consequences, psychological and psychiatric symptoms, and self-injurious behaviours. See **appendix 6**.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To educate, inform and raise participants' awareness of the impact of violence by learning to recognize it</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation-lecture • Structured discussion • Group work • Plenary discussion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors that perpetuate domestic violence • Impact of violence on women's health <p>Duration: 215 min.</p>

► **Presentation:** Factors that perpetuate domestic violence (30 min.)

► **Exercise:** Factors that perpetuate domestic violence (50 min.)

Work steps:



- participants receive materials listing the kinds of factors that perpetuate domestic violence (cultural, economic, legal and political factors)
- each participant chooses the 10 factors he/she regards as most commonly perpetuating domestic violence
- a list is made in order of importance of the factors regarded as most commonly perpetuating domestic violence
- the selected factors perpetuating domestic violence are classified by group (cultural, economic, legal and political)
- if there is no time for each participant separately to choose 10 factors, the participants may be divided into groups which then follow the same procedure

► **Presentation:** The impact of violence on women's health (30 min.)

► **Exercise:** My visit to the doctor (45 min.)

Work steps:



- ask the participants to spend the next 3 minutes writing down when and how often they visit the doctor and how they feel during the visit
- once they have done so, divide them into pairs to exchange experiences
- the group as a whole then discusses the issues and links them with the consequences for women's health of gender-based violence

APPENDICES

Mobbing – abuse in the workplace²⁶

Mobbing (*work abuse or employee abuse*) is an English term adopted in other languages to describe bullying in the workplace. It is a specific form of behaviour in the workplace by which one person or a group of people psychologically or morally abuses and humiliates another systematically with the intention of discrediting that person's reputation and honour and undermining their human dignity and integrity to the point of forcing them out of the workplace. The abused person is helpless to defend herself against the mobbing, which takes place frequently (once a week or more) over a long period (six months or more).

The history of mobbing

Systematic studies of mobbing behaviour began about 20 years ago (1980s, Heinz Leymann). The word derives from the verb to mob, meaning to attack or surround en masse, to molest or harass, and from the noun mob, meaning a disorderly or riotous crowd, a rabble. It was first used by Konrad Lorenz to describe the behaviour of certain birds or animals that gang up against an intruder or predator to attack and harass it, sometimes even to death. In the English-speaking world the word bullying is more common, usually to describe abuse at school. Research indicates that 55% of mobbing is vertical and 45% horizontal. *Vertical mobbing* occurs when a superior bullies a subordinate employee or one after another until he or she destroys them all (which is why it is also called bossing), or when a group of employees bully a superior (which occurs in 5% of cases). *Horizontal mobbing* occurs between employees at the same level in the workplace hierarchy.

The importance of addressing the problem of mobbing

Mobbing is a widespread phenomenon, usually studied in the workplace, which has consequences for the social environment, the workplace and the individual. It is considered from the medical, sociological, legal and psychiatric forensic perspective, with a view to drawing attention to the seriousness of the problem, and to becoming aware of and able to recognize it. Mobbing can be prevented by systematic primary prevention, information, education and specific steps such as personal communication skills training, preventive legislation and organizational policy, as well as in practice, by introducing codes of conduct that do not tolerate abuse.

The phases of mobbing

- ▶ *Phase 1*: unresolved conflict between co-workers affecting interpersonal relations. The original conflict is soon forgotten, but aggressive feelings remain, and are directed against a selected person.
- ▶ *Phase 2*: the repressed aggression escalates into psychoterror. The victim's professional and human dignity is targeted, and she begins to feel worthless, losing support, reputation and the right to her own voice in the workplace.

²⁶ From: <http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobbing>, accessed August 2010 [slightly adapted for this English translation to correct certain matters of fact]

► *Phase 3*: the victim has become stigmatized to the point of being blamed for the entire group's failings and shortcomings

► *Phase 4*: the victim is in a struggle for survival, and begins to show symptoms of burnout, a psychosomatic and depressive disorder

► *Phase 5*: this phase is usually reached after several years of being terrorized, when the victim succumbs to chronic illness, gives up her job or commits suicide

1. The effects of mobbing in the workplace

Diminished efficiency and effectiveness, failure to gain promotion, frequent absences from work, taking frequent sick leave (taking refuge in illness), giving notice or being fired.

2. Health consequences

- **physical disorders** – chronic tiredness, digestive problems, obesity or excessive weight loss, insomnia, various pain syndromes, compromised immune system, increasing need for alcohol, sedatives, cigarettes
- **emotional disorders** – depression, burn-out syndrome, emotional void, feeling that life is meaningless, anxiety, loss of motivation and enthusiasm, apathy or hypomania, adjustment disorders
- **behavioural symptoms** – irritability, projection, uncritical risky behaviour, loss of concentration, forgetfulness, explosive behaviour, rudeness, excessive sensitivity to external stimuli, lack of emotion, rigidity, constant preoccupation with work, family problems, divorce, suicide

3. Burnout

Burnout is the progressive loss of idealism and energy and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment, experienced by people in the caring professions as a result of frustration and stress at work. Burnout at work is not the same as tiredness, which does not alter one's attitude towards one's work or behaviour towards one's clients. Burnout is associated with a range of negative emotions, such as depression, loss of strength, dissatisfaction, fear, inappropriate quality of life, hopelessness, loss of self-confidence, inability to form judgments and make decisions, emotional exhaustion, the sense of being unable to control one's emotions as a result of constant long-term exposure to stress situations, and depersonalization – a pathological malfunction of the sense of personal identity.

How to recognize mobbing

Even if mobbing cannot be avoided, it is important to know how to recognize it. These are some of the factors given by H. Leymann that suggest mobbing, regardless of their frequency:

- having your decisions constantly doubted and your solutions challenged
- being given dangerous work assignments
- being given work that is below your level of expertise or diminishes your self-respect
- rumours or half-truths being spread about you

- being talked about behind your back
- being described as psychologically unwell
- being condescended to
- having your way of moving or talking made fun of
- being ridiculed and given an offensive nickname
- being sexually harassed

These factors make it easy for employees to recognize whether they are being mobbed. The worst kind of mobbing is sexual harassment, to which more and more women are being exposed.

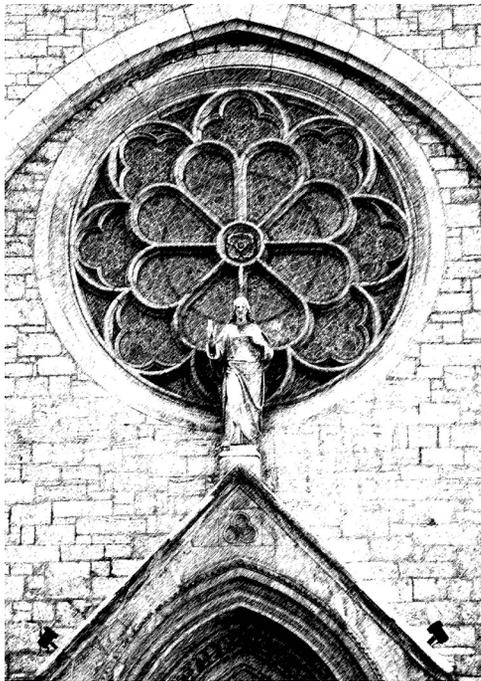
How to protect yourself

- make a note of every incident and keep copies of all documents
- talk to someone you trust in the workplace – a human rights activist, your union representative, the health and safety inspector
- do not let yourself be drawn into mobbing behaviour; be kind to the victim of mobbing and warn the mobbers not to behave in that way

Gender-based violence – a Catholic perspective

There are no specific provisions concerning violence against women in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (the CEDAW Convention), but in General Recommendation 19 (1992), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women interpreted CEDAW Article 1 as including “gender-based violence, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.” The Committee was thus drawing attention to *gender-based violence*. Since gender-based violence is directly rooted in traditional male dominance, CEDAW Article 5, dealing with sexual stereotypes, is also relevant to violence against women. Sexual stereotypes facilitate and perpetuate structural violence, violence that is related not to the immediate perpetrator but to social, cultural and religious norms and institutions which personally or directly, if not explicitly, facilitate or perpetuate violence in various ways. Though the Catholic Church neither permits nor justifies domestic violence, there are certain interpretations of biblical texts or Christian symbols that those who abuse women use to justify their actions or to keep the victim in an abusive relationship.

Biblical texts and gender-based violence



Cathedral in Sarajevo - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

Genesis 1: 26-27, which describes God’s creation of man, excludes any possibility of violence or domination by one person against another, including by a man against a woman; so too does the description of the first people in Genesis 2: 18-25. The first reference to male domination of a woman is in Genesis 3, after the Fall: “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3: 16). This is traditionally interpreted as the punishment for disobeying God’s command, and hence as the human condition after the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Modern interpretations of the Bible stress that the human condition after the Fall is not presented as a *norm* of human relations that is to be maintained, but as humankind’s *unredeemed state, which is the result of sin and which should be rectified*.

Despite this interpretation, Genesis 3 is still seen the basis for the relationship of a woman with her husband as one of love, respect and obedience, whereas that of a man with his wife is one of leadership, dominance and rule. The view that men should rule over women is also based on the notion, adopted by Christianity from ancient philosophy, that women are by nature more subject to their emotions, and as a result are less rational, than men. Biblical evidence for this view of female nature is also to be found in Genesis 3, where it is the woman who talks to the serpent, who trusts him, who disobeys God’s command, and who persuades her husband to do the same. This passage is interpreted as meaning that women are less rational, are more inclined to sin, and are seducers that men must guard against, control and rule over. It is also seen, therefore, as meaning that it is for the good of women that they are subordinate to men. St Thomas Aquinas, a theologian who had a great impact on the theology of Western Christianity, distinguishes between slavery and civil subordination. He regarded slavery, in which the lord and master uses slaves for his own benefit, as

a sin, but saw civil subordination, in which a superior rules over his subordinates for their benefit and welfare, as normal. Influenced by Aristotelian anthropology, St Thomas believed that men are more rational than women, and therefore that women owe civil obedience to men, which is for their own good.

In the Catholic tradition, an interpretation of a verse from the [Apocryphal] Book of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) has had particularly negative consequences for women. This verse, a common translation of which reads "From the woman came the beginning of sin, and by her we all die," has been translated incorrectly: though grammatically the word "by" could relate to either "the woman" or the Greek word *hamartia* (fem.), meaning sin, in terms of word order, it relates to "sin" rather than "the woman." However, the more usual translation is better suited to the notion that women are the devil's gateway through which sin and death came into the world, and that men should therefore beware of them. The usual conclusions drawn from these texts were that women are unsuited to leadership roles and that they should not be allowed to make their own decisions. If women were to be the decision-makers in important matters, it might result in world disaster.

Though neither these traditional interpretations of the Bible nor the teachings of St Thomas Aquinas concerning women's subordinating to men suggest violence as a way men should behave towards women, nor do they justify acts of violence, by defining the nature of women and men and their respective roles as they do, they facilitate *asymmetrical social power relations* and, as a result, *structural violence*. The notion that women are beings created of and for men, and are less rational and need to be kept under control, exposes women to a greater risk of violent behaviour than if the Bible is interpreted in egalitarian terms, as does modern theology. In this latter view, both men and women are in the image of God; God permits no violence by people against others; both men and women are rational and capable of ruling the world; the rule of men over women is not the condition that should rule after the Fall, but a condition that resulted from sin and man's alienation from God, and which should be rectified; the body of every man and every woman is a temple of the Holy Spirit; there is no difference among Christians on the basis of ethnicity, social status or sex (Gal. 3:28). As for violence, we should remember the many biblical passages attesting to God's favouring the weak and the poor.

The Bible, and in particular the Old Testament, does include passages referring to or describing violence against woman (Judges 19:26-30; 2 Sam 13). These are not *normative*, however; rather they describe violence as a fact that the biblical authors did not wish to pass over or minimize. Violence is shown as an expression of poverty or misery, a protest against it and an attempt to rise above it. In the light of the Bible, violence against other people, and especially against the physically weaker, should be condemned as harming the body and God-like image of the human person, and hence as injuring God Himself.

The cross – symbol of Christ's sacrifice and gender-based violence

Catholic women who suffer domestic violence often take the cross and Jesus's passion as their model. Just as Jesus did not descend from the cross, but suffered and died for us, so a woman should not leave her abusive husband, but rather help him to change by her patient endurance and love. The wife is responsible for her husband's salvation and for holding the family together. This interpretation not only reveals a lack of understanding of domestic violence and the dynamics of the act of violence, but is also a flawed understanding of the meaning of the cross and of Jesus's death; it actually helps to maintain abusive relationships.

When foretelling his own passion, Jesus called upon the disciples to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow him (Mk 3:31-38). This tells us that following Jesus entails suffering and the cross, but they must not be interpreted arbitrarily, only in the light of what is gained by following Jesus. The cross that Jesus's disciples were to follow is not just any suffering arising from natural causes or social existence, but the suffering that comes from living the Gospel. The fact that someone is suffering does not mean that they are followers of Jesus's suffering on the cross.

The cross of Jesus cannot be seen in isolation from his life as a whole. To separate the cross from the life of Jesus means according salvific meaning to suffering alone, the consequence of which is to propose suffering to the victims of violence as the only way of enduring an abusive situation. If the cross of Jesus is seen as part of Jesus's entire life and resurrection, it becomes clear that the redemptive event was not just Jesus's passion and death, but his proclaiming and living the message of the Kingdom of God, and that his suffering and death were the consequence of his proclaiming that message. Jesus did not suffer passively for the sake of the world in which he lived, but for the message that called into question that world and its structure. His death was thus the death of injustice and falsehood. For the victims of intimate partner violence, this means that the way they are living is to be weighed not only in the context of Jesus's passion and the crucifixion, but also in the light of the news of the Kingdom of God for which the passion and crucifixion took place. In the light of this message and of Jesus's death, their suffering is unjust, and should be stopped. Jesus's death demands the "death" of their suffering and the beginning of a new life. The only suffering that would make sense would be the suffering involved in breaking free of the abusive situation.

Jesus's passion and death should also be seen in the light of the Resurrection, in the light of the new life brought by Jesus by virtue of the resurrection. An abusive relationship cannot possibly be that new life or the plenitude of life that Jesus offered by his resurrection, and should therefore be changed.

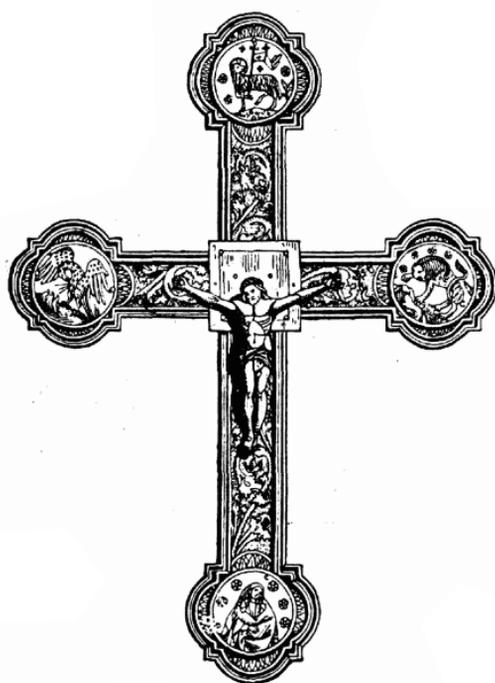
It should also be borne in mind that the cross of Jesus does not require us to repeat the sacrifice made by Jesus, but rather that it announces the victory of the cross to those who are victims. The spectacle of the cross of Jesus means that injustice, violence, evil and death do not have the last word. The victims of domestic violence should thus see their condition as one they should escape from, knowing that Jesus is on their side, that they are not abandoned, but that they are in communion with him.

The cross does not require us blindly to accept suffering, but to use our ability to judge reality where suffering rules and take responsibility for Christ's message of the Kingdom that brought Jesus to the

cross. Passive acceptance of suffering that could be changed means idealizing suffering itself, and is not what following Christ crucified means. It is a flawed understanding of the cross of Jesus if the mystery of the passion is transformed into a justification of suffering itself, and abandonment to one's fate into a virtue, melancholy apathy or self-pity,

If we are to avoid the misuse of theological discourse and piety, it is important to take into account who is speaking about suffering and how – who is commending suffering to whom. If the mystery of the cross and the passion are commended to victims by their abusers or by those whose influence could help change the social structures that perpetuate violence, the mystery of the cross is blasphemy and a monster of inhumanity. In such a case, both the victim and the abuser are condemned to captivity in a vicious cycle of violence, with no way out. But if the victim herself compares her suffering with Christ's passion, this may restore some sense of self-worth despite her humiliation and helplessness, a sense that God is on her side, and this may encourage her to break out of the vicious circle of abuse.

As a sign of violence, love and suffering, therefore, the cross of Jesus may not be used as an appeal to victims passively to endure the suffering of an abusive relationship. The cross is an appeal to victims, perpetrators and onlookers alike, in the sense of judging the abuse in the light of Jesus's



proclamation of the Kingdom of God and of his Resurrection. In this sense, the cross of Jesus gives us all the hope of breaking out of the vicious circle of abuse and of a fuller life.

Domestic violence – a Catholic perspective

The Catholic Church has never approved domestic violence as a matter of principle but, like society as a whole, it has treated it as taboo. Of late, the matter is increasingly becoming of concern. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (FC), for example, Pope John Paul II explicitly condemned the “oppressive presence of a father,” believing that this kind of behaviour is to be found especially where there is too much emphasis on male privileges that belittle women and impede the development of health family relations (c.f. FC 25).

When considering the attitude of the Catholic Church to domestic violence, one should remember that under the terms of canon law, “Even if only one party is Catholic, the marriage of Catholics is governed not only by divine law but also by canon law, without prejudice to the competence of civil authority concerning the merely civil effects of the same marriage,” which include protection against domestic violence. The canon-law treatment of domestic violence provides members of the congregation with moral certainty. What follows are those provisions of the Code of Canon Law that are designed to protect against domestic violence.

The provisions of the Code of Canon Law dealing with domestic violence relate to the pastoral and legal preparations for contracting marriage, to protection against violence during the celebration of marriage and within marriage itself, and to the ecclesiastical institutions and officials. This demonstrates that the canon law of the Catholic Church includes measures to prevent forced marriage, as noted by General Recommendation 19.

Pastoral care includes preparation for marriage from early childhood to the actual celebration of marriage, and is preventive in nature, designed to reveal and eliminate violence before contracting marriage. The purpose of legal preparation is to discover whether there are any impediments that would render the marriage null and void – for instance, the abduction or detention of a woman with the view of contracting marriage with her (Can. 1089), or whether the parties are competent to contract marriage and are entering into it freely without force or fear (Can. 1103). If, after the marriage has been contracted, there are justifiable grounds for believing that some such impediment existed, proceedings may be initiated to annul the marriage (Can. 1671-1691).

A marriage contracted as a result of physical force is regarded as never having been contracted, since it lacks consent. Acts performed out of bodily fear are valid as a rule, but may be annulled by verdict of the court. A marriage entered into out of grave fear is invalid if the fear a) is great, i.e. such as to actually weaken the subject’s psychological liberty; b) is inflicted from without, by one of the parties or another interested party; c) genuinely affects consent, in that the subject has, or believes she has, no choice but marriage – there must be a real causal link between the fear and the marriage; d) constitutes an objective threat, meaning that it is not necessarily imposed deliberately (immediate fear) but that there an objective threat (indirect fear), and that in order to avoid it the subject is forced to choose marriage. Canon 1061 § 1 of the Code states that a marriage is valid “if the spouses have



Cathedral in Sarajevo - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

performed between themselves in a human fashion [*humano modo*] a conjugal act." This means that the husband must not perform the conjugal act against his wife's will, for if performed without her free will, it would not be *humano modo*.

In the event of violence within marriage, the Code provides for temporary or permanent separation while maintaining the marriage bond. This is simple separation that does not entail the dissolution of the marriage bond, but merely suspends or severs conjugal living. The only acceptable reason for full, permanent separation is adultery (Can. 1152), while temporary separation may be approved "if either of the spouses causes grave mental or physical danger to the other spouse or to the offspring or otherwise renders common life too difficult" (Can. 1153 § 1). Examples of reasons for temporary separation given by canon lawyers are grave physical harm, unendurably harsh treatment, abuse, battering, quarrelling, hatred and intoxication. Separation must be approved by the local ecclesiastical authority since, though it may be justified, separation cannot be regarded as merely the private affair of the married couple. The Code requires them to re-establish conjugal living once the reasons for the separation have been eliminated, unless the ecclesiastical authority establishes otherwise (Can. 1153 § 2).

It should be noted that all the provisions of the Code of Canon Law relating to marital and domestic violence apply equally to women and men, except in the case of abduction or detention, which explicitly apply only to women. The reason given for this by canon lawyers is that cases of the abduction or detention of men with a view to contracting marriage are rare. If such a case were to occur, however, the marriage would not be valid, given the absence of consent.

The Catholic Church's classical moral theology has little to say about rape, though it has always been regarded as a grave sin. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, rape "does injury to justice and charity. Rape deeply wounds the respect, freedom, and physical and moral integrity to which every person has a right. It causes grave damage that can mark the victim for life. It is always an intrinsically evil act. Graver still is the rape of children committed by parents (incest) or those responsible for the education of the children entrusted to them." (Catechism no. 2356).

In the past, moral theologians have been restrained in their condemnation of marital rape, on account of the view at that time of marital duty. Present-day moral theologians regard marital rape as an "evil act," one that can never be justified, and cannot even be called a conjugal act. In his Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI wrote that "a conjugal act imposed on one's partner without regard to his or her condition or personal and reasonable wishes in the matter, is no true act of love, and therefore offends the moral order in its particular application to the intimate relationship of husband and wife" (para. 13). Writing about sexual abuse in the family, the Northern Canadian Bishops issued a document based on Can.1153 of the Code of Canon Law, stating:

"We want to be absolutely clear that the Catholic Church teaches that women have the right, and sometimes also the duty, to protect themselves and their children by walking out of a violent situation when it occurs."

In traditional legislation, rape was one of the few criminal offences for which the victim was required to offer active resistance as evidence of the absence of specific consent. When considering the question of consent and resistance, classical moral theology distinguished between persons lacking the competence to express valid consent and persons competent to express consent and offer resistance. In the case of the latter, the distinction was made between inward resistance (absence of consent) and outward resistance (the use of all available means to prevent the sex act taking place). This outward resistance was justified by the principle of legitimate defence, giving the woman being attacked the right and duty to offer active resistance. If, however, active resistance would place her life at risk, passive resistance could be exercised. This is of particular importance given that even today, the prevailing opinion is that the victim should risk her own life as she defends herself against sexual

assault. Instead of “resistance to the ultimate limits,” which could endanger the life of the victim or the perpetrator, and which has no basis in Christian theology and tradition, “reasonable resistance,” expressing opposition but saving life, is more acceptable.

The Catholic Church also permits women to defend themselves against sexual assault, provided they uphold the following principle: any procedure or means able to prevent conception, whether before sexual assault or after, is morally admissible only if such procedures and means have no abortifacient effect and do not cause serious danger to the lives of the victim and the child. The difficulty, however, is to determine which procedures and means have no abortifacient effect.

In addition to these provisions on domestic violence, the Code of Canon Law also includes provisions relating to pastors, particularly those required to play their part in family pastoral care. A particular sensitive issue concerns the attitude of the confessor to violence. The confessor may not report the abuser (see Can. 983), but the advice he gives to the victim or the perpetrator is of the greatest importance. Also significant is whether religious teachers notice when a child is the victim of abuse, and how they behave towards that child. Pastors should not only be aware of problems but also able to recognize them and offer help to both victim and perpetrator. The provisions of the Code of Canon Law requiring pastors to be aware of domestic violence are in line with General Recommendation 19, which requires states to introduce education and public information programmes to help eliminate prejudices which hinder women’s equality.

The Catholic Church also has institutions for protection against domestic violence, mainly consisting of various family councils. Within the Church as a whole, the Pontifical Council for the Family is part of the Curia of the Roman Catholic Church, while at the national level, there are the Family Councils of the Bishops’ Conferences and the national Marriage and Family Life Offices. At the episcopal level, the Bishops’ Council for Pastoral Marriage and the Family and the Bishop’s Office for Pastoral Marriage and the Family come under the Episcopal Commission for Pastoral Care. In addition, the Church has special counselling services and shelters for the victims of domestic violence. In Croatia, these are mainly of a charitable nature, helping the victims of violence that has already taken place. According to data gathered in 2005, the Catholic Church in Croatia has the following institutions providing support for the victims of domestic violence: two counselling services for the victims of domestic violence, one in the Zagreb Archdiocese and the other in the Đakovo and Srijem Bishops’ Conference; eight shelters for the victims of domestic violence, five in the Zagreb Archdiocese and one each in the Rijeka Archdiocese and the Šibenik and Varaždin Bishops’ Conferences; 16 marriage and family counselling services (there are none in the Hvar-Brač-Viš or the Križevac Bishops’ Conferences); and the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross have their own institution which also provides help to victims of domestic violence. Nuns mainly work in church or state family counselling services.

To know where we are in dealing with violence in the family in general and violence against women in particular, and to plan future steps, it may be helpful to differentiate between different types of prevention according to the model proposed by Alberto Godenzi, who identifies tertiary, secondary and primary prevention of violence.

Alberto Godenzi is of the view that tertiary prevention is limited to working with the victims and perpetrators of personal violence after the violence has occurred. Secondary prevention includes learning self-defence strategies and techniques and learning how to behave in situations that could become violent. Tertiary and secondary prevention relate only to direct or personal violence, and thus to the immediate actors. Primary prevention according to Alberto Godenzi includes exposing myths about violence, exposing and resolving power imbalances between the sexes, and addressing structural forms of violence. In his view, most efforts go into tertiary and secondary prevention, and little or none into primary prevention. He believes that violence is still only being managed, that we are still dealing with the consequences of violence but not its causes. The absence of primary prevention, in his view, allows us to postulate that society is becoming accustomed to violence. Failure to address the root causes of violence and focusing only on crisis intervention and minimizing the damage it causes, in his view, is the essential cause of the culture of violence.

Following Alberto Godenzi's model, one could conclude that the Catholic Church in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina is engaged, albeit to an inadequate extent, in tertiary prevention, that secondary prevention is only just beginning to emerge, and that the critical awareness needed for primary prevention is lacking. Since primary prevention entails dismantling structural violence, countering negative ideas and the denigration of women, and exposing the myths about violence that facilitate and perpetuate violent behaviour by individuals, the educational institutions of the Catholic Church could and should also be involved in preventive action. Elsewhere, however, there are Catholic institutions involved in preventive action to eliminate domestic violence, such as the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, an NGO in Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC of the United Nations, which is particularly concerned with violence against women.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the understanding of domestic violence from a Catholic perspective and work on recommendations for the prevention of violence in Catholic communities</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials Rebeka Anić, Domestic violence – a Catholic perspective, <i>Both Believers and Citizens</i>, pp. 47-81, Training Guidelines – Modification of Social and Cultural Behaviours of Men and Women in B-H, pp. 18-28, Appendices</p> <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

► I) **Presentation on domestic violence from a Catholic perspective (see Rebeka Anić, *Domestic violence – a Catholic perspective, Both Believers and Citizens*, pp. 47-81), (50 min.)**

Explain the following in particular:

- gender-based violence – a Catholic perspective
- biblical texts and gender-based violence
- understanding marriage, marital relations, duties and gender roles in marriage
- the cross – symbol of Christ's sacrifice and gender-based violence
- Code of Canon Law and *Familiaris Consortio*
- primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of violence

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the talk

► II) **Group reading – from Rebeka Anić, *Both Believers and Citizens*, Ch. 3, Appendix (25 min.)**

Give a copy of the appendix to each participant

► **Plenary discussion (35 min.)**

Raise the following questions:

- what are the Catholic Church's recommendations for the relationship between marital partners?
- how are family relations seen in the light of Catholic beliefs?
- what messages can be derived from the texts provided?
- is it possible to identify primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of violence in a given text?



▶ III) Group work (60 min.)

Divide participants into three groups and give each group one of the three passages in the appendix headed **Biblical tests**.

*Introductory notes on marital relations in the Catholic Church, the relationship between men and women, “tracing” in relation to gender theory in the light of the Bible, the theory of subordination, complement, equality and reciprocity (see Rebeka Anić, *Both Believers and Citizens*, pp. 61-77)*

The groups’ task is to interpret the biblical texts in the light of the possible interpretations they have already had the chance to hear at the beginning of the workshop, and to summarize their conclusions into a few basic ideas and conclusions to be presented in plenary.

At the end of the session, each group is required to make a brief presentation of its conclusions in plenary; encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

▶ IV) Presentation on examples of good practice and institutions already in existence in the Catholic Church for the prevention of domestic violence (see Rebeka Anić, *Nasilje u obitelji – katolička perspektiva*) (30 min.)

▶ Plenary discussion (30 min.)

Raise the following questions:



- are domestic violence and models for its prevention talked about in your community?
- can these institutions and good practice effectively protect women against domestic violence?
- what should a priest do when a woman turns to him for help?

Try to summarize the answers on a flip chart during the discussion

▶ V) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

▶ Group work (30 min.)

Divide participants into three groups

Their task is to think of ways in which priests and the community as a whole could help in cases of domestic violence; one question per group



The recommendations should be presented in the group as a joint document (30 min.)
(if there is not enough time this can be discussed in plenary; write the ideas on a flip chart during the discussion)

APPENDICES

1. from Rebeka Anić, *Both Believers and Citizens*, Ch. 3

In the Conclusions of the 1975 Joint Synod of Bishops of the Federal Republic of Germany and the 1981 Statement of German Bishops on the position of women in the Church and Society, the German bishops do not place responsibility for life only on women, but regard it as the essential calling of both women and men. They see the emancipation of women at the expense of children and also the emancipation of men from their family as a loss of true humanity. They are of the opinion that the separation between home/family life and work/public life is damaging to both women and men; women are restricted to family duties and forced to live a double life as mothers and working women; men are alienated from an important aspect of their humanity by being isolated from family duties. As a result, the German bishops recommend that a new and more adaptable division of tasks within the family, profession or occupation, society and the Church be found, and that men and women take into account both their careers and their family responsibilities when planning their lives.

Lumen Gentium teaches that Christian spouses help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children (*Lumen Gentium* 11:2), and that married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path (to holiness) by faithful love (*Lumen Gentium* 41). Husband and wife become the image of God by entering into a lifelong covenant of giving and receiving each other as free persons. The constitution *Gaudium et Spes* 52 calls for the kindly communication of minds and the joint deliberation of spouses, as well as the painstaking cooperation of parents in the education of their children.

Biblical texts²⁷

2. I Corinthians 11: 1-12

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

²⁷ Translator's note: except where otherwise noted, all quotations from the Bible are from the King James Version

3. The Gospel According to St Mark, 10: 1-12

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan; and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again. And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh; so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

4. I Corinthians 11: 3-16

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be no covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

Domestic violence – an Orthodox Christian perspective

Do we at the end of the twentieth century have the right to take a fresh initiative in this matter [of the ordination of women, after nearly two thousand years]?

(Kallistos Ware: in Thomas Hopko (ed.), *Women and the Priesthood*, p.9)

Domestic violence is not a family problem, it is a criminal offence, subject to the penalties prescribed by law.²⁸ Women, children and the elderly are most at risk of domestic violence; for example, one woman in three in Serbia is the victim of physical violence within the family, one woman in two is the victim of psychological abuse, and one in four experiences physical violence within the family at least once in her life. In 74.8% of cases of violence against women, the perpetrator is her current or former husband; in the remaining cases, the offender is the father, mother or children. In Serbia, 72% of parents admit to physically punishing their children, and believe the maxim “spare the rod and spoil the child.”²⁹ Among the elderly, women are the most common victims of domestic violence, but women are also the most common offenders – more than 50% are women, the daughters or daughters-in-law of the victims.³⁰ The counselling service against domestic violence in Belgrade is contacted by about 3,000 people a year (mainly women and children); the service’s records indicate that they suffer from the following types of violence:³¹

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE – this constitutes 70% of cases, and as a rule, extreme violence is used, resulting in broken arms or noses, head injuries and teeth knocked out. This category also includes cases of physical abuse of women during pregnancy or breast-feeding.

SEXUAL ASSAULT – often accompanies physical and psychological abuse, and in most cases these kinds of violence are committed together.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE – the second most common kind of violence reported, to which should be added that women suffering physical violence also suffer psychological abuse, though the reverse is not necessarily true.

In her introduction to the Domestic Violence Manual for the Greek Orthodox Community, Eva Condakes questions why women are silent about domestic violence, answering “Perhaps because we are. Whether by fact, practice or misinterpretation, our religion teaches us that marriage is a lifetime commitment, our traditions assign women the role of keeping our families together, our pride in our heritage causes us to deny our imperfections, our culture defines disclosure as shameful...” (Condakes, *Domestic Violence Manual – A Training Manual for the Greek Orthodox Community*).

The community of two persons in marriage is seen in Orthodox Christianity as among the most intimate of all human relations, for as the Bible tells us, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis, 2:24). Marriage is intended to be a lifelong covenant, and it is believed that Jesus Christ himself reaffirmed this when he repeated the Old Testament law and spoke against divorce, against the possibility that a bond immortalized before God should be broken: “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man

28 See the Family Laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia

29 Translator’s note: the saying in the original text translates literally as “the rod did indeed come out of paradise”

30 For more see the following sources: <http://www.nasiljeuporodici.rs/index.php?url=edukacija/statistika.htm> and *Žene i muškarci u Srbiji*, <http://webzrs.stat.gov.rs/axd/dokumenti/razno/MuZe08s.pdf>

31 See http://www.savetovalisteprotivnasilja.org/active/sr-latin/home/o_nama.html

put asunder" (Mat. 19:6, Jn. 2). In the Epistles to the Corinthians (I Cor. 11:3)³² and the Ephesians (Eph. 5:23-5),³³ the relationship between husband and wife in marriage is compared with that between Christ and God, where "the head (Gr. *kefalê*) of the woman is the man" in the same way as the head of Christ is God. This comparison has been and is still used to justify the unequal positions of men and women by claiming that the husband is the wife's lord and master. In these patriarchal views, a woman must submit all her wishes and desires to her husband, who is the master of her body, while she is nothing more than a means of reproduction (Bakić-Hayden, Grujić, 135-6; Spahić-Šiljak, 59-65; Anić, 61-80). Interpretations of this kind are unsustainable in the spirit of a faith that preaches equality, but also the difference between men and women in every sphere of life.³⁴ The term "head" does not imply power and domination, as may be thought by the faithful in a world that is not wholly governed by Christian principles and *in Christ*. "The head is the head only in relation to the body: it is 'above' in relation to the body, but without the body it is not what it is – the head" (Bakić-Hayden, Grujić, 136). To understand the hierarchy described here it is helpful to think of the model of the Trinity, in which there is a given order (*taxsis*), but in which neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit are first, second or third, nor does any come before or after, but are hypostases of the One God (Bakić-Hayden, 337-8: 2005; Harrison, 169).

In everyday life, however, the patriarchal code of conduct is still very much present among Orthodox Christians as well as the priesthood, and women's equality in dignity is even questioned. For the Orthodox Church, a woman is first and foremost a mother, in which her role is perceived least of all in its spiritual plenitude through the *charism* (grace or favour from God) vouchsafed in the person of the Virgin (*Theotokos*), but rather through humility and subordination in giving birth, in mere reproduction, shame, and *powerlessness, impurity* and being *informally powerful*, as Lidija Radulović says (Radulović, 172). Zorica Kuburić claims that mothers subconsciously bring up their sons and daughters differently, affirming their sons in the patriarchal matrix and reproducing her powerlessness and their power. Patriarchal and binary power relations can be maintained if men and women continue to re-produce them, which is why we need to work with both men and women to raise their awareness of their role in society and the family, especially if reasons for their equality are found in traditionalist, patriarchal interpretations of the scriptures.

Society, the religious community and the family tolerate domestic violence through the following models of behaviour and convictions:³⁵

- **marriage is for life** (even though the Orthodox Church permits up to three divorces)³⁶
- **the husband is the head of the household** (head of the family)
- **the wife is the "keeper of the home" / the wife is expected to obey** (she should obey



Orthodox Church in Sarajevo - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

³² "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

³³ "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

³⁴ The reference is to the final paragraph, "Equal but Different," of the Orthodox representatives at the Anglican – Orthodox Dialogue in Athens in 1978, p.58.

³⁵ See Domestic Violence Manual for the Greek Orthodox Community

³⁶ For more on divorce in the Orthodox Church see "Čin Svete Tajne Braka" – Bračna Pravila Srpske Pravoslavne Crkve

her husband because he is head of the family; her “function” is to produce and look after the children)

- **it is shameful to talk about domestic violence** (what would people say?)
- **pressure from the family / guilt**
 - “plenty of women would like him as a husband”
 - “how would you look after the children by yourself?”
 - “there’s never been a divorce in our family”
 - “you need to be a better wife/cook/mother”
- **family approval / tolerance**
 - “your father beat me and I survived; so will you”
 - “my father beat my mother, and they’ve been married for 40 years”
 - “he takes good care of the family, gives them all they need, and he’s good looking, too”
- **the idea of forgiveness and endurance** (“try to hold on a bit longer, he’ll change”)
- **the idea of fate** (“you got what you were meant to have”)
- **pray, pray longer and harder**
- **God “let” it happen**
- **God is “punishing” you for something you’ve done**
- **God is all powerful** (“God will punish him”)

These models of behaviour make the woman feel guilty and powerless to say out loud what is happening to her; instead, she tells herself she must make sacrifices for her family, her honour, her children, for otherwise she would be a traitor.

In the Serbian Orthodox Church, marital relations are contextualized against national and ethnic identity which, in the Balkan context, are patriarchal and traditionalist.³⁷ Here traditionalism has nothing to do with Tradition, in the sense of the Orthodox Tradition, which is one, but rather with interpretations or ways of understanding it, of which there are many.

The priesthood of the Orthodox Church is still not speaking openly about cases of domestic violence, though it is important to understand here that this does not mean they have to become experts in the field. What is expected of them is that they create an environment in their congregation in which the victim of domestic violence feels safe enough to ask questions and seek help. They should also know how they can help a person going through a spiritual crisis and thinking that she “deserves” to be battered, or that “God intends it that way;” they must know how to help her find a safe place for herself and her children. Priests must know about programmes and counselling services against domestic violence, and where there are women’s safe-houses in or near the parish.

In his “Clergy Perspectives on Domestic Violence,” the Rev. Athanosios Demos writes that “we are asked to forgive our enemies, but forgiveness never includes believing that we must accept abuse from anyone. We have every right to be humble, but again, humility does not include thinking that we must allow someone to walk all over us. We are not expected to tolerate or accept abuse! Each of us is a valuable, important, significant person of immeasurable worth to God and to all those who truly love us. ... God wants us to love one another with understanding, compassion, mercy, dignity and respect. Abuse is devoid of all these qualities.” (*Domestic Violence Manual for the Greek Orthodox Community*). He then quotes a passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians, saying that each of us should read it, for it refers to the man’s role in marriage:

37 For more on this, see the author’s master’s dissertation, “Rodna ravnopravnost i društvena pravda u Srpskoj Pravoslavnoj Crkvi – Teorijski i Praktični Pristupi Rodnim/Seksualnim Identitetima - Analiza diskursa,” Pravoslavlje 2004-2009, CIPS, Sarajevo 2010; Bracewell, Wendy, “Women, Motherhood, and Contemporary Serbian Nationalism,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 19, 1/2. 1996.; Sofos, Spyros A. “Inter-ethnic Violence and Gendered Constructions of Ethnicity in former Yugoslavia,” *Social Identities*, Feb. 96, Vol. 2 Issue 1,73-92,20.

*"Husbands, love your wives,
just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for her,
that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word;
that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church,
not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
but that she should be holy and without blemish.
So husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies;
he who loves his wife loves himself."*

Ephesians 5:25-28

In other words, he adds, "when the husband loves his wife to the extent that he is willing to make any sacrifice for her; when he treats her with love, dignity, honor and respect - presenting her without bruises or blemishes, but whole, complete, loved, admired, adored and cherished as deemed by virtue of the position she holds as his wife - as his other self - as his completion of himself; **then** she should respect him (*in return*)."

*"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,
by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, yelling and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.
And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
even as God, in Christ, forgave you.
Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children,
and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us.
...but fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you...
neither filthiness, nor foolish talking...which are not fitting...
and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,
but rather expose them."*

4:30-5:4 & 5:11

Violence must be talked about, opposed and stopped in its tracks; and for this, the only way is to live in a community that does not encourage batterers, but does everything to stop them.

Metropolitan Emilianos Timiades says that tradition has become legislative, and that legislation can be changed, adding that the Orthodox Church has a tendency to "forget" the influence and grounds of its "traditional values" and hierarchical structures. What one can find in Orthodox Christianity may be described as rigid assertions and instructions on how "Orthodox Christians should behave," act, love, or have sexual relations. The Ten Commandments, one of the crucial divine injunctions for the conduct of all Christians, contain nothing that pertains only to men. One should not forget that women came very low on the social scale when Christianity first came into being, and that under Roman law a woman, whether as wife or daughter, was always subject to male authority. She was despised by all. In a letter dating from the 1st century BCE, a man writes to his pregnant wife, "If it (the newborn) be male, leave it in peace; if female, cast it out".³⁸ What we must remember is, that was then, but times change (Timiades, 367-73).

38 Translator's note: referring to the custom of infanticide by exposure in ancient Greece and Rome.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective</p> <p>To introduce participants to the understanding of domestic violence from an Orthodox Christian perspective and work on recommendations for the prevention of domestic violence in Orthodox communities</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <p>Marija Grujić, <i>Domestic Violence – an Orthodox Christian Perspective</i>, Milica Bakić-Hayden, Marija Grujić, <i>Both Believers and Citizens</i>, pp. 123-64, <i>Training Guidelines – Modification of Social and Cultural Behaviours of Men and Women in B-H</i>, pp. 29-38, Appendices</p> <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

►I) **Presentation on domestic violence from an Orthodox Christian perspective (see Marija Grujić, *Domestic Violence – an Orthodox Christian Perspective*, Milica Bakić-Hayden, Marija Grujić, *Both Believers and Citizens*, 123-64) (50 min.)**

Explain the following in particular:

- why do women keep quiet about domestic violence – ways of justifying domestic violence – basis in religious principles?
- obligations and duties in Orthodox marriage (describe the ceremony of marriage and prepare photographs or a brief video)
- in what way do society, the religious community and the family tolerate domestic violence
- how can Orthodox priests and the Orthodox congregation help victims of domestic violence; explain the concept of Sabornosti and Tradition/tradition

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the talk

►II) **Group reading of the sections of the appendices relating to beliefs that perpetuate and justify cases of domestic violence (25 min.)**

Give a copy of the appendix to each participant

► **Plenary discussion (35 min.)**

Raise the following questions:



- in what way do society, the religious community and the family tolerate domestic violence?
- are there certain convictions or models of behaviour that could be described as “typical”?

►III) **Group work (60 min.)**

Divide participants into two groups and give each group three of the passages in the appendix headed **Reinterpretation of beliefs that justify domestic violence** (one group receives passages 1-3, the other passages 4-6)

Introductory remarks on the “ethnicization” of Orthodox Churches, attitudes towards women in the Serbian Orthodox Church, discourse on gender/nation

The task is for each group to “discover” the beliefs they have already heard about in the previous exercise and the presentation at the beginning of the workshop, and to summarize their

conclusions into a few basic ideas and conclusions to be presented in plenary

At the end of the session, each group is required to make a brief presentation of its conclusions in plenary; encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

► IV) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES (60 min.)

► Group work (30 min.)

Divide participants into three groups

Their task is to think of ways in which priests and the community as a whole could help in cases of domestic violence; one question per group. Write down the questions on a flip chart so that everyone can see them. Each group should write down its conclusions in the form of a short document.

- what information should a priest have on domestic violence
- working with counselling services, safe-houses, NGOs and government organizations/institutions
- ways of working together

At the end of the session, each group is required to make a brief presentation of its conclusions in plenary; encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

► V) GROUP WORK ON INVOLVING WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY – AN END TO SILENCE (30 min.)

A brief presentation on examples of good practice and advocacy in religious communities to speak openly about domestic violence (e.g. the Domestic Violence Manual for the Greek Orthodox Community, more in Marija Grujić, *Domestic Violence – an Orthodox Christian Perspective*)



Group work on the recommendations, which will be presented in the group as a joint document (if there is not enough time this can be discussed in plenary; write the ideas on a flip chart during the discussion)

APPENDICES

1. Beliefs that perpetuate and justify cases of domestic violence

- **marriage is for life** (even though the Orthodox Church permits up to three divorces)³⁹
- **the husband is the head of the household** (head of the family)
- **the wife is the “keeper of the home” / the wife is expected to obey** (she should obey her husband because he is head of the family; her “function” is to produce and look after the children)
- **it is shameful to talk about domestic violence** (what would people say?)

³⁹ For more on divorce in the Orthodox Church see “Čin Svete Tajne Brake” – Bračna Pravila Srpske Pravoslavne Crkve

- **pressure from the family / guilt**
 - “plenty of women would like him as a husband”
 - “how would you look after the children by yourself?”
 - “there’s never been a divorce in our family”
 - “you need to be a better wife/cook/mother”
- **family approval / tolerance**
 - “your father beat me and I survived; so will you”
 - “my father beat my mother, and they’ve been married for 40 years”
 - “he takes good care of the family, gives them all they need, and he’s good looking, too”
- **the idea of forgiveness and endurance** (“try to hold on a bit longer, he’ll change”)
- **the idea of fate** (“you got what you were meant to have”)
- **pray, pray longer and harder**
- **God “let” it happen**
- **God is “punishing” you for something you’ve done**
- **God is all powerful** (“God will punish him”)

2. Reinterpretation of beliefs that justify domestic violence

Marriage as a lifetime commitment

Marriage is entered into on the assumption that it is for life, but the victim should not believe that the Church values the sanctity of marriage over the sanctity of life. When a man decides to become violent, he has resolved to “kill” the marriage.

The husband is the “head” and the wife must obey him:

- *St Paul and the Epistle to the Ephesians; understanding of the term “head” (Gr. kefalos)*
- *St Paul also says, “there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”*
- *the church’s marriage ceremony promotes partnership, communion, and mutual understanding*

Ephesians (5:25-28),

Husbands, love your wives,
just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for her,
that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word;
that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church,
not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
but that she should be holy and without blemish.
So husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies;
he who loves his wife loves himself.⁴⁰

Shame and talking about violence as a “betrayal of the family”

Secrecy is a way of life for many families in the Balkans. Some victims would rather “feel pain than shame,” fearing that the community would reject them and spread scandal about them.

IT IS VITAL TO REPORT A BATTERER – IT IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS STOPPING HIM. It is neither shameful nor a betrayal.

Forgiveness:

Should the Christian ethical principle of forgiving one’s enemy be applied to cases of domestic violence?

40 As quoted in the Domestic Violence Manual

Fate

No victim of violence should think she “deserves it,” or that God “intends it.”

Just pray harder

Who stops the cycle of violence?

Ephesians 4: 30- 5:4 and 5:11

“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,
by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, yelling and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.
And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
even as God, in Christ, forgave you.
Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children,
and walk in love as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us.
...but fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you...
neither filthiness, nor foolish talking...which are not fitting...
and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”¹

1 ibid

Gender-based violence – an Islamic perspective

BATTERING

The doctrine of the dignity of every person attests to the importance of respecting each individual's integrity. However, if the family is characterized by hierarchical relations, many men will find it hard to avoid the temptation of domination over their wife and children, who are dependent on them economically and materially. Violence is not innate to just one religious or cultural tradition, but a problem for all societies, all cultures, and all social strata. The traditional architecture of family relations in early societies meant that the man was the head of the family, the decision-maker to whom every other member was subordinate. It is hard to even hypothesize how much violence there was in these early families, given that it was then, and in many societies still is, taboo, the "woman's disgrace."

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا
 مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۖ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّاتِي
 تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَإِن
 أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

Ayat from Qur'an 4:34

The problem of domestic violence gradually began to be addressed in the Balkans in the final decade of the 20th century. In 2005, the Domestic Violence Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina was adopted, the first legislation to govern domestic violence specifically. However, people are still reluctant to speak about it, as women are still fearful of being stigmatized by making their "disgrace" public. The disgrace affects the entire family, damaging its reputation in the marital relations of later generations. Religious communities are doing little to resolve these problems, and are not actively involved with other state institutions responsible for the care of victims of domestic violence – who are usually women and children. In the Islamic community, a few imams who have recognized the damaging consequences of domestic violence are addressing the problem, and sometimes take part in actions by non-governmental organizations, but there is as yet no specific action within the community.

It is important to talk about the problem and help to bring to light certain religious and cultural problems, but this requires detailed analysis of the teachings to be found in the Islamic religious heritage. Most Muslims and scholars would now say that Islam forbids violence, and that the example of the Prophet Muhammad has always encouraged them to refrain from violence and behave kindly towards women. The problem, however, is that for centuries people have believed that a woman must obey her husband (*bayt al-ta'ah*), which still forms part of the family law of many Muslim countries – and oppression is a frequent result. In classical Islamic law, "disobedience" (usually meaning refusing sex or leaving the house within the husband's permission) may be a legal basis for divorce. In such cases, the wife loses her *mahr* and the right to maintenance.⁴¹ The basis for this legislation is found in the prescriptive classical interpretations of the following Qur'anic verses:

⁴¹ For example, in Malaysia, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and other Muslim countries where family laws still include the "bayt al-ta'ah" (house of obedience) clause. For more, see John ESPOSITO, *Women in Muslim Family Law*, New York, 2001.

Men are the managers of the affairs (**qawama**) of women for that God has preferred in bounty (**faddala**) one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property. Righteous women are therefore obedient (**qanitat**), guarding the secret for God's guarding. And those you fear may be rebellious (**nushuz**) admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them (**daraba**). If they then obey you, look not for any way against them; God is All-high, All-great (Qur'an, 4:34)

Reading this *ayat* or verse in isolation from the message of the Qur'an as a whole, the impression is that the Qur'an promotes hierarchical, androcentric and even misogynous attitudes, in which women are expected to obey their husbands and will be punished if they fail to do so. This attitude, and one's first encounter with the Qur'an, may deter women in particular from religion and from looking into what Islam really says about family relations. As noted above, Muslim authorities have underlined the importance of the revealed Text, but also the context and the grammatical composition of what it says. Taking passages from the Qur'an out of context, one could justify many dubious social practices which do not in fact conform to the fundamental principles of the faith – the dignity of every human being, justice, mercy, love, the vice-gerency and friendship of women and men – dealt with earlier.

In their exegesis of this *ayat*, classical Qur'an commentators such as Tabari and Al-Razi interpret the "preference" (*faddala*) given to men in the economic and material sense,⁴² and women's disobedience (*nushuz*) to mean refusing sex or leaving the house without their husband's consent; they take the term *qunut* to denote a woman's obeying her husband, and the term *darb* (to beat) as a symbolic act by the man as head of the family. Other commentators, such as Zamakhshari, however, understand it literally as meaning the man has the right to beat his wife, but without injuring her, rather as a warning to be "obedient."⁴³ On the basis of this verse, therefore, classical Islamic law justifies the superior position of the man and the rule of the family and society by the father and husband.

Modern exegetical tradition, which includes various feminist and progressive factions, opposes these interpretations, seeing them as contrary to the overall logic of the Qur'an and other message on the shared action of God's vice-gerents and friends, both women and men, and their responsibilities, which cannot be achieved within a hierarchical relationship structure. For a better understanding of this, we need to provide the explanation of certain terms in this Qur'anic *ayat* given by modern exegesis:

Qawama – this is translated and interpreted as caring for and protecting women in the material sense, and sometimes as superiority. In most Bosnian and English translations of the Qur'an, the term is translated as taking care of and taking responsibility for the wife and family.⁴⁴

Faddala – the advantages God gives to people, which may be material, spiritual, intellectual or other advantages, and which are not based on sex; as already noted, the Prophet Muhammad's wife Khadijah was an economically independent businesswoman, who enjoyed that type of advantage (*faddala*) and, in consequence, *qawam*, or providing for the family. Advantages and gifts are conditional on a greater degree of responsibility.

42 For more see Zilka SPAHIĆ-ŠILJAK, *Žene, religija i politika*.

43 Sa'adiyya SHAIKH (ed.), *A Tafsir of Praxis: Gender, Marital Violence and Resistance in a South African Muslim Community*, Daniel C. MAGUIRE C. – Sa'adiyya SHAIKH, *Violence against Women in Contemporary World Religions: Roots and Cures*, Cleveland, 2007, 72–73.

44 For more see Amina WADUD, *Woman and the Qur'an*, 64–74 and Zilka SPAHIĆ-ŠILJAK, *Žene, religija i politika*, 113–116. Translator's note: The translation given above is that of Arthur J Arberry, perhaps the most widely-read of all English versions of the Qur'an. A much lesser-known translation is that of Muhammad Asad, whose version reads: "Men shall take full care of women with the bounties which God has bestowed more abundantly on the former than on the latter, and with what they may spend out of their possessions. And the righteous women are the truly devout ones, who guard the intimacy which God has [ordained to be] guarded. And as for those women whose ill will you have reason to fear, admonish them [first]; then leave them alone in bed; then beat them; and if thereupon they pay you heed, do not seek to harm them. Behold, God is indeed most high, great!"

Nushuz – usually translated as disobedience, acts of rebellion, antagonism, ill-humour; in the Qur’anic verse in question, it is usually rendered as disobedience. However, as Kecia Ali notes, Qur’an commentators have paid little attention to the fact that the Qur’an also uses the term in reference to men: “If a woman fear rebelliousness or aversion (*nushuz*) in her husband, there is no fault in them if the couple set things right between them.” (Qur’an 4:128).⁴⁵ Kecia Ali notes that in this instance, the term **nushuz** is not translated as disobedience, but rather as antagonism or aversion towards the wife, which is a reason for setting things right by agreement or divorce.⁴⁶ In other words, the self-same term is translated as “disobedience” in reference to women but as “ill-treatment or aversion” by reference to men.

There are, however, alternative translations and commentaries on the Qur’anic verse 4:34. Parvez, a contemporary Qur’an commentator from Pakistan, and the jurist ‘Umar Ahmad Usmani, hold the view that the terms used in this *ayat*, *rijal* and *nisa*, mean man and woman, not husband and wife; as a result, **nushuz** cannot be interpreted as a wife’s disobeying her husband, and he in consequence has no right to punish his wife. Rather, “punishment, if any, will be awarded by an Islamic court.”⁴⁷ The prominent lexicographer Imam Raghīb interprets **nushuz** as “rebellion against one’s husband and befriending another man or developing [an] illegitimate relationship.”⁴⁸

Daraba – a term used in several passages of the Qur’an with a variety of meanings, such as to give an example (Arberry: “strike a similitude;” Asad: “propound a parable:” Qur’an 16:112), to prevent, to begin a journey, to abandon. Ahmad Ali of Pakistan is of the view that **daraba** means to have sexual relations, while Imam Raghīb, who is of the view that the meaning **daraba ‘ala** means the mating of camels,⁴⁹ translates the last part of the verse as follows:

As for women you fear are averse, talk to them persuasively; then *leave them alone in bed* (without molesting them) and **go to bed with them** (when they are willing) (Qur’an, 4:34)

Contrast this with the usual translation of this same verse:

And those you fear may be rebellious (*nushuz*) admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them (*daraba*). If they then obey you, look not for any way against them; God is All-high, All-great (Qur’an, 4:34)

Though the word **daraba** is usually translated as “beat,” Wadud concludes that this passage should be understood as a restriction or prohibition on unconstrained violence against women.⁵⁰ Barlas also believes that the word should be understood in those terms, for two reasons:

- the case of the prophet Ayub (Job), who swore to beat his wife when he regained his health, for having reproached him for persevering in his faith during his travails; but God told him “Take in thy hand a bundle of rushes, and strike therewith, and do not fail in thy oath” (Qur’an, 38:44). The oath was fulfilled, and the bearing was symbolic – with a bundle of grass.
- the term **daraba** should be seen as descriptive, in the light of the context in which the subject is discussed. Barlas explains that at that time (7th century CE), when a man needed no

45 Translator’s note: Muhammad Asad has “If a woman has reason to fear ill-treatment from her husband, or that he might turn away from her...”

46 Kecia ALI, *Sexual Ethics in Islam*, Oxford, 2006, 121.–122.

47 Asghar Ali ENGINEER, *The Qur’an, Woman and Modern Society*, 2005, 51.

48 Ibid, 50. Translator’s note: in each case the translation into Bosnian is rather different in meaning from the original English text given here.

49 Translator’s note: one of a great many meanings for this verb in J M Cowan (ed.), *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Spoken Language Services Inc, New York, 1976 is “to cover or mount” in the sense of a male camel mounting a female.

50 Amina WADUD, *Qur’an and Woman*, 76.

permission to beat his wife, this provision was in fact a restriction on such behaviour, which was to be used only as a last resort, after admonition and being left alone in bed. The passage should not therefore be seen as authorizing violence against women, but as an attempt to bring some degree of order into a society in which physical punishment of one's wife was not seen as violence.⁵¹

Qunut – usually translated as obedience and submission, but to God and His Messenger, not to people, as explained in the joint action principles. Several passages of the Qur'an refer to obedience:

- a) and obedient men and obedient women (*wa al-qanitin va al-qanitat*) (Qur'an, 33:35);
- b) Maryam is said to have been among the *qanitin* or obedient, but Besim Korkut translates this as "those who spend time in prayer (Qur'an, 66:12);
- c) the prophet Ibrahim/Abraham is said to have been devout and obedient (*ummatan qanitan*) (Qur'an 16:120);
- d) believers are commanded to "stand obedient to God" (Arberry) or "stand before God in devout obedience" (Asad) (*qumu li al-Allahi qanitin*) (Qur'an, 2:238).

As these translations of the Qur'an reveal, the term *qunut*, *qanit* is translated as one who is obedient to God. Wadud adds that the Qur'an does not require obedience to men, and that this is not characteristic of better women (Qur'an, 66:5).⁵²

Nor is obedience to a man a condition for swearing fealty (*bay'at*) by women who come to pledge allegiance to the new community in Medina:

O Prophet, when believing women come to thee, swearing fealty (*bay'a*) to thee upon the terms that they will not associate with God anything, and will not steal, neither commit adultery, nor slay their children, nor bring a calumny they forge between their hands and their feet, nor disobey thee in aught honourable, ask God's forgiveness for them; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. (Qur'an, 60:12)

Modern exegesis also underlines the example of Muhammad a.s., who condemned violence and was never violent towards his wives. Given the 7th century context in which the Revelation was received by him, modern exegetes draw attention to the difficulties Muhammad himself faced in the Beduin society of his day. Men were the sovereign authority in the family and were not accountable for their conduct towards their women except in the higher echelons of society, so that the prescription on restricting violence through a series of steps (admonition, separation from the marital bed, beating) was too much for them, and they kept complaining that their women were "not obeying them." The example of 'Umar, the second Caliph, reveals that the Medinans had a different attitude towards women from the Meccans: "Men from the Quraysh tribe are accustomed to ruling their wives, and then we came to Medina and saw that the women rule the men. Then our women began keeping company with them and refusing to obey us."⁵³

51 Asma BARLAS, *Believing Women in Islam*, 188.

52 Amina WADUD, *Qur'an and Woman*, 77.

53 Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Tafsir al-Fakhr al-Razi*, V, Beirut, 1985, 93

Against the background of customs inherited from the pre-Islamic period, Muhammad set the example by his own conduct and his constant advice:

- The best among you are those who are best to their wives and daughters.
- The best among you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family. It is the generous who is good to women, and it is the wicked who insults them.
- No one should beat his wife like a slave as at night he will be with her again.

When considering the Qur'anic text, the meaning, the translation and the context in which this verse restricting violence was revealed, modern exegetes turn to other Qur'anic passages which explicitly reveal an egalitarian attitude and respect for the dignity of all:

- Women and men are twin souls: "They are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them" (Qur'an, 2:187)
- Women and men are vice-gerents (khalifa) of God, who have accepted the amanah of testifying to the oneness of God in diversity (tawhid): "I am setting in the earth a viceroy" (Qur'an, 2:30)
- Women and men are each other's friends and protectors (awliya): "And the believers, the men and the women, are friends one of the other" (Qur'an, 9:71)
- Women and men are equal before God, and the only thing that distinguishes one person from another is their piety (taqwa): "Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him" (Qur'an, 49:13)
- "The Qur'anic verses were revealed in ancient Arabia, over fourteen hundred years ago when the world viewed beating one's wife as a right. Today, our society has moved decidedly beyond that stage, and views wife abuse as the crime it really is."

In the light of these Qur'anic verses and the sayings of the Prophet (*hadith*), it is hard to see a connection between justifying violence against women and the Qur'anic principles of equality between God's vicegerents and friends, men and women alike. Verse 4:34 should therefore be seen as descriptive, designed gradually to eliminate it or replace it with other methods (leaving the wife alone in bed) proposed by Pakistani lexicographer Imam Raghib.

Violence and abuse of any kind, whether physical, verbal or emotional, destroys the family and inflicts profound trauma on women and children, which in turn has an impact on society as a whole. It is vital, therefore, to involve every sector of society in eradicating violence and not to permit partial interpretations of individual Qur'anic verses. As Bosnia and Herzegovina has no activities or programmes to combat domestic violence within the Islamic community, the following example of Muslim doctors in the USA may suggest how to become involved in resolving the problem in association with non-governmental organizations and state institutions. The Guidelines have been translated and expanded, in part with additional information from the Qur'an.

THE VERB *DARABA*

Taken from Abdulhamid A. Abu Sulejman, *Bračne nesuglasice, CNS, Nahla, Sarajevo 2009, pp. 27-43.*

If it can be shown that the verb *daraba* does not mean inflicting physical or psychological pain, and that some husbands have misused this Qur'anic term to justify their cruelty towards their wives, who for their part have had no choice but to endure the abuse because of concern for their children or social or financial insecurity, how then should we understand the term?

This is a question demanding wide-ranging consideration and a genuine knowledge of its various aspects and ancillary meanings; it is not one on which we can reach hasty conclusions. The Qur'anic steps relating to the terms *daraba* and *darb* focus on ways of reconciliation between spouses that promote love, compassion and intimacy, to re-establish a meaningful marriage. These steps do not extend to the ultimate resource: arbitration by conciliators from the spouses' families. If, then, the aims and steps set out in the Qur'an allow no excuses for violence, injury or pain as a way of resolving marital problems, what is the proper interpretation of this verb? Does it denote pain in the allegorical or metaphorical sense?

The verb *daraba* is used in the Qur'an both as a transitive verb, as, for example, in "God has struck a similitude/propounded a parable" (16:75 and 16:76), and as an intransitive verb, as in "When you are journeying (*daraba*) in the land there is no fault in you if you shorten the prayer" (4:101), where the verb is accompanied by an adjective.

If we adopt the interpretation of this verb as a light or gentle blow, as it were with *miswak* (a frayed stick used as a toothbrush) or something similar, such as a modern toothbrush or a pencil, as Ibn Abbas suggests, it does not mean to punish or to inflict injury or pain. What it actually indicates is a mild physical expression of seriousness, frustration or lack of interest on the part of a husband for a wife with whom he no longer shares the marital bed. It is the opposite of the touching and caressing that imply warmth and intimacy. This is a reasonable interpretation, since it does not compromise human dignity in any way, nor does it undermine the respect between spouses who are literally bound by the bonds of marriage. This does not associate "striking" with denigration, injury or pain. On the other hand, the views of some jurists, as revealed in their fatwas, do not necessarily follow this line of thought, especially when they say that *darb* should not exceed 20 or 40 blows, without considering what kind of blows are meant (regardless of whether they are directed at a particular part of the woman's body, whether they inflict internal injury or break bones, or even whether the woman will survive them).

Then again, notwithstanding Ibn Abbas' moderate interpretation, it still leaves room for the flawed understanding that has been used to manipulate it in the past to justify violent and abusive treatment; even today, it can still be misused to inflict pain on women by appeal to fatwas that speak of light blows. Neither perception nor solution should leave any room for a false interpretation of the true meaning of the verb *daraba*, and should not allow the concept to be disregarded or misused. These precautionary measures are in line with the true aims of the Sharia as regards founding a family on the basis of love, compassion and dignity.



Calligraphic fragment of Qur'an - editing by Sanja Vrzic (Source - Wikipedia) -

The outcome of all this was that I embarked on a re-evaluation of the entire question in the light of his methodological framework (presented earlier in the study), of the eternal nature of the Revelation and its Message, the need to understand the relevant Divine norms, the particular features of the place and time, and the imperative need to conduct an objective and systematic analysis of the question under consideration. I studied the various meanings of the verb *daraba* and its many derivatives in the Qur'an, since the most reliable way of explaining the Qur'an is by the Qur'an; the best interpretations of it are to be found in the Qur'an itself if we interpret it in line with the higher aims of the Sharia (*maqasid*). The cluster of meanings of the verb *daraba* and its derivatives in the Qur'an provide seventeen nuances of meaning, as revealed by the following ayats:

"God has *struck a similitude*" (16:75, 76, 112; 66:11); 2) "And when the son of Maryam is *cited as an example*, behold, thy people turn away from it" (43:57); 3) "Behold, how they *strike similitudes* for thee, and go astray, and cannot find a way!" (17:48); 4) "So *strike not any similitudes* for God; surely God knows, and you know not" (16:74); 5) When you are *journeying* in the land there is no fault in you if you shorten the prayer" (4:101); 6) "Then we *veiled [smote]* their ears many years in the Cave (18:11); 7) "Shall we *turn away* the Remembrance for you, for that you are a prodigal people?" (43:5); 8) "and let them *cast* their veils over their bosoms, . . . nor let them *stamp* their feet, so that their hidden ornament may be known (24:31); 9) "Go with My servants by night; *strike* for them a dry path in the sea" (20:77); 10) "Then We revealed to Moses, '*Strike* with thy staff the sea'; and it clave, and each part was as a mighty mount" (26:63); 11) "God is not ashamed to *strike a similitude* even of a gnat, or aught above it" (2:26); 12) "And when Moses sought water for his people, so We said, '*Strike* with thy staff the rock'; and there gushed forth from it twelve fountains" (2:60); 13) "And abasement and poverty *were pitched upon them*, and they were laden with the burden of God's anger" (2:61); 14) "Abasement shall *be pitched on them*, wherever they are come upon" (3:112); 15) "How shall it be, when the angels take them, *beating* their faces and their backs?" (47:27); 16) "I shall cast into the unbelievers' hearts terror, so *smite* above the neck, and *smite* every finger of them!" (8:12); 17) "Take in thy hand a bundle of rushes, and *strike* therewith, and do not fail in thy oath" (38:44).

Reading these verses, we see that the verb *daraba* (transitive and intransitive) has a number of figurative or allegorical meanings; it can mean to isolate, to separate, to leave, to distance oneself, to move away, and so on. When *daraba* relates

- to the earth or land, it means to *journey, travel or leave*
- to the ear, it means to *block or prevent from hearing*
- to the Qur'an, it means to *set aside, ignore or abandon*
- to truth and falsehood, it means to make something *obvious* and to *distinguish* one from the other
- to the hijab, it means to *cast one's veil over one's bosom*
- to the seas and rivers, it means to *make a path* through the water by pushing it aside
- to building a wall, it means to *partition or separate*
- to people, it means to be *covered with shame*
- to feet, necks, faces or backs, it means *to cut, to cut off, to strike or beat*
- in other verses it means to drive away, to shock, to slap, to inflict damage.

Thus the primary meaning of the verb *daraba* in the Qur'an is to separate, to distance oneself, to leave, to abandon...

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the understanding of domestic violence from Islamic perspective and work on recommendations for the prevention of domestic violence in Muslim communities</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials Abdulhamid A. Abu Sulejman, "Battering," from <i>Marrital Disagreements</i>, pp. 27-43; Zilka Spahić-Šiljak, <i>Domestic Violence – an Islamic Perspective; Both Believers and Citizens</i>, pp. 199-207; <i>Training Guidelines – Modification of Social and Cultural Behaviours of Men and Women in B-H</i>, pp. 29-38, Appendices</p> <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

► I) **Presentation on domestic violence from an Islamic perspective** (see Abdulhamid A. Abu Sulejman, "Battering," Zilka Spahić-Šiljak, *Domestic Violence – an Islamic Perspective*, and *Both Believers and Citizens*, pp. 199-207, (50 min.)

Explain the following in particular:

- how are certain passages of the Qur'an relating to married life and the relationship between spouses interpreted
- relations within Muslim marriage (obedience or partnership)
- how are these passages translated from Arabic to other languages, and why are Bosnian translations not amended to reflect contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an
- fatwas (legal rulings) on domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the (in) activity of the Islamic Community in B-H
- how can imams and Muslim communities help to eliminate domestic violence

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the talk

► II) **Group reading of the sections of the Qur'an and hadith that can be interpreted as supporting domestic violence or partnership between women and men** (25 min.)

Distribute the appendices to all participants



► **Plenary discussion** (35 min.)

Raise the following questions:

- *why do society, the religious community and the family tolerate domestic violence?*
- *why do certain interpretations relating to women and men that do not conform to the time and context we are living in keep being repeated?*

► III) **Analysis of the texts**

► **Group work** (60 min.)

Divide the participants into groups and give them copies of the passages from Appendix 1.

Analysis of the passage on the value of a virtuous woman (from Ismail and Izeta Haverić, *Islamski brak i porodica, Sarajevo 1991. pp. 43. 164,*) and Appendix 2. Analysis of the passage on partnership and love between a woman and a man

The groups' task is to analyze and discuss marital relations in the Muslim family and to draw conclusions based on the texts provided, which they will present in plenary

At the end of the session, each group is required to make a brief presentation of its conclusions in plenary, which should encourage participants to discuss the various points they have heard from the texts analyzed (30 min.)

► IV) Analysis of Qur'anic texts

► Group work (60 min.)

*Give participants two translations of the Qur'anic ayat on "qawam" from Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 (**Qur'an, 4:34, from the translation by Besim Korkut, and the translation by Imam Raghīb on p. 202 of Both Believers and Citizens**) together with the passage by A. Abu Sulejman entitled "Battering," pp. 38-43.*

The groups' task is to analyze the translations and discuss the Qur'anic term "daraba" and the ways in which it is translated, and to understand and form their views on domestic violence.

At the end of the session each group will present its conclusions in plenary with the possibility of plenary questions and discussion

► V) Recommendations for religious communities (60 min.)

► Group work (30 min.)

Divide participants into three groups

Their task is to think of ways in which an imam or muallim and the community as a whole could help in cases of domestic violence. Each group has one question. Write the question on a flip chart so everyone can see it. Each group should write down its conclusions in the form of a brief document.

- what information should an imam or muallim have on domestic violence
- how should religious communities work with counselling services, safe-houses, NGOs and government organizations/institutions
- what resources does the community need to respond to these needs

At the end of the session, each group is required to make a brief presentation of its conclusions in plenary; encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

► Group work (30 min.)

Give one group a copy of the Guidelines for imams for combating domestic violence, so it can analyze it and prepare a brief presentation for the plenary.

Give the other group the task of finding fatwas (legal rulings) on the internet, either from the Islamic Community of B-H or individually (two or three fatwas), to analyze the fatwas and the questions and prepare a presentation for the plenary.

APPENDICES

1. Analysis of the passage on the value of a chaste woman (from Ismail and Izeta Haverić, *Islamski brak i porodica, Sarajevo 1991. pp. 43. 164*)

1. "An industrious and chaste woman is the greatest treasure. A woman like that appreciates her husband, appreciates his hard work and his care of his family. She looks after his house, cares for and raises his children, and so on."
2. "A woman is the shepherd in the house of her husband and is responsible for her flock" (hadith)
3. Neglecting the home and the upbringing of children is a grave sin for a woman, for this is her principal duty. Her value is judged from the way she understands and carries out this duty, as Muhammad a.s. put it so well: "The world and all things in it have value; but the most valuable thing in the world is a wife willing to forgive the faults of her husband for the sake of their family."
4. Her husband has the greatest rights over a woman, and his mother the greatest rights over a man" (hadith)
5. "A woman's obedience to her husband is equivalent to jihad" (hadith)
6. "When a woman dies she will go to heaven if her husband is pleased with her" (hadith)
7. "A woman cannot requite God until she fulfils all her obligations towards her husband"

2. Analysis of texts on partnership and love between a woman and a man

1. "And the believers, the men and the women, are friends one of the other; they bid to honour, and forbid dishonour; they perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and they obey God and His Messenger. Those – upon them God will have mercy; God is All-might, All-wise" (Qur'an, 9:71)
2. "Your wives; they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them" (Qur'an, 2:187)
3. "And of His signs is that He created for you, of yourselves, spouses, that you might repose in them, and He has set between you love and mercy. Surely in that are signs for a people who consider" (Qur'an, 30:21)
4. "Every soul earns only to its own account""No soul laden bears the burden of another" (Qur'an, 6:164, 35:18)
5. You will not enter heaven until you believe; and you will not believe until you love one another.""Show kindness to the creatures on the earth so that God may be kind to you" (hadith)
6. "The best among you are those who are best to their wives and daughters" (hadith)

3. Qur'anic text

"As for women you fear are averse, talk to them persuasively; then leave them alone in bed (*daraba* – without molesting them) and go to bed with them (when they are willing) (Qur'an, 4.34)

4. Qur'anic text

"And those you fear may be rebellious admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them (*daraba*). If they then obey you, look not for any way against them" (Qur'an, 4:34)

5. The views of Prof. Ljevaković

From the public lecture on domestic violence held at the women's organization Nahla, Sarajevo, published in *Preporod*, 23. 02. 2010. "Those who commit violence should not hide behind religion"

"When a married couple fall out, Professor Ljevaković said that there are three stages to overcoming the problem. The first is for the couple to talk things over without a mediator, and if that proves fruitless, the next is to have them sleep apart, and finally, if even that does not succeed, the third is to have them live apart, in different houses. The purpose of this separation is to provide an opportunity for them to become close again, and to keep the marriage together. If these measures fail, two arbitrators chosen by the spouses, one by each, should come into the picture. Their job is to find common ground and to determine whether the marriage can be saved. If even that does not help, then divorce is the answer, but in a dignified manner. The Qur'anic imperative is that married life should be pleasant. Professor Ljevaković reiterated this: "God commands us to behave kindly in marriage, to visit our relatives, and prohibits violence and ill deeds. Many ayats of the Qur'an say that believers, men and women, are like brother and sister to each other, like friends, so how can they be violent?"

6. Guidelines for imams to combat domestic violence (Both Believers and Citizens, pp. 204-207)

Integrating knowledge and skills relating to the prevention of sex/ gender-based violence

Case scenario 2:

Adrijana and her ten-year old son were taken in at the Medica Zenica safe-house after she had endured ten years of battering by her husband. She described the violence as physical and psychological abuse. She had been married for 13 years, and for the first three years all went fairly well, until she had her son. That was when the problems of psychological abuse began; her husband began to forbid her to see anyone, and then to assault her physically (pulling her hair, hitting her) and abusing her verbally. She said that it was a long time since she had left the house to spend time with her friends and relatives, and that she was not allowed to contact her parents. At first, she saw her husband's jealousy as love, which was how her husband also described and justified it. He did not like it when she changed her clothes, washed her hair, or wore make-up. She decided to call the police when the violence became too much to bear. She asked the police to come to the house, where her husband had put two grenades on the door handle of the living room and threatened her and her son. It was then that she filed for divorce, but withdrew the petition when her husband promised to behave, and also because of her son, so that he would still have a father. After a while the problems began again: her husband began to threaten her with an axe, a knife, a grenade, a gun... More than once she reported her husband to the police, who came to the front door and took her husband's identity card details without arresting him. On one occasion her husband took their son to the top of the house, intending to throw him off the building, but the boy managed to get away as he was trying to open the loft door. Adrijana tried to stop her husband, but was not strong enough. She called the police again, but once again all they did was to check the husband's ID. Her husband was drinking daily, as well as taking medication prescribed by the doctor. She was working as a cleaner in a bakery, and had to pay the rent of the flat and the utilities bills out of her wages of 200 KM. Her husband, for his part, showed not the slightest interest in caring for his family, and worse still, he used to take her money and "gamble it away." On one occasion Adrijana fainted on her way home from work, saying she was terrified of her husband's threats. One evening, she finally decided to seek help when her husband kept an axe by the bed where he had put her and her son, and forced them to kiss it. He refused to allow them any food or water. She said he called a friend that night on his mobile phone and said he was going to kill them. With the help of the police and an NGO, she managed to get to Medica in Zenica.

During her time at the Medica Zenica safe-house, she underwent regular individual and group psychotherapy with a view to alleviating or eliminating the psychological problems caused by the violence she had suffered, and she and her son were also given regular medical check-ups. As part of her occupational therapy, after her financial circumstances had improved, she joined a 6-month hairdressing course, which was of considerable help in overcoming her problems. Her son was also involved in individual and group therapy, and was selected as a peer educator, along with another child, a girl, to help the trainer with educational workshops with another group of children from three different organizations.

Her divorce was also finalized during her time at the safe-house, and she was granted custody of her son. Aware that she could only stay in the safe-house for a limited time, she began to look for work, keen to provide for herself and her son. After many unsuccessful attempts to find work, she often talked about her fears for the future.

Her mother and sister would have been able to give Adrijana a place to live in an empty flat of theirs when she left Medica, but refused, fearful of her former husband's reaction when he learned that they had taken her in.

Two days later, Adrijana told her therapist that she planned to go back to her former husband, as she could see no other way out for herself and her son, and she was sure her husband had changed. She was contacted after leaving Medica, and said that she could not believe her husband had changed so much for the better; he was not even shouting or swearing, let alone hitting her. She says they talk everything over now, and she has begun to work and earn money thanks to her determination, her skills and the certificate she received while at Medica.

Questions for case scenario 2:

1. In what way are traditional gender roles obvious in this story?
2. What elements of gender-based violence are there in this story?
3. What impact did gender roles and gender-based violence have on Adrijana's decisions?
4. Why did Adrijana go back to her husband?

Case scenario 3:

Nađa is a young woman of 19, who was taken into the safe-house for rehabilitation and care through the Social Services Centre, which she contacted on account of the psychological, economic and physical violence she had experienced at the hands of her partner. They had been living together for about 9 months. She showed clear signs of physical violence, having suffered serious injuries four days before seeking help.

Her medical records and a medical check-up revealed the extent of the severe abuse she had endured; eleven knife wounds in various parts of her body, a serious leg injury, haematomas around the eyes, and her nails and tongue pulled out.

The young woman and her boyfriend had been dating for two and a half months before deciding to live together. He is eleven years older than her, and already had one failed marriage behind him from which he had a son (now twelve years old), as well as one failed relationship. She knew about the marriage and the child, but it was not until two months ago that she found out about the other woman he had lived with. He worked as a security guard, and she had a job in a fast-food restaurant. She described their relationship before they moved in together as a fairy tale. They saw each other every day, he made her feel safe, they would go for long walks to the theatre and on outings together, and they exchanged gifts. Her father had known him since the war, when he had been with the mujahideen; he was just sixteen at the time. Her father was in the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She said that her father warned her against her boyfriend, saying he was not a good choice of lifetime companion, but that she was blinded by love and decided to live with him anyway. From that moment on their relationship was full of jealousy, and it was when they started living together that his jealous outbursts began. He had been coming to her workplace even before that, when they were dating, but was now coming daily; he refused to let her go out with her girlfriends, saying it was all "for her own good." Once they were living together he became increasingly controlling, and later made her give up her job, saying she didn't need to work, she should be at home; he was working, so she could relax and enjoy life. The first battering occurred on her return from an outing. As time passed even the simplest thing would be a pretext for a beating; she would be hit even if she asked him something he did not like. She began to realize that something was wrong, and wanted to share her problems with her parents. He cried and promised never to do it again, and they made up, but despite this, their arguments, accompanied by physical assault against her, became increasingly frequent. He then began to forbid her things; she gave up cigarettes when he ordered her to do so. Another of his orders was to read the Qur'an, at least two pages a day, after which he would "test" her when he came back from work. She had to perform the five daily prayers; he did not do so, but she had to. There were

other problems before the serious physical abuse: they were evicted from their flat, and the police confiscated two cars from her boyfriend, who was working on the side buying and selling cars, mainly imported vehicles. A police check found that the paperwork for two of the cars was not in order, and the cars were confiscated. This left him in severe financial difficulties, and he became increasingly irritable, shouting at her, insulting and belittling her, and beating her up. Often, when he was angry, he would hit her with a rolling pin.

The last assault on her was extremely brutal and even life-threatening: he took a knife, sat on her and began stabbing her all over her body. He then got up, took some water from the fridge and poured it over her. He told her he was going to sell her for 2,000 KM in a few days. She begged him to take her to the Emergency, but he refused, making further threats before locking her into the house and leaving. She lay bleeding all night, but managed to escape through a window in the morning. She was helped by the landlady of the house she was living in, who telephoned her father. Her father and mother set off for the house she was living in, and on the way her father called his "son-in-law" in a state of shock, asking "What happened? Why?" Her boyfriend told him not to worry, saying "there are disagreements in every marriage." The boyfriend got home before the father arrived, and ran into the room where the landlady was, asking where his "wife" was and saying he would find her and kill her. She meanwhile was hiding behind the fridge and a kitchen cupboard, and though he looked for her, he did not find her. He ran out of the house, and five minutes later her father arrived and immediately took his daughter to the doctor, and then to the Cantonal Hospital.

After this she was taken in at the safe-house, where the dressings on her wounds were changed with the help of the ambulance service. She was provided with appropriate psychological and medical assistance, and was found to be pregnant. Her boyfriend was charged, and the trial is pending. She finds this hard, saying that she loved him. She has the full support of her father, mother and sister, and intended to continue her education and enrol in one of the courses at the safe-house when she recovers, but soon decided to return to her boyfriend, with whom she was in touch again.

He expressed remorse, promising it would never happen again, and she believed him; her pregnancy also influenced her decision to go back to him. He promised her they would have a wonderful life, and that they should build a happy relationship for the sake of the child she was expecting. Until she withdrew charges, there were no problems, but when she did so, the violence began again. It was not long before Nađa again ended up in hospital, in the emergency ward; this time he had beaten her with a cable. Her parents tried to help her by keeping away from her and, by seeming not to support her, to make her understand that there was no point in trying to live with a violently abusive man. Even so, she tried once more, but soon realized that he was not going to change, that his violent behaviour would continue. She again turned to her parents for help, and this time, like the first time they found out about her abusive relationship, they provided her with help and support. She is now reconciled with her parents and younger sisters and is awaiting the birth of her baby.

Questions for case scenario 3:

1. In what way are traditional gender roles obvious in this story?
2. What elements of gender-based violence are there in this story?
3. What impact did gender roles and gender-based violence have on Nađa's decisions?
4. Why did Nađa keep going back to her boyfriend?

Community actors working together to prevent gender-based violence and protect victims

Examples of good practice of institutional cooperation between Medica Zenica, institutions and non-governmental organizations: signing a Protocol on Cooperation to Prevent Domestic Violence and Protect Victims

Medica Zenica, a non-governmental organization, has many years' experience of taking a holistic approach to the victims of violence and trauma, regularly monitors community needs, and seeks to respond to them using its own resources in association with institutions and other NGOS. It therefore launched a project entitled **Institutional Response to Gender-based Violence within the Family and Community in Zenica Municipality**, with a view to linking institutions and organizations to work together more effectively and to developing a multidisciplinary to prevention and providing direct care and assistance for the victims of violence.

Council of Europe Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the protection of women against violence calls upon member states "to ensure that victims, without any discrimination, receive immediate and comprehensive assistance provided by a coordinated, multidisciplinary and professional effort." This also features in the Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for the Federation of B-H 2009-2010. Objective 4 of the Plan calls for the development of a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to preventive and protective measures against domestic violence and for cooperation between all parties to prevent domestic violence and protect the victims of violence.

Cooperation between the police, health care services and social services, the judiciary and the non-government sector should ensure that a coordinated approach is taken in this field.

Council of Europe experts have stated that, as a minimum, all relevant institutions should develop guidelines for cooperation and joint action.

In March this year, on the initiative of Medica Zenica, a Working Group was set up to draft the **Protocol on Cooperation to Prevent Domestic Violence and Protect Victims of Violence within the Family and Community in Zenica Municipality**. The group consisted of representatives of the municipality, Zenica-Doboj Canton, the judiciary, the public prosecutor's office, the social services centre, health care services, education services and non-governmental organizations, who worked dedicatedly on drafting the Protocol and monitoring the needs of the victims of domestic violence within the limits of their various powers. From the very outset, they received considerable support in drafting the Protocol from the Gender Centre of the Federation of B-H.

Thanks to the efforts of the Working Group, the support received from the Gender Centre of the Federation of B-H, and the contribution from the relevant institutions and organizations in Zenica-Doboj Canton and the relevant cantonal ministries, the Protocol was drafted and signed and is being implemented to ensure that our joint forces and efforts provide effective, high-quality services to the victims of domestic violence. For more on the measures taken to implement the Protocol, see the Protocol itself.⁵⁴

Why do all this?

Together to achieve equality between the sexes and prevent violence within the family and community. Violence is a criminal act, and everyone is required to report it and to work to prevent it.

⁵⁴ The Protocol on Cooperation to Prevent Domestic Violence and Protect Victims of Domestic Violence, Zenica, 2010, may be obtained from Medica Zenica, while background information on the initiative may be found on the web site: www.medicazenica.org

WORKSHOP		
Objective To integrate knowledge and skills relating to gender-based or sex-based violence	Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study • Group work • Plenary discussion • Presentation-lecture 	Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case scenarios 1, 2 and 3 • Community cooperation to prevent violence and protect the victims Duration: 240 min.

► **Exercise: Case scenarios (60 min.)**



Work steps

Divide participants into two or three groups, depending on numbers

Each group is given one case scenario and answers the questions that follow each scenario

Each group should read the other scenario so that they can more easily follow the group answers during the plenary presentation

Participants should answer the questions and draw their conclusions based on their own opinions and experience and the knowledge and skills they have gained during the training course (see appendix 7).

Questions for case scenario 2:



1. In what way are traditional gender roles obvious in this story?
2. What elements of gender-based violence are there in this story?
3. What impact did gender roles and gender-based violence have on Adrijana's decisions?
4. Why did Adrijana go back to her husband?

Questions for case scenario 3:



1. In what way are traditional gender roles obvious in this story?
2. What elements of gender-based violence are there in this story?
3. What impact did gender roles and gender-based violence have on Nađa's decisions?
4. Why did Nađa keep going back to her boyfriend?

Note: for case scenario 1, see Module 3

► **Presentation:** Community cooperation to prevent violence and protect the victims; Protocol on Cooperation to Prevent Domestic Violence and Protect Victims of Violence within the Family and Community in Zenica Municipality (45 min.)

► **Discussion and conclusions:** How should local communities work to prevent violence within the family and community and to ensure that the victims of violence have appropriate, ongoing help, protection and care (60 min.)

APPENDICES

1. Possible answers to the questions for case scenario 2:

1. Adrijana's belief that a woman's place is in the home, by her husband, because despite everything she went back to him, so that her child would have a father; believing that her husband's jealousy was his way of showing her love; believing that a woman cannot manage by herself, without a man
2. Emotional violence in the form of jealousy, death threats and threatening her with weapons. Forbidding the wife to leave the house and see her relatives and other people
3. Her gender role played a large part in Adrijana's decision to return to her "protector," believing he would change. Gender-based violence prompted her to leave her husband and seek a divorce, but her gender role and her socio-economic circumstances proved stronger and she went back to him
4. She went back to him because she did not have the support of her family to go on living with their help, and because of her economic circumstances – finding a job was proving to be mission impossible. The absence of support and job opportunities made her return to her gender role and believe that it was better for her to have a husband, whatever he might be like, than to be alone. Her tormentor thus became her "saviour." Adrijana became more aware of her own abilities and was able to influence her husband to decide to change his behaviour. Though he changed for the better, she decided to keep looking for work and become economically independent, in which she was successful.

2. Possible answers to the questions for case scenario 3:

1. Her boyfriend had stereotypical beliefs and preconceptions about the way a woman or wife should behave and look, strengthened by his flawed religious understanding of the role of the woman and his misuse of religion. When his girlfriend failed to fit his image of a "proper woman" he became violent as a reaction to her "disobedience"
2. The kinds of violence present here are emotional (jealousy, control, isolation – preventing her from seeing her family), economic (decided for her that she should give up work), physical (stabbing, beating with a cable) and spiritual/religious (forcing her to perform the prescribed prayers and read the Qur'an, punishing her for failing to do so)
3. Nađa believed that it was better for her to have the child and for the child to have a father, because a woman alone cannot be a proper parent. She saw violence as an expression of jealousy, a sign of love and the mark of a real man. She believed her violent partner when he said he would change, despite the absence of any proof or specific agreement
4. She kept returning to her partner because she loved him and believed he was capable of changing. It is not easy to leave a man just like that; most women make several attempts before they finally decide to make the break and leave

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PEACEMAKING
AND INTERFAITH
DIALOGUE

PART III

The origins of non-violence: a brief overview

The idea of non-violence was first articulated in the Indian subcontinent about 600 BCE, at a time of profound changes within the Brahmanic religion and when new religious trends were taking shape, embodied in the teachings of Mahavira and Gautama Buddha, the religions now known as Jainism and Buddhism.⁵⁵ The idea of non-violence, *ahimsa* in Sanskrit, still forms the basis of Jainism, Buddhism and many forms of Hinduism, particularly those based on the teachings of the Upanishads, which came into being at the same time or later. The historical context for the emergence of this idea in ancient India was probably the ritual sacrificial practices of the Vedic culture, which were increasingly perceived as cruel and unnecessary; certain Vedic texts themselves even say that it is important not to harm other living beings. The development of ascetic and monastic ways of life in the India of that time also contributed to the formulation of the doctrine of *ahimsa*, as did the idea of *karma*, which came to denote not only ritual, but also conduct that had moral consequences. The cause-and-effect principle that *karma* stands for could be expressed in the saying “as you sow, so shall you reap.”

From the theological and philosophical perspective of these religions, and with particular reference to *karma*, the cycle of existence (*samsara*) – of birth and death, rebirth and death once more, until the final liberation of the soul, for which different terms are used in these different traditions – meant that anyone whose actions in this life inflicted harm on other forms of life suffered the consequences in his or her next life. A man who took the life of another human being, for example, would sink to the lowest level of life, for ultimate spiritual liberation can be achieved only as a human being. Fundamental to this world view is the experience of life as a single, indivisible phenomenon; anything that harms life at one level has a negative impact on another, for everything is interconnected. The idea of non-violence, of not harming life, gradually became integrated into broader cultural patterns of behaviour that in one way or another punish any form of violence, from the extreme of taking life or inflicting physical harm of any kind, to violence expressed in words, feelings or thoughts. Though many texts would address this subject over the long history of Hinduism, debating who could take the life of another living being and in what circumstances, the idea was revived in the 19th and 20th centuries by prominent spiritual and political leaders in the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere, and given a political context.



Lord Mahavir, The Torch-bearer of Ahimsa - Photo by Sidparakh, Editing by Sanja Vrzic (Source: Wikipedia)

⁵⁵ Mahavira, meaning Great Hero, is regarded as the 24th Tirthankar (Fordmaker), the term used to denote those who have crossed to the far side of the river of this transitional life. Though there are no historical records of his predecessors, the names of some of them are known; the first generally accepted to be a historical figure is the 23rd Tirthankar, Parshva (approx. 9th century BCE), who is regarded as a great ascetic and whose followers were required to make four pledges, the most important of which was *ahimsa* or abstaining from all forms of violence and injury to life of any kind. This is also the earliest known reference to the term *ahimsa*. In Buddhism, too, the doctrine of non-violence occupied an important place from the very outset, and came to characterize the way of life not only of monastic but also of lay Buddhism. As with the Jains, this meant that the monks were vegetarian, and that Buddhists were required to choose an occupation or profession that did not endanger the life of other beings; this excluded being butchers or hunters, for example.

In modern political history, the idea of non-violence is associated above all with Mohandas K. Gandhi, known as Mahatma, who made it central to the struggle to liberate India from British colonial rule in the early 20th century. Gandhi called his philosophy and practice of non-violent resistance *satyagraha*, a term denoting soul-force, or force that is based in the Truth. It was initially equated with “passive resistance” in the West, but Gandhi drew a distinction between the two, emphasizing that *satyagraha* does not differentiate between ends and means, and that the end can never justify the use of violent means. As such, Gandhi’s radical approach to peace was very close to and inspired by the Christian ideal of peace found in the Sermon on the Mount. Interestingly, another influence on his understanding of *Ahimsa* was Tolstoy’s ideas about peace, or Tolstoyism, developed by the great writer towards the end of his life, and about which these two great men exchanged correspondence in the early 20th century, while Gandhi was still in South Africa. However, Gandhi drew his ideas of non-violence from its Indian roots above all, which enabled him to mobilize the masses throughout India. The famous Salt March of 1930, for example,⁵⁶ when Gandhi crossed the country from end to end, joined as he went by hundreds of thousands of people, of whom more than 80,000, including Gandhi himself, were brutally beaten and arrested by the British authorities, was a clear demonstration in practice of the difference between “passive resistance” and active non-cooperation with the authorities. His tactics of civil disobedience and active non-cooperation, along with his hunger strikes, became an inspiration to many leaders and have been echoed in many movements world-wide.



Mohandas K. Gandhi - Author unknown, Edited by Sanja Vrzic (Source: Wikipedia)

A close associate and fellow pacifist of Gandhi’s in the opposition to British colonial rule was the Pashtun pacifist and devout Muslim Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who continued to advocate non-violence even after Partition and the creation of Pakistan in 1947. As a result, he was frequently arrested or exiled by the Pakistani authorities. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela adopted the basic principles of Gandhi’s non-violent opposition, remaining true to them even when some members of his movement were in favour of the use of force or were could not avoid it in their defence against the brutality of the regime. Mandela spent three decades in prison, but on his release, had not a trace of hatred or desire for revenge against the racist apartheid authorities, having applied the idea of non-violence to his own life, and not merely to the social struggle, where every effort was made to limit civil protest to active sabotage, not killings and terror of the kind perpetrated by the white men in power. Even in prison, Mandela advocated a peaceful resolution of the conflict with the white man, knowing that the truth of the anti-apartheid movement would win out in time and that all South Africans would ultimately have to live together, whatever their skin colour, language or ethnicity.

In North America, the idea of non-violence in the civil rights movement against racial segregation and discrimination was proclaimed by Dr Martin Luther King. As a Christian Baptist priest campaigning for the dignity and fundamental human rights of African Americans, non-violence was dear to his heart, both because of Christ’s teachings and because of the impression made on him by Gandhi’s non-violent opposition in India. In 1959 Dr King even visited Gandhi’s birth place in India, and took the opportunity to learn more about *ahimsa*, deepening his resolve to apply non-violent methods of resistance in the USA in the 1960s. Ordinary Americans were impressed by the effectiveness of the boycott of the race laws, the peaceful protest marches and the speeches that emphasized the oneness of all human beings as God’s creation, as well as by the tolerance shown in the face of the US authorities’ harsh reprisals against the demonstrators, all of which contributed to a growing awareness of the need for equality of civil rights for all Americans, including “coloureds.”

⁵⁶ The Salt Satyagraha was triggered by the British salt monopoly in India. Overturning the Salt Act also had the symbolic value of allowing Indians to manage their own resources, of which salt had become the symbol.

Over its long history, the idea of non-violence has inspired, and continues to inspire, many peace movements and initiatives around the world, each time taking on the specific features of the historic moment in which it emerges.

WORKSHOP		
Objective To introduce participants to the basic ideas of non-violence in religion	Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion 	Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milica Bakić-Hayden, “The origins of non-violence: a brief overview,” Appendices Duration: 80 min.

► I) **Presentation on non-violence – see “The origins of non-violence: a brief overview,” by Milica Bakić-Hayden (30 min)**

Explain the following in particular:

- early ideas of non-violence – Buddhism and Jainism, Mahavir and Gautama Buddha
- the idea of *karma* and *samsara* and the moral consequences of human behaviour
- understanding *ahimsa* and the decision to apply non-violent methods of opposition
- modern political history, Gandhi and non-violent opposition – *satyagraha*
- Dr Martin Luther King, Baptist priest campaigning for the dignity and fundamental human rights of African Americans

► II) **Watching/listening to part of Dr Martin Luther King’s speech, “I have a dream”**

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbUtL_0vAJk

See appendix for a transcript of the speech (20 min.)

Give each participant a transcript and translation of Dr Martin Luther King’s speech

► III) **Plenary discussion of Dr Martin Luther Kings’ basic ideas on non-violence (30 min.)**

Raise the following questions in particular:



- how did Dr Martin Luther King apply his religious convictions to his struggle against racial hatred and crimes?
- could his methods and their rationale be applied to other kinds of violence and crime? If so, why and how?

APPENDICES

Video: "I have a dream" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbUtL_0vAJk

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., <http://www.dadalos.org/kr/Vorbilder/mlk/traum.htm>

"I Have a Dream"

[King helped organize a massive march on Washington, DC, on August 28, 1963. This was the closing speech, given before 250,000 people at the Lincoln Memorial. See photo. An excellent aerial photograph can be found on the Washington website. (This transcript was made from recordings and has been taken from <http://www.usconstitution.net/dream.html> - Trans.)]

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check — a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the

foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied, as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "For Whites Only". We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the White House, 1966 - Photo by Yoichi R. Okamoto, Editing by Sanja Vrzic (Source: Wikipedia)

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"



Peace building approaches and concepts – the Catholic tradition

Proclaimed the Prince of Peace, in the New Testament Jesus Christ reconciles people with God, and thereby people with themselves, with other people, and with nature. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity ... for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace" (Eph. 2:14-15)

Pacifist doctrine

Jesus's entire life was imbued with radical non-violence and pacifism. He rebuked the disciples when they asked him to let them bring down fire on a Samaritan village after they were turned away (Lk 9: 52-56), forbade them to use force against the armed men who had come to arrest him and take him to his death (Mat 26: 51-53) and, on the cross, even prayed for those who had crucified him (Lk 23: 33-34).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (Mat 5: 9), and told his disciples to love their enemies: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Mat 5: 44). Becoming the sons and daughters of God on the basis of pacifism and love of one's enemies shows that non-violence and pacifism are at the very heart of Christianity.

In preserving the memory of Jesus's death on the cross, the New Testament unmasks the falsity of any attempt to link violence with the sacred. The God of Jesus of Nazareth is the God of radical non-violence and pacifism. God's transformation of the world has nothing to do with violence.

Regrettably, however, radical pacifism and non-violence were lived only by the first Christians.

From the Catacombs to imperial palaces

For those first Christians, war was a sin, a grave religious offence. Non-violence and pacifism were explicitly advocated by the early Church Fathers (the patristic tradition), who did not fail to stress that the deeper cause of war is always the "evil within us" that we must triumph over.

Origen, for example, taught that Christians were forbidden to use the sword and kill the enemy in war. Tertullian even called on the faithful not even to wear military garments, for if they did, they could no longer be regarded as true Christians. Cyprian of Carthage and Clement of Alexandria held the same views on non-violence and pacifism.

Tragically, once it emerged from the catacombs to become the official religion of the state, Christianity would move away from the radical non-violence and pacifism of Jesus and the first Christians. After Constantine, two opposing histories can be traced: on the one hand, the Church's history of injustice versus non-violence and pacifism as the essence of Christian teachings, for again and again "the peace mission of Christians and churches became secondary to their national affiliation and the churches granted statesmen the right to wage war. Worse still was that the churches placed their own interests, their claim to be protecting eternal truths, above the preservation of human life" (R. Frieling).

On the other hand, there is the history of opposition by the faithful to the warlike options within the Church (Ž. Mardešić); the heroes of this on-going religious movement against war on the margins of the Church are "the thousands of pious priests and good Christians, those true "proletarians" of historical studies and "forgotten saints"

People of faith against war

Religious movements against war come in four different forms, at least as far as the prophetic religions, including Christianity, are concerned (Ž. Mardešić):

- a) the spiritualization of pilgrimage
- b) opposition by mystics
- c) getting to know one another
- d) pacifist religious groups denounced as heretical

The spiritualization of pilgrimage as a form of religious opposition to war is to be found in mediaeval Christianity. Crusader armies, the very reverse of pilgrims, regardless of the extent to which they were justified by the Church's moral teachings, rationalist theology and philosophical reflections on the "just war" theory, became too much to bear for the common folk among whom the memory of Christianity's original pacifism was still alive. This finally gave rise to the Children's Crusade of 1212 and the Shepherds' Crusades of 1251 and 1321. Though tragic in themselves, these events sprang from the conviction that military power, bound up as it was with a lust for wealth and power on the part of leading laymen and churchmen, was not the way to the Holy Land, but only the purity and goodness of children and the poor, believing literally in miracles. The brutality of the crusaders was countered by unarmed groups of children and shepherds, and the deviousness of secular leaders and crusader storm-troopers by the innocence of true pilgrims led by genuine religious fervour. It was a true depoliticization and demilitarization of the Crusades.

Even in the Middle Ages, a time when religious fanaticism raged between Christians and Muslims, we find accounts of Christians who turned to their opponents in war and to "unbelievers" not with the sword, but with the aim of getting to know them, albeit often with the ulterior motive of conversion.

Among such Christians were Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, and Francis of Assisi (1181-1226). Peter the Venerable called upon Muslims to fight the Christians with words, not weapons, stressing the realities that Christians and Muslims had in common. St Francis went a step further: unarmed, he crossed the battle lines between the Christians and the Muslims to hold peaceful negotiations with Sultan Malek al-Kamil in Damietta in 1219, and the two became friends. The Dominican Raymond of Peñafort, who spoke both Arabic and Hebrew, concentrated on training Christian missionaries to work among Muslims in place of the sinful practices of the Crusader armies; to this end, he opened a Studium in Tunis in 1250. Christian attempts at dialogue with Muslims found considerable support in William of Tripoli's work on the Muslim faith, published in Palestine in 1273, which describes the life of the Prophet and the content of the Qur'an, and explains the reasons for the Qur'anic stories about Jesus and Mary. Imbued with trust, it appealed to Muslims. Finally, there was Raymond Lull, not least because of the fact that he did not describe Muslims as unbelievers, a major departure from the Christian theology of his time. Lull helped to introduce the study of oriental languages at a number of Europe's leading universities.

Though they were not directly anti-war, monastic seclusion, the vows of poverty, and the solitary life of mystics was to highlight the incompatibility between Christianity and war. As the preservers of classical culture, monks would constantly appeal for peace to the peoples of Christianity, while poverty, as a radical return to the Christianity of the apostles, necessarily entailed an equally radical rejection of violence and war. Criticism of the wealth and luxury of the Church was invariably criticism of the warrior Church. Similarly, the mystic aspiration to the *unio mystica* meant giving up the possession of anything that at its root was the cause of war and violence.

Explicit opposition to war within Christianity, however, was to be found in mediaeval and later schismatic and heretical groups. Nor did Christianity on the margins or outside the official church lack religiously-motivated resistance to war, rightly accusing the Church of backing the Crusades and the merciless extermination of native peoples in the New World. Only now is it becoming clear

that it was not the official Church who was the stubborn transmitter of Jesus's pacifism and that of the first Christians, but heretical and schismatic groups, which was long also the consequence of the indifference of Church dignitaries towards the voices calling for reform within the Church to bring it back to its origins in poverty and peace.

The Hussites, for example, who followed the teachings of Jan Hus, banned the use of arms even in self-defence. Leading humble lives, they refused to accept public duties or to take part in war. The Anabaptists, too, rejected violence of any kind and the bearing of arms. This would bring both the Hussites and the Anabaptists into open conflict with the secular authorities. Turning one's back on war and loving one's enemy was seen not as a return to the Christianity of the apostles, but as undermining military morale. Even more radical in this regard were the Mennonites, who are not permitted to kill nor even to pass judgment; they do not perform judicial or military service, do not use arms, and do not take part in war.

A shadow was cast over the pacifism of these reform movements by their warlike attitude towards the Catholic Church (feelings which were entirely mutual). Peace between them was based on conflict with others, in much the same way as the Crusades initially created peace among Christians. One reform movement, however, did transcend this: the Quakers, a Christian community that received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947. Persecuted since the 17th century for their non-violence and pacifism, they have persisted in their refusal to perform military service, take part in war or use violence of any kind, and have given refuge to the victims of religious persecution, helped war victims and worked actively to establish world peace.

The peace churches of our day, which are barely known in this part of the world, are based on the spirituality of those reform movements that were once denounced as heretical or schismatic. In a world ruled by the "ethics of violence," their pacifism, courage and love in standing unarmed before the gun to challenge violence and domination is a prophetic call to live a life of pacifism and non-violence, demonstrating that Christians have never believed the sword is an alternative to the cross.

The pacifism of Pope John XXIII

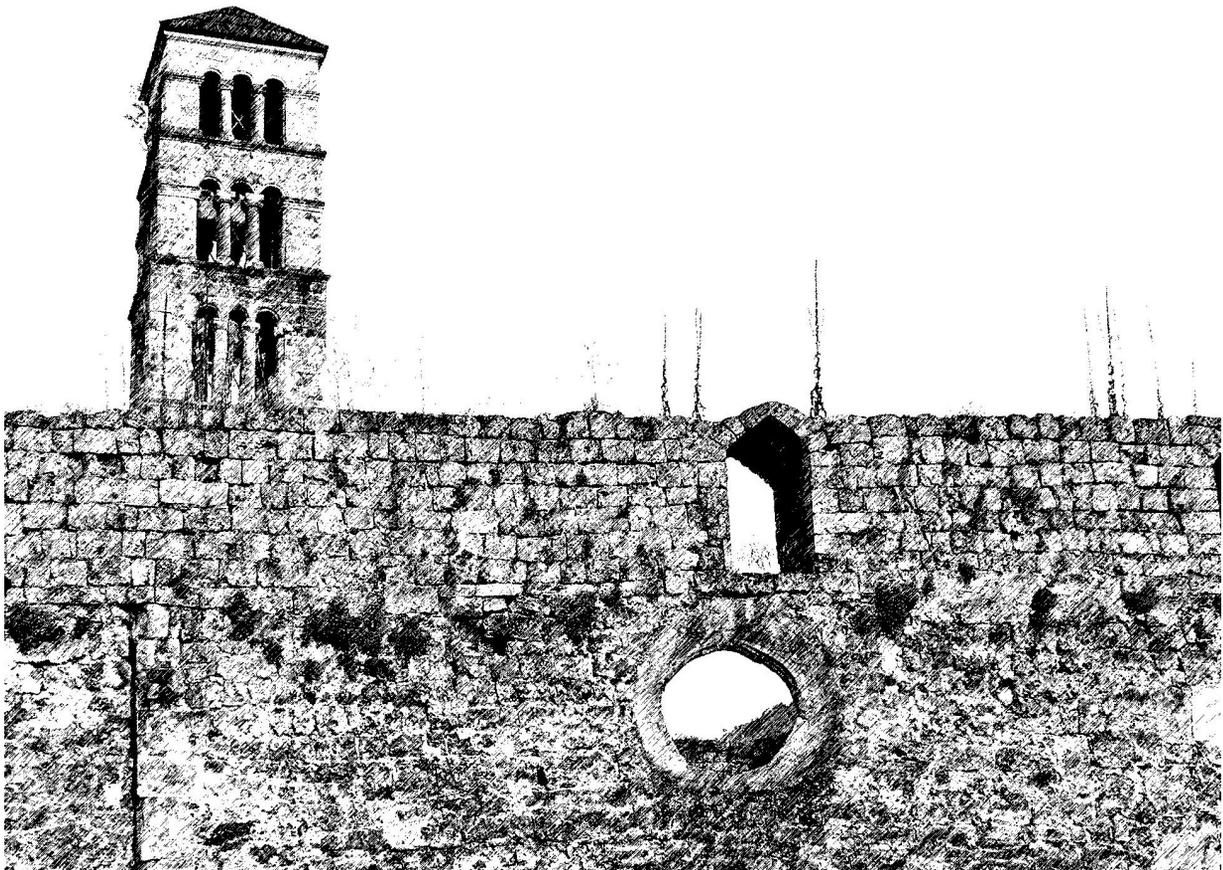
A prophetic turn towards non-violence and pacifism in the Catholic Church was made by Pope John XXIII, who was preceded by many Catholic pacifists who were viewed with suspicion and often even persecuted, such as Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day.

After playing an active part in mediating a peaceful conclusion to the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 that threatened nuclear conflict between the USA and the USSR, and aware of the importance of peace as the only true strength of Christianity, Pope John XXIII spent his last days composing his peace Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963), the first papal encyclical addressed to all people of good will.

Distancing himself from the theory of just war, John XXIII clearly condemned all bloodshed as a crime. Lasting peace should be built on a just world order, mutual trust, sincere cooperation, and respect for human rights rooted in the gospels. He called for a ban on nuclear weapons and for an agreed programme of disarmament, believing that "the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone." Recognizing the connection between social justice and peace, he also stressed that ordinary citizens as well as the representatives of civil authority can and should advocate peace.



Echoing Pope John XXIII's thinking, the theologians of the Second Vatican Council, which John XXIII himself had convened, would include in the Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* a chapter entitled "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations," which includes the words: "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation" (GS 80).



St. Mary's Church & St. Luke's Tower in Jajce - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

Christian witness to pacifism stresses the multifaceted nature of peace: it is our relation to God, to ourselves, to our neighbours and to nature, and is also the product of the socio-political order. As a reality that is more than just the absence of war, peace is unimaginable without justice, rights and security.

Though peace is ultimately God's eschatological gift and work, this does not exempt Christians from the duty to advocate peace in the world today, to work towards the divine kingdom of peace and justice on earth. Quite the contrary, awareness of this is a prerequisite for and the source of the obligation of Christians to work together and with others to build world peace.

Christians should thus be co-workers for world peace: among themselves (supra-national ecumenical structures), with others (with religious people in interfaith dialogue, as well as with agnostics and atheists of humanist bent through such initiatives as a global ethos), and finally with God Himself.

If "Humanum" is the true fundamental interfaith criterion, as to which there should be no doubt, then non-violence and pacifism, as the supreme expression of that "Humanum," will more than ever before be the distinguishing mark not only between authentic versus ideologized Christianity, but also between authentic and ideologized religion or religiosity as a whole.

Bertha von Suttner

Baroness Bertha Felicie Sophie von Suttner, Countess Kinsky, was born in Prague in 1843 to an impoverished military family. In the autumn of 1876 she spent two weeks working as secretary to the millionaire inventor of dynamite Alfred Nobel, which marked the beginning of a lifelong friendship. In 1876 she married Arthur Suttner. Despite being a woman, she had the courage to take up her pen and call for a spiritual revolution against war – and this in the 19th century, a man’s century if there ever was one, when the very thought that a woman might enter the world of politics and science was scandalous. She rejected the illusions of her day – nationalist fanaticism, the arms race and anti-semitism – that were united in militarism.

In 1888, using the pseudonym “Jemand” (Someone), she published a book entitled *Das Machinenzeitalter - Zukunftsvorlesungen über unsere Zeit* (The Machine Age), which marked the start of her work for peace. Calling war the worst of crimes, the supreme evil, she condemned the principle of force on which armaments and war are based: “As long as people demand power over one another to achieve their own interests at the expense of others, there will be war.” So too the idea that war is part of human nature, and that conflicts cannot be resolved by peaceful means. War is the legacy of barbarism, of the age of savagery, which civilization must renounce.

Bertha added momentum to the nascent civil peace movement – the first world peace congress was held in Paris in 1789 – by her anti-war novel *Die Waffen nieder!* (Lay Down your Arms!), which became a 19th century best-seller. It drew the world’s attention to the threat of world war, an unknown horror, in which Europe would be destroyed. No one in Central Europe had ever used a work of literature to launch such a fierce attack on militarism.

In her plea for peace, Bertha described the horrors of war in a realistic and passionate way from a woman’s perspective. Seeing through ideological lies in the midst of the horrors of war, Martha, the novel’s principal character, daughter of a general and wife of an army officer, undergoes a spiritual conversion. From being a woman convinced that war is a necessity dictated by human nature, as she had been brought up to believe, she became a committed pacifist, for whom war was the work of man, the product of human freedom distorted by the lust for power, an unqualified evil. Using arguments of both reason and sentiment, Bertha denounced the falsehood and inhumanity of the prevailing ideologies, militarism, nationalism and anti-semitism. War is facilitated by the warlike spirit instilled by upbringing and the media. Peace cannot be secured by an arms race.

Bertha called for an international peace movement, and attended peace conferences. In 1891, almost single-handedly, she founded the Austrian Peace Society, and launched a monthly periodical with the same title as her novel, *Die Waffen nieder!* She was the first woman to speak at the Capitolium, traditionally reserved for men, during the Third Universal Peace Congress in Rome in 1891, and became a deputy to the International Peace Office in Berne.

At the First Hague Peace Conference in 1899, attended by statesmen, diplomats and the military, she launched an appeal: “Europe, hasten to fraternize, to end war between the nations, or the next incident may destroy you.” The conference came to nothing, but to the end of her life, despite her age, Bertha travelled around Europe and even went to the United States, warning of the threat of world war. This is how she explained her astonishing staunchness: “Rationally, I had to give up hope of



Portrait of Bertha von Suttner - Hand-drawn Illustration by Vesna Husic

being personally able to hasten the day when I would see the fruits of what I longed for. What I could contribute was insignificant. But the moment I recognized that insignificant contribution as my duty, it became the greatest cause for me, and I persist in it." She died on 21 June 1914, a week before the event that triggered the outbreak of World War I.

During her 20-year friendship with Nobel, she urged him to use his wealth to create a foundation that would help fund the peace movement: "I beg of you, my hands joined in supplication, never withdraw your support from us -- never, not even from beyond the grave."

In 1905, she was the sixth recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Dorothy Stang

Dorothy Stang, a sister of the order of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, began her missionary work in Brazil in 1966. When the colonization of the Amazon began a few years later, she joined the flood of Brazil's landless and poor responding to the government's promise of land.

But the vast Amazon region also attracted unscrupulous marauders. An alliance of the logger mafia, cattle ranchers and soya farmers, relying on armed mercenaries and corrupt authorities, turned against the poor settlers and native Indians, but also against the ancient Brazilian rain forest, the lungs of planet Earth. Intent on exploiting the rain forest unhindered, the logger mafia persecuted small settler farmers and native Amazonians, using forged title deeds and not shrinking even from murder. Once cleared by loggers, the land would be taken over by cattle ranchers and soya farmers, polluting it beyond recall.

Stang courageously spoke out against the destruction of the rain forest and the expulsion of native Amazonians and settlers, proposing to replace the predatory activities designed to accumulate still more wealth for the rich at the expense of the poor and the death of the rain forest with a developmental model of social environmentalism based on cooperation between settlers and the forest and the distribution of wealth to small farming and forestry cooperatives.

Risking her life by travelling around the Amazon, she taught small farmers how to live off the land as the native Amazonians did, in harmony with the rain forest, forging them into a strong, environmentally-aware community capable of resisting the landowners and speculators who were usurping their land.

In 2004, Dorothy testified before the congressional committee in Brasilia against the landowners who were destroying the rain forest and sustainable farms, and naming them, thereby risking her life. This testimony, matching the courage of the Old Testament prophets, bore fruit: 600 families were each granted 250 *ral* (about 125 acres) of land on condition that they cleared 20 percent for farming and preserved the rest as rain forest.

Encouraged by the Brazilian government's Project for Sustainable Development (PDS), which she developed, Dorothy began calling for the establishment of a permanent federal reserve of land for poor farmers and the landless, from which they would be granted land for sustainable farming from which they could make a living without endangering the rain forest and become part of a network of farm workers.

In 2005 she began to focus her efforts on Lot 55, not far from Anapú in the federal state of Pará, where she had been living since 2000. Her intention was to acquire this from the state for sustainable farming, but illegal felling began even before the decision was taken as to who the lot should go to. Her efforts to prevent this cost Stang her life, adding her to the list of more than 772 farmers killed since 1971.

On 12 February 2005, the 73-year-old Stang was on her way to a meeting in the forest when two armed men blocked her path. They asked if she had any weapons, and she claimed that the only weapon would be her Bible. Perhaps sensing what would come next, she read a passage from the Beatitudes, "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mat

5: 6). The men's response was to fire six bullets into her body.

The funeral of the "martyr of the rainforest" was attended by Brazil's entire top political ranks, but the real evidence of their sincerity is that the man who had ordered her murder, a powerful landowner, along with the hit men themselves, was freed on retrial. Though President da Silva declared 6.5 million hectares of rain forest a protected zone in February 2006, not including the contested Lot 55, there are no signs of radical change in Amazonia.

All that remains to us as a prophetic warning is the message on Stang's t-shirt, "The death of the forest is the end of our life," and the hope that her martyr's blood will become the seed of new Christians to grace her prophetic courage, sprung from her environmental awareness and sense of social injustice.

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Jakov Jukić, *Lica i maske svetoga*, Kršćanska sadašnjost, Zagreb 1997;

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WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To explain the meaning of peace in the Catholic tradition and how to become involved in peace actions within the Catholic community</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alen Kristić, <i>Peace building approaches and concepts – the Catholic tradition</i>, Appendices <p>Duration: 130 min.</p>

► I) Presentation on peace building concepts from the perspective of the Catholic tradition – see Alen Kristić, *Peace building approaches and concepts – the Catholic tradition* (40 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- the understanding of peace and non-violence in Christianity in its origins and after Christianity became the official religion of the state
- schismatic and heretical reform movements, peace churches, and the radical policy of non-violence
- the pacifism of Pope John XXIII and the papal encyclical *Pacem in terris* (1963)

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Plenary discussion (30 min.) on the significance of Pope John XXIII's pacifism and the changes it led to within the Catholic Church and attitudes to war, violence and interfaith dialogue

Before the discussion, briefly introduce Pope John XXIII's views on just war: "Lasting peace should be built on a just world order, mutual trust, sincere cooperation, and respect for human rights rooted in the gospels. In his peace encyclical, the pope called for a ban on nuclear weapons and for an agreed programme of disarmament, for the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone. Recognizing the connection between social justice and peace, he also stressed that ordinary citizens as well as the representatives of civil authority can and should advocate peace." (see text by Alen Kristić)

► III) Group work – using the Appendix (60 min.)

Discussion on Jesus as Peacemaker and his principle of radical non-violence, based on selected New Testament passages

1. Jesus rebuked the disciples when they asked him to let them bring down fire on a Samaritan village after they were turned away (Lk 9: 52-56)
2. Jesus forbade his disciples to use force against the armed men who had come to arrest him and take him to his death (Mat 26: 51-53) and, on the cross, even prayed for those who had crucified him (Lk 23: 33-34)
3. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (Mat 5: 9)

Divide participants into three groups and give each group one of the passages from the Appendix.

Leave enough time at the end for each group to present its findings from the group work (15 min. per group)

APPENDICES

Selected passages from the Bible

1. Lk 9: 52-56

And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

2. Mat 26: 51-53, Lk 23: 32-35

And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

.....

And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

3. From the Sermon on the Mount – Mat 5: 1- 10

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The meaning of peace and pacifism in the Orthodox Christian tradition

Introduction

*In peace let us pray to the Lord ... for the peace from above and the salvation of our souls ... for the peace of the whole world ... for the good estate of the holy Churches of God ... and for the union of all ... In peace let us pray to the Lord.*⁵⁷

Peace is the refrain that runs through the Divine liturgy from beginning to end, which tells us that it is at the heart of the Orthodox understanding of salvation, and is thus an eschatological term. The peace that is meant, however, is not merely the absence of war or conflict, but the salvific peace that is the gift of God. It is not of this world, and its significance thus goes beyond this world, for its roots are not on earth but in the Kingdom of Heaven which, Jesus taught, is within us (Lk 17: 21).⁵⁸ Almost two millennia later, the Russian St Theophanes the Recluse taught that “everything outside and apart from this peace is emptiness. And this peace is not far, it is almost within your grasp, although you must desire it, and to desire is not so easy.”⁵⁹ This is because it demands commitment to an entirely different struggle – the struggle for the undivided heart as the centre of the human personality and of humanity as a whole. This is why the pure in heart are blessed, for they shall see God (Mat. 5: 8). This pertains to the radical commandment to love our friends and enemies equally; it calls for an unequalled degree of spiritual perfection – for how are we to love our enemy, to bless those who curse us, or to do good to those who hate us (Mat. 5: 44)? As Jesus says, it is easy to love those dear to us and those who love us (Mat. 5: 46-47); the real challenge is to behave in the same way towards those whose actions we dislike, or those who dislike us.

From the very beginning, Jesus’s disciples came face to face with this call for spiritual perfection (Mat. 5: 48), and it is clear from the place occupied in the later writings of the Eastern Church Fathers by their reflections on Jesus’s sayings about peace that it was as important a topic among the early Syrian and Cappadocian fathers and later Byzantine theologians and philosophers as it is among the present-day clergy of the national Orthodox Churches. We shall briefly consider some of the views of peace of influential holy fathers of the Eastern Church which, as the theologian John McGuckin notes, is often overshadowed by Western Christian debates on the morality of war and non-violence beginning with St Augustine in the late 4th century and culminating with St Thomas Aquinas in the 13th before being taken up by late mediaeval Reformation apologetics.⁶⁰ The Christian understanding of peace thus came, paradoxically, to be associated with the Crusades, the Inquisition, the wars of religion in Western Europe and various colonial projects around the world, and was linked to the just war theory that never arose in Eastern Christianity, any more than did the influence of these theologians who conceived the just war theory.⁶¹ This does not mean, of course, that there have been no wars or violence motivated by religion, conquest or defence in the East. There were such wars both before Islam advanced into the provinces of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire and after (including the Crusade against Constantinople in 1204), but they did not give rise to a theory that sought to justify

57 From the 4th century liturgy of St John Chrysostom, used in all Orthodox churches throughout the year. During Great Lent, it is used together with the liturgy of St Basil the Great and the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. See Philip LeMasters, “Peace in Orthodox Liturgy and Life,” In *Communion* (<http://www.incommunion.org>)

58 The Greek word for “within” may also be translated as “among” (The Orthodox Study Bible, 1993, 183)

59 Quoted in *The Art of Prayer: An Orthodox Anthology*, Timothy Ware, ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), 180.

60 See John McGuckin, “Non-violence and Peace Traditions in Early and Eastern Christianity,” In *Communion* <http://www.incommunion.org/2004/12/29/nonviolence-and-peace-traditions/>

61 The just war theory is not a thing of the past, but is still alive and well in a variety of forms, as is clear from the interventionist policies of certain countries, which also seek moral justifications for their interests in the just war theory.

these wars or war in general.

In most cases, Christianity is seen in the East as an apocalyptic religion, and many observations on war and violence are considered in the light of the *eschaton*, as eschatological allegories or symbolic aspects of the “last things.” To take images of war of the apocalyptic dimension from a biblical text as examples of how this world ought to be managed is “a gross distortion of the ancient literature,” as McGuckin notes.⁶² Even if some historians of Christianity find evidence for such distorted interpretations in the 4th-century writings of Eusebius, Constantine the Great’s court theologian, it should be noted that unlike his historical writings, his eulogies of Constantine⁶³ cannot be seen as either normative or of far-reaching consequence, the more so since his younger contemporary St Basil the Great, among the greatest of Cappadocian fathers and one of the Three Hierarchs of the Orthodox Church, laid the foundations of Canon Law, which is still fundamental to the Orthodox Church and which sees war, combat and violence in a different light.

In fact, Basil’s thinking clearly reflects the problems and antinomies of Christ’s teachings on non-violence and how to put it into practice in the prevailing circumstances both before and, in particular, after the 4th century when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Basil the Great himself witnessed the constant border incursions and tribal conflicts on the eastern border of the Empire and their impact on the Christian communities living there (plunder, rape), which meant that the absolute ban on violence and bloodshed for Christians had to be modified in the specific context, which differentiated murder by aggressors from killings by the weak in self-defence. However, those who killed another human being to protect the weak or in self defence should not be celebrated as heroes; to the contrary, it should be made quite clear that the standards of behaviour prescribed by the gospels preclude war and bloodshed in any circumstances. For those returning from war, therefore, the only victory worthy of respect was one that ended in sincere repentance for having shed enemy blood and a number of restrictive measures on participating in the liturgy and taking Holy Communion.⁶⁴ St Basil perceived this inconsistency (punishing a warrior for self-defence) as the consequence of our post-lapsarian existential condition, torn between the earthly kingdom which is the here and now and the Kingdom of Heaven that has not yet been realized. He concludes that violence can never be justified from a Christian perspective, not even when it is inevitable and necessary.

“Ye are the salt of the earth:” the view of peace in the works of the Church Fathers

Clearly, the subjects of war and peace could not be avoided by the later Eastern Fathers either, given that the Bible as a whole is imbued with them. Though the Psalms speak of the time when righteousness and peace will have “kissed each other” (Ps. 85: 9-11), much of the Pentateuch consists of descriptions of conflicts and violence of all kinds, so early Christian theologians and philosophers were faced with the question of how to interpret the context in which war and violence were described. Early Christian fathers can come to our aid in this, such as Origen, whose views had a considerable impact on later Eastern Christian hermeneutics, especially his idea that the scriptures had a triple meaning, for everything is created on the three-in-one model of body, soul and spirit: the body is the literal meaning, the soul is the emotional or intellectual meaning, and the spirit is the spiritual or mystical meaning. The descriptions of war and violence in the Bible should not therefore be interpreted literally, but rather in the spirit of the Word of God, the Logos, as the early Church did. In this sense, the allegorical symbolism that depends largely on “a symbolic reading of violent images

⁶² One should not lose sight of the fact that with the Reformation and the Enlightenment, allegorical interpretations of the scriptures were increasingly displaced by rationalist or literal interpretations

⁶³ For example, he saw “the cessation of the war in 324 [as] a fulfilment of the Psalmic and Isaian prophecies of a golden age of peace.” See McGuckin, “Non-violence and Peace.”

⁶⁴ For instance, under the terms of Basil the Great’s Canon 13, a person who has killed at war cannot take Communion for three years. It is not clear, however, just how consistently the Church applied this rule. In any event, the point is not punishment for moral reasons but spiritual repentance and healing. See LeMasters, “Peace in Orthodox Liturgy.” Then again, since the Eucharist is a form of communion with God whose Kingdom is the peace that is not of this world, we may be worthy of the Kingdom only if we have established peace in this world, or in ourselves. By its very nature, war divides and fragments, and is thus a spiritual sickness that must be healed in this world, where alone it can prevail.

... successfully defuses a wholesale biblical 'sanction' for violence and war,"⁶⁵ putting the emphasis on the inner meanings of both peace and war.

This is particularly clear in the case of St Maximos the Confessor, who writes:

"Why did He command you [to love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you]? To free you from hatred, irritation, anger and rancour, and to make you worthy of the supreme gift of perfect love. And you cannot attain such love if you do not imitate God and love all men equally. For God loves all men equally..."

St Maximos explains that perfect love "does not split up the single human nature, common to all, according to the diverse characteristics of individuals; but, fixing attention always on this single nature, it loves all men equally."⁶⁶ He believes that our love for our enemies, expressed in forbearance and patiently accepting whatever they do, even to the point of suffering on their behalf, may enable them to change. This is not easy, of course, and few are able to sacrifice themselves for an evil-doer (though there are examples of such behaviour), but what everyone can do, with a little good will, is to pray for the other whom we regard as an enemy.

In the 20th century, this prayerful way of manifesting one's love for one's enemy was particularly underlined by the Russian Staretz Silouan, also known as St Silouan the Athonite,⁶⁷ for whom the human soul cannot find peace without love even towards the enemy, which in turn cannot happen without God's mercy, which we receive through the Holy Spirit through prayer and spiritual endeavour.

"The Lord taught me to love my enemies," wrote Silouan. "I beseech you, put this to the test. When a man affronts you or brings dishonour on your head, or takes what is yours, or persecutes the Church, pray to the Lord, saying: 'O Lord, we are all Thy creatures. Have pity on Thy servants and turn their hearts to repentance,' and you will be aware of grace in your soul. To begin with, constrain your heart to love enemies, and the Lord, seeing your good will, will help you in all things, and experience itself will show you the way. But the man who thinks with malice of his enemies has not God's love within him, and does not know God. If you will pray for your enemies, peace will come to you."

Those who have strayed from the truth are to be pitied:

"People who do not know God, or who go against Him, are to be pitied; the heart sorrows for them and the eye weeps. Both paradise and torment are clearly visible to us: we know this through the Holy Spirit. And did not the Lord Himself say, 'The kingdom of God is within you'? Thus eternal life has its beginning here in this life; and it is here that we sow the seeds of eternal torment."

If we are unable to pray in love even for our enemy, our heart cannot be made pure, and we cannot "see" God (Mat. 5: 8).⁶⁸ St Maximos frequently warns of the need to protect our heart from irritability and anger, which lead to aggression, and to beware of our thoughts and feelings, for demons wage war against the soul primarily in our thoughts, and this is war is far fiercer than any waged by physical means.⁶⁹ From this perspective, the enemy is within us first and foremost, rather than in the world around us. Peace building therefore begins and ends in ourselves.

This brief survey shows that the Christian church, though based on pacifism and the call to love everyone, including our enemy, was torn from the outset between this ideal, most fully achieved in the early centuries of martyrdom, and the later temptations to which it was exposed as an imperial

65 McGuckin, "Non-violence and Peace"

66 Ibid, 60

67 About whom Archimandrite Sophrony, a disciple and younger spiritual brother of St Silouan the Athonite, wrote a well-regarded biography, St. Sylouan the Anthonite (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999)

68 See http://www.orthodoxphotos.com/Holy_Fathers/St_Silouan_the_Athonite/

69 Ibid, 56, 64

(state) religion. These paradoxical and often contradictory circumstances still persist, though with significant differences between the experience of the Eastern and the Western Church. The tension we observe in Orthodox Christianity between peace as a norm on the one hand and concessions to war on the other, is in fact an eschatological tension, which cannot be resolved in this world by moralist views and theories, for war on this earth attests to the presence of evil in the world, which must be countered by pacifism and love, but can ultimately be healed only by the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven in which there is no war, for there are no enemies – no Other. Until then, in the Orthodox view, each of us is at a different point on the path of divinization (*theosis*), and we act accordingly. For some, this means taking part in conflicts or war, which is why we pray for their souls every time we perform the liturgy, that they may not sin more than they must, and that they may repent and become worthy of the “peace from above.”

***Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God:*⁷⁰ women peacemakers**

The idea of peace is reflected differently in the lives of Christians according to the circumstances and moment in history in which they find themselves. There are times when peace and pacifism may be realized in wartime or in post-war conditions, at others in times of peace; the ultimate meaning of peace is not the cessation of physical hostilities but the establishment of greater harmony between people. Two examples of this are Hajji Staka Skenderova in late 19th century Bosnia, and Maria Skobtsova, who was of Russian origin and lived in Paris just before World War II.

Hajji Staka Skenderova lived and worked in Sarajevo in the latter half of the 19th century. After her father’s death, she lived with her elderly mother, a sister and two brothers. She had been pious since early childhood, and every morning, weekdays and holidays alike, she went to morning service in the old Orthodox church in Sarajevo. It is said she had a fine voice, and often sang at church services. Prompted by her piety and her determination to be able to read religious books, she learned to read; it is recorded of her that even as a little girl “she wanted to read books, especially religious ones, regardless of the fact that in Bosnia at that time female literacy was regarded as perfectly unnecessary and nonsensical.”⁷¹ What is more, Staka also wrote, which probably makes her one of the first women writers in Bosnia: “Staka wrote *Letopis Bosne* between 1825 and 1856, dating it January 1858 in Serbian, in old church lettering,”⁷² records a Russian consul on his travels through Bosnia. This gifted and unassuming woman, who was ahead of her time and place in many ways, had the idea of teaching other girls to read and write by starting a school. In this she had the help of “Sarajevo’s Metropolitan Prokopije and the vali of Bosnia, Veliudin Pasha Ćiritlije. She founded and opened the first Serb primary school in Sarajevo”⁷³ in 1857, becoming its first teacher and principal. Staka acquired books from Belgrade, and soon began to train girls to become her assistants initially, and then teachers in their own right. News of the school in [the Sarajevo quarter of] Varoš, where reading was taught “by a new method,” along with writing, handwork and some book-keeping, soon spread around town, and girls of other confessions began to enrol there. By 1862 she already had Roman Catholic, Jewish and Turkish⁷⁴ girls. Topal-Osman sent both his girls to



70 Mat. 5: 9

71 Miloško V. VESELINOVIĆ, *Srpske kaluđerice*, Belgrade, 1909, 249.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid, 250. See also Mitar PAPIĆ, *Istorija srpskih škola u BiH*, in http://www.starackva.org/staka_skenderova.htm (31.7. 2009)

74 Translator’s note: presumably meaning Muslim – Serbs commonly referred to Muslims as “Turks” though the great majority were native Slavs.

Staka's school and became one of her supporters. It was also thanks to him that in 1870 Staka was able to achieve her dream of going to Jerusalem, where she decided to take the veil, returning to Sarajevo as the nun Hajji Staka. Sadly, her life ended tragically in Ilidža after a celebration, when a carriage ran over her, fatally injuring her.

Staka Skenderova's story is inspiring in the context of peace and reconciliation, showing that her desire to open a school to teach girls paved the way for harmonious relations in a multi-religious setting when the school became a place where girls from all the religious and ethnic groups living in Sarajevo at the time could gain an education. Coexistence in peace could be built today on these examples of cooperation in which all remain what they are by tradition, but united by a shared ideal, in this case education.



Mother Maria Skobtsova - Edited by Sanja Vrzic (Source: <http://saintslives.blogspot.com>)

Mother Maria Skobtsova, known as the “open door saint,” was born Elisaveta Pilenko to a well-to-do Russian Orthodox family in 1881. Her turbulent life, marked by the ferment of historic events in imperial Russia and during World War II, began with a peaceful childhood in a pious family, followed by years during which she experienced family tragedy, loss of faith, two marriages and the loss of a child, exile in Paris and, finally, in her later years, the decision to take the veil and become a social activist, ending in the maelstrom of war and the gas chamber of the Ravensbruck concentration camp in 1944.

Two events in Elisaveta's life were crucial to her later decision to become a nun: first, the death of her father when she was still a girl, as a result of which she lost her faith and became enthused by the leftist ideas of pre-revolutionary Russia; and the death of her daughter in post-revolutionary exile, bringing her back to her Orthodox faith and leading to her subsequent decision to take the veil in Paris, where she spent most of her life. The death of her child helped her to realize that from that moment of tragedy her vocation was to be a mother to anyone in need of material care and protection, a refuge in which, if only for a while, the wretched of this world could find peace. She began to care for the neglected, from Russian refugees from the Soviet Union to local drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes and the homeless. As she came face to face with their tragedies, she no longer doubted that the essence of the Christian faith is love for our neighbour, and that such love is realized when the face of God can be seen in every human being, without distinction. Inspired by the example of the Church Fathers, and in particular of *yurodivy* (the Russian term for “foolishness for Christ”),⁷⁵ Elisaveta, who had taken the veil in 1923, becoming Mother Maria, introduced what was in effect a new kind of “urban” monasticism. She had the ability to see the Face of God or, as she often said, of Christ who is hungry and thirsty, naked and barefoot, in her dedication to those whom society had given up on. She was not afraid to behave in ways that some saw as inappropriate for a nun; for example, to gain the trust of society's rejects, she used to sit with them in a café, a cigarette in her hand and a mug of beer in front of her – not exactly what one expects of a nun. Yet her priest, the prominent Russian theologian Father Sergey Bulgakov, himself a man with a fascinating background, was well aware of Maria's motives, and gave her a free hand. He knew what she meant when she said nothing should come between her heart and the world and its wounds. Maria's view of Christianity was that of an activist: theological debates are pointless, though she enjoyed taking part in them, fictitious love of “humanity” is meaningless if one does not love one's neighbour; what is the point of talking about

⁷⁵ *Yurodivy*s or fools for Christ have been a feature of Eastern Christianity from the earliest times, and are a particular kind of monastic ascetic, though they do not usually live in monasteries, isolated from society, but almost always in a village or town where they act the fool to talk openly about social issues or matters of the Church that others dare not mention, revealing hypocrisy, corruption and superstition, and the failure to understand or distortion of Christ's teachings on the part of the faithful and of the Church itself. They have been a particular feature of Russia in the past few centuries, and found a place in Dostoevsky's novels.

the sufferings of Christ when one hasn't the patience to listen to what is troubling others and to learn how to use words, or simply listen, to bring them peace.

Maria's activism, however, really came to the fore in World War II, when Paris was occupied. Though she had the opportunity to leave occupied France, Mother Maria stayed in Paris to share its misfortunes with those who had no other choice. She had no illusions about Nazism, calling it "new paganism" and saying that it "poisoned every spring and well." Her house in Paris, which had been a shelter for the vulnerable even before the war, became a place where the persecuted, especially Russian émigrés and Jews, could be fed and hidden. She campaigned particularly for people to help Jewish families, who were at the mercy of the Nazis, procuring false papers for Jewish children and helping them to survive or to get out of the country. She was arrested several times by the Gestapo, and was finally deported to the Ravensbruck concentration camp, where she endured incredible hardship before ending up in the gas chambers at the very end of the war, on 18 January 1945. Some sources claim that she volunteered to give her life to meet the quota of those supposed to die that day. The Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul recognized her martyrdom⁷⁶ and proclaimed her a saint – for many, one of the greatest of the 20th century.

WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To explain the meaning of peace in the Orthodox Christian tradition and how to become involved in peace actions within the Orthodox community</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Group work • Plenary • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milica Bakić-Hayden, "The meaning of peace and pacifism in the Orthodox Christian tradition," Appendices <p>Duration: 130 min.</p>

► I) Presentation on the meaning of peace and pacifism in the Orthodox Christian tradition – see text by Milica Bakić-Hayden (40 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- peace as salvific peace, the grace of God, and peace as the absence of war
- St Basil the Great's views on peace, non-violence and war
- "Ye are the salt of the earth:" views of peace in the writings of the Church Fathers
- prominent Orthodox pacifists

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Plenary discussion: can violence be justified from a Christian perspective (30 min.)

Before the discussion, briefly introduce Eastern Christian hermeneutics, especially the idea that the scriptures have a triple meaning, for everything is created on the three-in-one model of body, soul and spirit: the body is the literal meaning, the soul is the emotional or intellectual meaning, and the spirit is the spiritual or mystical meaning. The descriptions of war and violence in the Bible should not therefore be interpreted literally, but rather in the spirit of the Word of God, the Logos, as the early Church did. In this sense, the allegorical symbolism that depends largely on "a symbolic reading of violent images ... successfully defuses a wholesale biblical 'sanction' for violence and war," putting the emphasis on the inner meanings of both peace and war.

⁷⁶ Some of her closest associates also suffered a martyr's death in the concentration camps – her son Yuri, and the priest Father Dmitri Klepnin, who when asked by the Gestapo if he would continue to help Jews, took out his crucifix and said that Christians must do so on account of "this Jew on the cross." Another who died with them was Maria's close friend and associate Elie Fondaminsky. Being fully aware of the consequences of helping Jews was what made them martyrs, and it was on that basis that they were canonized.

► III) Group work – using the Appendix – selected texts on women pacifists (60 min.)

Divide participants into two groups and give each group one of the passages from the Appendix.

The groups are to discuss the life and work of the pacifist described in the texts and the significance of their work

Leave enough time at the end for each group to present its findings from the group work (15 min. per group)

APPENDICES

1. **Mother Maria Skobtsova** (selected passage from the text on the meaning of peace and pacifism in the Orthodox tradition)

Maria's activism, however, really came to the fore in World War II, when Paris was occupied. Though she had the opportunity to leave occupied France, Mother Maria stayed in Paris to share its misfortunes with those who had no other choice. She had no illusions about Nazism, calling it "new paganism" and saying that it "poisoned every spring and well." Her house in Paris, which had been a shelter for the vulnerable even before the war, became a place where the persecuted, especially Russian émigrés and Jews, could be fed and hidden. She campaigned particularly for people to help Jewish families, who were at the mercy of the Nazis, procuring false papers for Jewish children and helping them to survive or to get out of the country. She was arrested several times by the Gestapo, and was finally deported to the Ravensbruck concentration camp, where she endured incredible hardship before ending up in the gas chambers at the very end of the war, on 18 January 1945. Some sources claim that she volunteered to give her life to meet the quota of those supposed to die that day. The Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul recognized her martyrdom and proclaimed her a saint – for many, one of the greatest of the 20th century.

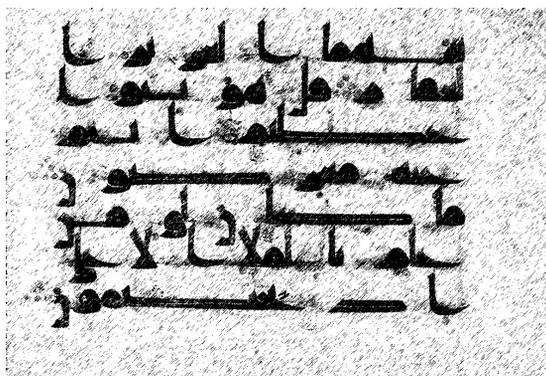
2. **Hajji Staka Skenderova** (selected passage from the text on the meaning of peace and pacifism in the Orthodox tradition)

Hajji Staka Skenderova lived and worked in Sarajevo in the latter half of the 19th century. This gifted and unassuming woman, who was ahead of her time and place in many ways, had the idea of teaching other girls to read and write by starting a school. In this she had the help of "Sarajevo's Metropolitan Prokopije and the vali of Bosnia, Veliudin Pasha Ćiritlije. She founded and opened the first Serb primary school in Sarajevo" in 1857, becoming its first teacher and principal. Staka acquired books from Belgrade, and soon began to train girls to become her assistants initially, and then teachers in their own right. News of the school in [the Sarajevo quarter of] Varoš, where reading was taught "by a new method," along with writing, handwork and some book-keeping, soon spread around town, and girls of other confessions began to enrol there. By 1862 she already had Roman Catholic, Jewish and Turkish girls. Topal-Osman sent both his girls to Staka's school and became one of her supporters. It was also thanks to him that in 1870 Staka was able to achieve her dream of going to Jerusalem, where she decided to take the veil, returning to Sarajevo as the nun Hajji Staka. Sadly, her life ended tragically in Ilidža after a celebration, when a carriage ran over her, fatally injuring her.

The concept of peace and dialogue in the Islamic tradition

God commanded me to believe in the one God and in charity, to help the poor and needy, and to make peace with those who have fallen out with us (hadith)

The Prophet Muhammad a.s. (*aleyhi-s-salaam* – the Arabic for “peace be upon him”) was sent to mankind as a mercy to all beings (Qur’an, 21: 107), to recite the Revelation (the Qur’an) to others, for its words bring rest and peace to men’s hearts (Qur’an, 13: 28; 39: 23). Peace is fundamental to God’s revelation to Muhammad a.s. The word *islam*⁷⁷ means surrender, reconciliation (to the will of God), commitment, salvation, while the Muslim greeting *As-salaamu aleykum* means “Peace be with you.” One of the 99 beautiful names of God is *As-salaam*, the Peace, which is often repeated in prayers and rituals, reminding us that only God bestows true peace. Five times a day, the faithful repeat these words after the obligatory formal prayers (*salah, namaz*⁷⁸): *Allahumma antas-salaam wa minkas-salaam* (O Lord, Thou art the source of salvation and peace, and from Thee come salvation and peace).



Folio from a Qur'an (8th-9th century) - Edited by Sanja Vrzic (Source: Wikipedia)

Daily prayer is important for the faithful, instilling true inner peace and security and building peace in one’s environment. Prayer helps us to achieve a balance between the physical and the spiritual and our preoccupation with the challenges of everyday life. Muslims believe that both the material and the spiritual world are important for a happy and blessed life in *dunya* (this world) and *al-akhira* (the next world), but that the soul feels truly at peace (*mutma'innah*) only when it is connected with God and is in harmony with its primordial nature (*fitrah*). Our natural state is thus one of surrender

(*islam*) to God, for in the primeval origins,, when the Lord asked the souls “Am I not your Lord?” they replied “Yes, we testify.” (Qur’an, 7: 172).

True surrender (*islam*), however, comes from freedom and love, not by the imposition of rules and regulations, which people often practise pro-forma to satisfy the demands of the family or society.

For Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad a.s. is the best exemplar in all things, including peace work. He said of himself, “I came to perfect the highest morals;” and his companions and contemporaries described him as a person who behaved impeccably, a man of high moral virtues who showed compassion, understanding, humility and forgiveness, demonstrating how religion should truly be lived.

During the first thirteen years of his mission in Mecca, Muhammad a.s. suffered tremendous pressure and persecution, and after the death of his wife Khadijah he decided to go to Taif, a town with an abundance of date palms and vineyards, hoping to find there greater tolerance towards his mission. Instead, however, the tribal leaders rejected him, mocked him, and then persuaded their slaves to throw stones at him, to humiliate him still more. When he took cover in a vineyard, nursing his injuries, the Prophet did not curse them, but prayed to God to give him patience and to forgive them, for they did not know what they were doing.

⁷⁷ Translator’s note: The verb *salima* in its various forms has many meanings, including to be safe, to surrender, to commit oneself to God, to keep the peace, to make peace, to embrace Islam, to become reconciled with another... The noun *islam*, derived from the verb, is generally regarded as meaning submission, resignation or reconciliation to the will of God; Islam with a capital “I” denotes the religion. The word *salaam*, also derived from the same verb, means peace, security, well-being. See J M Cowan (ed.), *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Spoken Language Services Inc, New York, 1976

⁷⁸ Translator’s note: *salah* is the Arabic term, *namaz* the Persian, used by speakers of Indo-Iranian, Turkic, South Slav and Albanian languages

Patience, forgiveness, social justice

In the Qur'an, God offers many explicit and implicit ways of building and keeping peace. Patient endurance, forgiveness and mercy, and social justice are regarded as the mediating virtues and principles of pacifism.

Patience – in the Islamic tradition, the virtue of patience is closely linked to the concept of peace, as several *ayats* (verses) of the Qur'an indicate:

- ▶ "O all you who believe, seek you help in patience and prayer; surely God is with the patient" (Qur'an, 2: 153).
- ▶ "...men who are patient, truthful, obedient, spenders in alms, imploring God's pardon at the daybreak" (Qur'an, 3: 17).
- ▶ "Such as are patient, and do deeds of righteousness; for them awaits forgiveness and a mighty wage" (Qur'an, 11: 11).

Patient people try to avoid anything that leads to conflict and violence. The *hijrah* (Muhammad's a.s. emigration from Mecca to Medina with his followers in 613 CE) is an example of this. In response to the increasing attacks and death threats against the Muslims in Mecca, Muhammad a.s. and his followers chose patience and retreat to avoid chaos and bloodshed. When it became possible for them to return to Mecca in 622, Muhammad a.s. showed no desire for revenge or to persecute his persecutors, but instead declared a general amnesty. He brought the people together in the town square and asked what they thought would now happen to them, to which they replied that he was a man of honour, from a noble family, and that they expected a magnanimous gesture from him. He forgave them all, even those who had accused his daughter Fatima and son-in-law Ali of being idolaters and his enemies.

This was a time when the tribal laws of the blood feud still prevailed, so that the general amnesty proclaimed by Muhammad a.s. on his return to Mecca melted even the hardest hearts of the polytheists. His fiercest enemies decided to join forces with him and seek forgiveness for the hostility they had shown to him and the Muslims. This gesture of forgiveness and fellow-feeling was more effective than violence and force; forgiving people gives them another chance to mend their ways. It also gives people hope that God's mercy is always there to embrace them if they are open to receiving and accepting it.

Forgiveness – the principle of forgiveness is of great importance in the Islamic tradition, though it is sometimes forgotten or given too little prominence. Even in the Bosnian translations of the Qur'an, there are verses that are not properly rendered in the spirit of its pacifist message. One example is the *ayat* (Qur'an, 7: 199) "bid to what is honourable, and turn away from the ignorant" (Arberry) or "enjoin the doing of what is right, and leave alone all those who choose to remain ignorant" (Asad), which Besim Kurkut translates as "Be nice to them," though the Arabic word *'afw* means to forgive.⁷⁹ God describes himself as the Forgiving (*al-Ghaffar*) and the Veiler or Coverer (of others' failings or sins) (*as-Sattar*). We too are expected to forgive others for the injustice and evil they have inflicted, for this is the only way of breaking out of the vicious cycle of violence and revenge. There is great wisdom and good fortune in forgiveness, as the Qur'an says:

"Not equal are the good deed and the evil deed. Repel with that which is fairer, and behold, he between whom and thee there is enmity shall be as if he were a loyal friend. Yet none shall receive it, except the steadfast; none shall receive it, except a man of mighty fortune" (Qur'an, 41: 34-35).

⁷⁹ Translator's note: but it also means to refrain, to desist, which appears to be the meaning chosen by both Arberry and Asad.

The example of Muhammad's a.s. forgiving the long years of enmity towards him demonstrates the effect this had on a community that had been living according to the laws of the blood feud. People today, however, have little faith in the power of forgiveness, and find it difficult to forgive, which is the very reason there is so much hostility, anger and lack of communication, which does nobody any good. Good fortune, as God tells us, lies in patience and forgiveness. Forgiveness is neither simple nor easy, but for people of faith it is a challenge which they should meet with the strength of their faith.

Justice – many Muslim scholars emphasize justice as a fundamental principle of Islam, to which everything else should be subject. It is true that there is no peace without social justice, but justice cannot be imposed only by law and punishment; it must be accompanied by mercy, for God describes Himself as the Just (*al-'Adil*), and enjoins mercy upon Himself: "And when those who believe in Our signs come to thee, say, 'Peace be upon you. Your Lord has prescribed for Himself mercy. Whosoever of you does evil in ignorance, and thereafter repents and makes amends, He is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.'" (Qur'an, 6: 12, 54).

Khaled Abou El Fadl, a leading authority on sharia law, describes justice as "an obligation we owe to God, and also to one another... Although the Qur'an does not define the constituent elements of justice, ... [it is] an obligation that falls on all of us,... a moral imperative that is vague but recognizable through intuition, reason, and human experience." As we seek to establish a just society and social justice, we must always take into account the differences that Divine providence has bestowed on us in *amanah* (trust), enjoining us to compete in doing good (Qur'an, 49: 13). It is vital, therefore, as we strive to establish social justice, to show mercy and compassion for other people, for this is the essence of the Prophet Muhammad's a.s. mission, as El Fadl notes:

In the Qur'anic discourse mercy is not simply forgiveness, nor the willingness to ignore the faults and sins of people, but a state in which the individual is able to be just with him- or herself and others, by giving each individual person his or her due. Fundamentally, mercy is tied to a state of genuine perception of others—that is why in the Qur'an mercy is coupled with the need for human beings to be patient and tolerant with each other ("Islam and the Challenge of Democracy," first published in the *Boston Review*, 2003)

This is the foundation of the Islamic ethics of pluralism and responsibility towards one another in respecting and accepting diversity, reflected in the multiple identities and world views that people follow, whether they are religious or not.

Conclusion

Peace is the greatest gift we can receive and experience. In the Islamic tradition, it is important to establish peace within ourselves and between people as the prerequisite for a true life of commitment and submission to everything that God may demand of us. The daily prayers which refer to God as Peace and the source of peace should be lived in our daily lives by fostering the virtues and principles of patience, forgiveness and justice with mercy.

Muslims should apply these principles both in their relations with other Muslims who hold different beliefs and views on the faith, and in their relations with those of other religious traditions or none. Only thus, by fostering inward and outward pluralism in today's global trends, can we hope for a peaceful and just society.

WORKSHOP		
Objective To explain the meaning of peace in the Islamic tradition and how to become active peace-maker	Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Group work • Plenary • Individual and group presentations 	Materials Zilka Spahić-Šiljak "The concept of peace and dialogue in the Islamic tradition" Appendices Duration: 130 min.

► I) Presentation on the concept of peace and dialogue in the Islamic tradition – see text by Zilka Spahić-Šiljak (40 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- Meaning of *islam* and *salaam* in Arabic, as the framework of peace
- Concept of patience, forgiveness and social justice
- Female Paradigms of peace-building

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Plenary discussion: can violence be justified from a Christian perspective (30 min.)

Explain why justice is at top of human rights pyramid in Islamic tradition, and why compassion, mercy need be twinned with justice. In the Qur'anic discourse justice is about obligation to promote good and forbid evil for men and women who are vicegerents on Earth. In contemporary scholarship on Islam and human rights there show different even divergent opinions on justice, its content, meaning and applicability in practice. The question posed by Khaled Abou El-Fadl (2004) reflects the best tensions in understandings of the nature of justice: "Does the divine law define justice, or does justice define the divine law? If the former, then whatever one concludes is the divine law therein is justice. If the latter, then whatever justice demands is, in fact, the demand of the divine."

► III) Group work – using the Appendix – selected texts on women pacifists (60 min.)

Divide participants into two groups and give each group one of the passages from the Appendix.

The groups are to discuss the life and work of the pacifist described in the texts and the significance of their work

Leave enough time at the end for each group to present its findings from the group work (15 min. per group)

APPENDICES

1. Umm Salamah

Umm Salamah was an educated, eloquent and wise woman, as several examples of her life with the Prophet Muhammad a.s. reveal. She was of high social status, being from a leading Meccan family, and also enjoyed the respect of Muhammad a.s., who would invariably listen to what she had to say on various subjects, and often sought her advice when there was the need to intervene in some way not directly addressed by the Qur'an. Two examples attesting to the important place she occupied in the first Muslim community are:

She set an example of gender-sensitive interpretation of certain terms:

One day the herald in Medina went around the town announcing: "O people (*an-nas*), come to the mosque, the Messenger has something to say to you." Umm Salamah began to get ready to go to the mosque, but her servant said to her: "There's no need for you to go, he's calling on men to go, not women." Umm Salamah replied, "But no, he is calling on people (*an-nas*), and I am one of them. I am going to the mosque."

At that time the mosque was the centre of both religious and socio-political events, and women as well as men went there, wanting to know what was going on so that they could make their own contribution to the community. Umm Salamah went to the mosque because the news that Muhammad a.s. was going to present to his community would enable her to act and thus to fulfil her *amanah* as God's vice-gerent (*khalifa*) on earth. This instance also provides us with important information on how to interpret the Arabic of the fundamental sources of the faith. The noun *an-nas*, people, is generic, relating to everyone, not just to men, though sometimes interpreted reductively in the masculine gender. Modern Qur'an commentators stress the importance of generic nouns that cover both masculine and feminine gender, thereby reaffirming the equality of men and women in God's discourse in the Qur'an.

She proposed peaceful conflict resolution

Another event reveals that Umm Salamah was engaged in the political life of the community and shows how she helped Muhammad a.s. to resolve serious political dilemmas. In 628, as they were travelling together to Mecca to perform the *hajj*, the Meccan authorities stopped the Muslims at a place called al-Hudaybiyyah, preventing them from entering the town to perform the pilgrimage. The pilgrims were restive and unhappy at being turned back rather than allowed to perform the *hajj*. Fearful that violence might break out, Muhammad a.s. was uncertain what to do. His companions gave him various kinds of advice, including challenging the Meccans to fight, but the advice he took was that of his wife Umm Salamah, who suggested that a camel be sacrificed (*qurban*), which is one of the last rituals of the *hajj*, so indicating that the pilgrimage had been performed and completed; this would calm the people and make them feel that they had not travelled all that way in vain, and would avoid conflict with the Meccans. Muhammad a.s. did as she suggested, defusing an extremely sensitive political situation and showing that he had no problem accepting and publicly acknowledging that a woman could be a capable and wise politician.

2. Shirin Ebadi

The first Muslim woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, in 2003, she is one of many Muslim women who have tried to show that it is possible to be a good believer and a good citizen. Shirin was born in Iran in 1947 to a family of educated, practising Muslims. She herself was educated in Tehran, where she graduated from Law School in 1965, and served as a judge from 1969 on, gaining her doctorate at the same faculty in 1971.

She was the first woman to be given the opportunity to serve as a judge, against the background of certain views of Islam according which women may not serve as judges. The 1979 Revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini brought with it many changes, affecting women in particular. Shirin and the other women judges were dismissed, but she was given permission to work in the administration of the court where she had once presided. She decided to take early retirement, using her time to write until she obtained a licence to practise law, launching her practice in 1992. Since then she has carried out important work in defence of fundamental human rights, including:



- co-founding the Children's Rights Support Association in 1995, which she chaired until 2001, since when she has acted as its legal adviser;
- working to improve the status of students, and in particular to provide scholarships for those who cannot afford the tuition fees;
- co-founding and chairing the Centre for the Defence of Human Rights in 2001;
- lecturing on human rights at Tehran University;
- defending a number of cases of violations of human rights and freedom of speech;
- representing the families of victims of serial killers;
- representing women who have lost custody of their children because of the custody laws, which give precedence to the father over the mother;
- proposing to the Islamic Consultative Assembly that it ratify the Law on the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination Against Children, which was agreed and ratified in 2002

Shirin Ebadi carries out all these activities as a practising Muslim, constantly underlining the importance of her religious identity to her life and work. She is fully committed both to human rights and to Islam, having grown up in a family that saw no conflict between the principles of the faith and those of universal human rights. She has therefore been the object of criticism not only in her country's religious circles but also from other human rights organizations, which forces her to fight not on one but on two fronts to prove that it is possible to be both a believer and a citizen. Amber Pawlik of the Homa Darabi Foundation is a fierce critic of Shirin for continuing to emphasize Islam in her work: "We were stunned to hear you calling yourself a Muslim woman instead of an Iranian woman. Have you forgotten that Iran has been a defeated country and

Islam is a foreign religion forced on the Iranians for centuries?"

Pawlik also suggests that Shirin received the Nobel Peace Prize because she was not a rebel, but a peaceful advocate of reform. This is the very point, however; she believes that is one way of bringing about social change without conflict and killings. For Shirin the 21st century is a time when many concepts are being deconstructed, among the most important of which are peace and democracy. For her, the mere absence of war is not peace – and there is no peace without social justice. She believes that it is vital to transform the concept of democracy, behind which many tyrants and dictators are shielding, and which deepens class differences.

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Interfaith dialogue

Interfaith is a modern phenomenon, though there have been instances – exceptions, rather than the rule – in the past. After centuries of self-sufficiency, ignorance, polemics and conflict, interfaith dialogue is painstakingly introducing a new kind of relationship between the world's religions in the lineaments of a genuine spiritual revolution. Though interfaith dialogue still arouses feelings of mistrust, fear and resistance in many religious people, there can be no doubt that it is a necessary part of a responsible and mature religion.

The necessity of dialogue

This will be addressed in three ways: the anthropological, the social and the theological necessity of dialogue.

1. The anthropological necessity of dialogue

The roots of interfaith dialogue lie within the structure of the human person. As dialogical, relational beings, we can grow only in coexistence with those who are other and different, on the basis of non-violent dialogue and communication. Dialogue is a fundamental human need; to exist, I need a You. Differences give meaning to dialogue, and knowing another means enlarging oneself by one life.

2. The social necessity of dialogue

The growing tendency towards interfaith dialogue in modern societies, marked by globalization, points to the manifold social necessity of dialogue. Above all, this is the cultural and religious pluralization of society. Coexistence by several religious communities in a single society is no longer the exception, but the rule. Every day we meet people whose view of the essential things of life is different from ours. Those who were once remote national, religious or cultural strangers to us are now our neighbours. Sectarian autism is socially unacceptable.

Associated with this is a new understanding of truth, prompted by dialogical philosophy. The limitations of human language mean that every expression of the truth is in fact fragmentary. We do not possess the whole truth, but only bits and pieces of it, which are no longer seen as static and monological but as dynamic and dialogical, relational and complementary. Constant dialogical encounters with other cultural, philosophical, social and religious perspectives are thus a necessary condition for a fuller knowledge of the truth of reality. We do not possess the truth/Truth, we are merely on a journey towards it.

The democratic structure of modern societies also encourages dialogical behaviour between religions. The quest for a shared ethical common denominator as the foundation of society, and for solutions to specific problems in democratic societies, is based on consensus. This is achieved by a mentality of active dialogical tolerance, rather than merely passive tolerance, which always threatens to descend into violence.

Another social factor prompting dialogue is the post-colonial syndrome. Europeans, formerly colonial rulers but now haunted by feelings of guilt, finally perceive the authentic value of cultures and religions beyond Europe, which should be known and respected for their distinctive features, as

a worthy expression of humanity. The proponents of these cultural and religious values also acquire a new self-awareness beyond any inferiority complex.

And of course, one should not overlook the increasingly topical peacemaking function of interfaith dialogue.

3. The theological necessity of dialogue

Crucial to interfaith dialogue, however, are its theological imperatives. This tells us that interfaith dialogue is not a survival strategy or a fashionable whim, but an unconditional demand that, for people of faith, derives from religion itself, from our fundamental relationship with God. Interfaith dialogue is thus an essential component of faith.

The primary reason for this is the Abrahamic religions' spiritual experience of the dialogical nature of God and of Revelation. Interfaith dialogue is in fact the reflection and continuation of God's redemptive dialogue with humankind, and indeed a privileged form of collaboration with God on the salvific transformation of the world into a state of justice, equality and peace.

But religious dialogue is also a privileged locus of growth and the refinement of our own faith. A dialogical encounter with the spiritual worlds of others prompts us to do away with the inconsistencies of our own religious practice and encourages a more profound understanding of our own faith, enhancing our own religious experience.

Standing firm in our own faith is proportionate to our capacity for interfaith dialogue, and vice versa. In fact, it is how we begin, through interfaith dialogue, fully to realize our shared divine calling to be the children of the one God (our heavenly Father-Mother).

Basic forms of interfaith dialogue

It is customary to refer to four basic, complementary forms of interfaith dialogue, for which, it should not be overlooked, intra-religious dialogue within each religion is a prerequisite, for none is monolithic:

- the dialogue of life, dealing with the everyday life of people of different religions with a view to mutual respect and love
- the dialogue of action, in which people of different religions collaborate to solve social problems (environmental, social etc.)
- the dialogue of theological exchange, where theologians of different faiths meet and discuss the fundamental issues of religion to eliminate the lack of knowledge that gives rise to prejudice and demonization and to discover the similarities and differences between religions
- the dialogue of experience, where spiritually committed, mature people seek to learn about the religious experiences of others and to share their experience of the divine, through prayer, meditation, contemplation, mystical experience and ascetic practice.

The virtues of interfaith spirituality

The challenges that must be overcome on the path of interfaith dialogue are clearly revealed by the virtues of interfaith spirituality: trust, humility, curiosity, friendship, honesty, courage and gratitude.

1. Trust

Like faith, interfaith dialogue is inconceivable without trust, for the ultimate reality that believers call God is good. It is only on the basis of trust in the goodness of the ultimate reality, which transcends and maintains the world, that we can preserve our fundamental conviction that this world and human life are also essentially good, despite the undeniable presence of various forms of evil.

Faith in the universal redemptive will of God that excludes no one grows from trust in the goodness of the ultimate reality. The holy scriptures of all the world religions preserve this awareness of the goodness of the ultimate reality, which is manifested particularly in the redemptive presence of God that encompasses everyone.

St Paul explicitly tells us that God wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4), while the Qur'an says that God has sent a messenger to every nation (Qur'an, 16: 36). The same beliefs are to be found in the scriptures of Hindus and Buddhists. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says that "even those who in faith worship other gods, because of their love they worship me" (9: 23). The writings of the Old Testament prophets of Israel make it particularly clear that God's redemptive presence is not limited to certain peoples and religious communities. The prophet Amos is aware that Yahweh does not love only the Israelites, and did not save only them from slavery; the same is true of their enemies, and of Yahweh's favourites, the Philistines and the Aramaeans (Am. 9: 7). No wonder, then, that the Evangelist Matthew says that "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 8: 5-11). The first virtue of interfaith spirituality, then, is trust in God's goodness and the awareness that his salvific will encompasses everyone.

2. Humility

There can be no true dialogue without humility, and from the perspective of interfaith dialogue, more than anything humility means not restricting God to our human modes of thought. On the path of interfaith dialogue, we must constantly renew our awareness that God is greater than any of our thoughts or ideas.

This wisdom is not confined to great Christian theologians such as Anselm of Canterbury or Thomas Aquinas. Anselm says that God is greater than anything that can be imagined, and Thomas Aquinas that the divine essence transcends all forms of our intellectual capacities. Every great world religion is conscious of the ineffability of God. We see this clearly in the Muslim exclamation "Allâhu akbar!" which does not mean "God is great" but "God is greater" – always greater than anything we humans can conceive of. The second of the Ten Commandments also suggests this: make no image of God, whether by your hands or in your mind. Upanishads, the holy Hindu texts, also say that the secret of God surpasses all human thinking. Laozi, the first Taoist philosopher writes: „The Tao that can be spoken of is not Tao, the name that can be named is not the eternal name.“ (Tao te Ching 1,1)

All this means that the doctrines and teachings of our religious communities cannot encompass the divine reality in its plenitude, however wise they may be. Religions that demand or claim absolute truth or knowledge in this regard are blinded by human arrogance. God always remains the Ineffable. And yet He is near to us, speaking to us, which we experience in different ways through the traditions of the world's religions, the diversity of which reflects that of humankind itself.

The second virtue of interfaith spirituality is thus the humility that does not restrict God to our human way of thinking, for it is aware of God's ineffability.

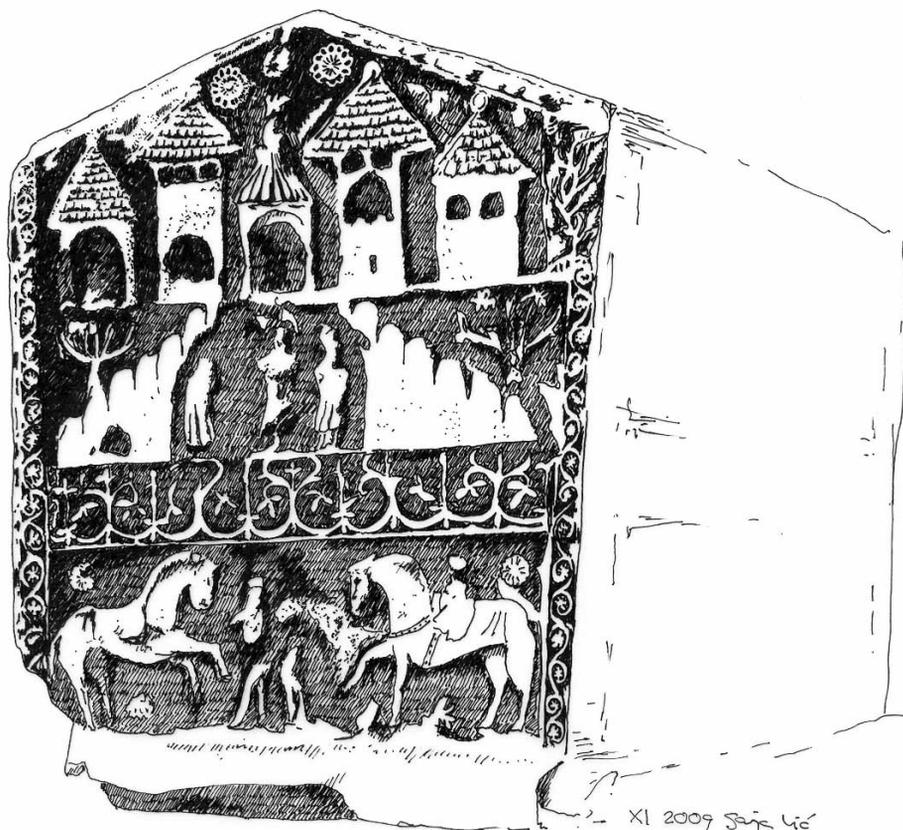
3. Curiosity

Despite the ambiguities and amphiboly of all world religions, more and more theologians see religious pluralism as part of God's mysterious plan for our salvation, the ultimate meaning of which eludes us. It was God, not the devil, who decreed that there should be many religions. Interfaith

dialogue is thus inconceivable without scholarly curiosity.

Interfaith dialogue piques our curiosity as to what God meant or means in the lives of others, and arouses in us the wish to study the riches that merciful God has cast among the nations and the delight of discovering other paths to God; and, as the current Pope once said, there are as many paths to God as there are people on earth.

From the perspective of interfaith dialogue, therefore, curiosity means willingness to learn about the many human paths to God and God's many paths to man. We thus gradually become capable of a better understanding of our neighbours of different faiths, and become familiar with their experiences, wisdom and truth. And this leads us to a central virtue of interfaith dialogue: spirituality.



4. Friendship

However necessary and praiseworthy it may be to learn about other cultures and religious traditions by reading works of scholarship, this is not enough for true interfaith dialogue. The true faith that is to be known in interfaith dialogue, and with which such dialogue is to be conducted, is not the faith of books, but that of living men and women. Our image of another faith is complete and true only after we come into contact with the people who live it, and that is possible only by becoming friends with them – a central virtue of interfaith spirituality.

Friendship enables us finally to discover what another faith means to a specific person in his or her daily life. Understanding another religion – Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism – means seeing the world through the eyes of a Muslim, Buddhist or Hindu. It is only through friendship that we can understand how our friends of other faiths understand themselves. By sharing the joy and sufferings of our friends, we learn how their faith helps them to overcome life's problems and maintain hope. Without this kind of understanding, there is no true interfaith dialogue.

Friendship is thus a key virtue of interfaith spirituality.

5. Honesty

Since there can be no true friendship without honesty, the next virtue of interfaith spirituality is honesty. In interfaith dialogue, we must be honest about our own and others' religions, without covert contempt or dissimulation. We should not compare the ideals of our own religion with the horrific historical failures of our friend's religion. Honesty is comparing ideals with ideals and reality with reality. Jesus's and Muhammad's expressions of respect and praise for people of other faiths may be an inspiration and model for us for honesty in befriending people of other faiths, while words of criticism should be uttered with caution and compassion.

In honest friendship, we shall learn not only to see others and their religions through their eyes, but to see ourselves and our religion through the eyes of others. This marks the beginning of an exchange of experience and mature friendship. It paves the way for interfaith dialogue to become a source of enrichment. But for this truly to happen, we need the next virtue of interfaith spirituality.

6. Courage

It takes courage to expose our own religion and ourselves to others' scrutiny without embellishment or concealment; and courage is the next virtue of interfaith spirituality. This not only breaks down many entrenched flawed understandings and notions between us, but also reveals our own idealized image of ourselves and our own religious tradition. This is often accompanied by temporary feelings of anger provoked by departing from our customary ways of seeing ourselves and others.

At the end of this process of refinement we come to a more realistic understanding of ourselves and others, beyond idealization, and discover what our religion – our religious symbols, for example – really mean to others.

Only if we now allow this to begin to change the way others and their religious tradition perceive us and our own religious tradition can we say that we have taken the first step into genuine interfaith dialogue, which entails the courage to change. The testimonies of the many people who have been conducting interfaith dialogue in this way for years show that they ultimately develop an inner sense of dual belonging or affiliation and gain a deeper experience of the grace from which the final virtue of interfaith spirituality springs.

7. Gratitude

The human heart often sees a deeper experience of God's grace as a source of gratitude. In interfaith dialogue, gratitude means gratitude for others above all – not only because of what we share, but because of what makes us different. Ultimately, true interfaith dialogue leads to delight in our unity and diversity with others – gratitude in the same measure for both realities that begin to speak to us of God. And gratitude frees us from our anxieties, releasing our tensions on the basis of trust in the goodness of the ultimate reality and its redemptive presence. And this brings us back to the first virtue of interfaith spirituality.

By way of conclusion

Against this background, it is clear that the necessary conditions of interfaith dialogue are self-criticism out of faith (responsibility towards God), responsibility for others (universal suffering) and responsibility for the general good (universal human rights).

It is worth remembering that interfaith dialogue is not conducted by religious structures, doctrines or books, but by people. "Dialogue is a conversation between one person and another about the essential interests of humankind for its own sake" (V. Bajsić).

The ultimate purpose of interfaith dialogue, therefore, is not to defend orthodoxy, but to seek the individual for his or her own sake as an enrichment for the participants in the dialogue; not the truth about the person but the person herself or himself, for whose freedom and dignity God alone is the warrant.

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WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the significance and practice of interfaith dialogue</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief presentation • Group work • Plenary discussion 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interfaith Dialogue – Alen Kristić • Appendices <p>Duration: 150 min.</p>

► I) Presentation: Why dialogue (see Interfaith Dialogue – Alen Kristić) (30 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- basic forms of interfaith dialogue
- anthropological, social and theological necessity of dialogue
- the dialogical nature of God and of Revelation

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Presentation on the basic forms of interfaith dialogue (see Interfaith Dialogue – Alen Kristić) (30 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- the dialogue of life
- the dialogue of action
- the dialogue of theological exchange
- the dialogue of experience

► III) Group work (using Appendix) (30 min.)

Give each group one of the three passages from the Appendix

Passage 1. Interreligious Beatitudes – Raimon Panikkar

Passage 2. The Dialogue Decalogue: fundamental rules for interfaith and inter-ideological dialogue – Leonard Swidler

Passage 3. The Ten Commandments expressed in universal discourse as the foundation and impulse for interfaith and social dialogue – Walter Harrelson.

Follow the group work with a wide-ranging plenary discussion (30 min.)



Raise the following questions – write them down on a flipchart before the group work begins so everyone can see them:

1. find dialogical passages in the scriptures of your own religious tradition and try to explain the theological necessity of interfaith dialogue from the perspective of that religious tradition



2. draft your own manifesto for interfaith dialogue against the background of Raimon Panikkar's "blessings of interfaith dialogue"

3. try to find positive and negative examples from the practice of your own environment for each item of Leonard Swidler's Dialogue Decalogue

Summarize the conclusions in the groups and in plenary (30 min.)



Write the conclusions on a flipchart during the discussion

APPENDICES

1. Interfaith Beatitudes – Raimon Panikkar

When you enter into an intrareligious dialogue, do not think beforehand what you have to believe.

When you witness to your faith, do not defend yourself or your vested interests, sacred as they may appear to you. Do like the birds in the sky: they sing and fly and do not defend their music or their beauty.

When you dialogue with somebody, look at your partner as a revelatory experience as you would – and should – look at the lilies in the fields.

When you engage in intrareligious dialogue, try first to remove the beam in your own eye before removing the speck in the eye of your neighbour.

Blessed are you when you do not feel self-sufficient while being in dialogue.

Blessed are you when you trust the other because you trust in Me.

Blessed are you when you face misunderstandings from your own community or others for the sake of your fidelity to Truth.

Blessed are you when you do not give up your convictions, and yet you do not set them up as absolute norms.

Woe unto you, you theologians and academicians, when you dismiss what others say because you find it embarrassing or not sufficiently learned.

Woe unto you, you practitioners of religions, when you do not listen to the cries of the little ones.

Woe unto you, you religious authorities, because you prevent change and (re) conversion.

Woe unto you, religious people, because you monopolize religion and stifle the Spirit which blows where and how she wills.

2. The Dialogue Decalogue: fundamental rules for interfaith and inter-ideological dialogue – Leonard Swidler [abbreviated]

First commandment: The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and grow in the perception and understanding of reality, and then to act accordingly.

Second commandment: Interreligious, interideological dialogue must be a two-sided project-- within each religious or ideological community and between religious or ideological communities.

Third commandment: Each participant must come to the dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity. Conversely--each participant must assume a similar complete honesty and sincerity in the other partners.

Fourth commandment: In interreligious, interideological dialogue we must not compare our ideals with our partner's practice, but rather our ideals with our partner's ideals, our practice with our partner's practice.

Fifth commandment: Each participant must define himself. Conversely - the one interpreted must be able to recognize herself in the interpretation.

Sixth commandment: Each participant must come to the dialogue with no hard-and-fast assumptions as to where the points of disagreement are.

Seventh commandment: Dialogue can take place only between equals, or *par cum pari* as the II Vatican Council put it.

Eighth commandment: Dialogue can take place only on the basis of mutual trust.

Ninth commandment: Persons entering into interreligious, interideological dialogue must be at least minimally self-critical of both themselves and their own religious or ideological traditions.

Tenth commandment: Each participant eventually must attempt to experience the partner's religion or ideology "from within."

3. The Ten Commandments expressed in universal discourse as the foundation and impulse for interfaith and social dialogue – Walter Harrelson⁸⁰

1. Do not have more than a single ultimate allegiance
2. Do not give ultimate loyalty to any earthly reality
3. Do not use the power of religion to harm others
4. Do not treat with contempt the times set aside for rest
5. Do not treat with contempt any member of one's family
6. Do not do violence against fellow human beings
7. Do not violate the commitment of sexual love
8. Do not claim the life or goods of others
9. Do not damage others through misuse of human speech
10. Do not lust after the life or goods of others

⁸⁰ Translator's note: as given in Walter Harrelson, *The Ten Commandments and Human Rights*, Mercer University Press, 1997, p. 164. The Bosnian version omits the first commandment, numbering the second as 1 etc., and the last as 9/10.

4. The ways are various, the goal is one – Jalâl al-din Rûmi

I was speaking one day amongst a group of people, and a party of non-Muslims was present. In the middle of my address they began to weep and to register emotion and ecstasy.

Someone asked: What do they understand and what do they know? Only one Muslim in a thousand understands this kind of talk. What did they understand, that they should weep?

The Master answered: It is not necessary that they should understand the inner spirit of these words. The root of the matter is the words themselves, and that they do understand. After all, everyone acknowledges the Oneness of God, that He is the Creator and Provider, that He controls every thing, that to Him all things shall return, and that it is He who punishes and forgives. When anyone hears these words, which are a description and commemoration of God, a universal commotion and ecstatic passion supervenes, since out of these words comes the

scent of their Beloved and their Quest.

Though the ways are various, the goal is one. Do you not see that there are many roads to the Kaaba? For some the road is from Rum, for some from Syria, for some from Persia, for some from China, for some by sea from India and Yemen. So if you consider the roads, the variety is great and the divergence infinite; but when you consider the goal, they are all of one accord and one. The hearts of all are at one upon the Kaaba. The hearts have one attachment, an ardour and a great love for the Kaaba, and in that there is no room for contrariety. That attachment is neither infidelity nor faith; that is to say, that attachment is not confounded with the various roads which we have mentioned. Once they have arrived there, that disputation and war and diversity touching the roads -- this man saying to that man, 'You are false, you are an infidel,' and the other replying in kind -- once they have arrived at the Kaaba, it is realised that that warfare was concerning the roads only, and that their goal was one.

To resume: now all men in their inmost hearts love God and seek Him, pray to Him and in all things put their hope in Him, recognising none but Him as omnipotent and ordering their affairs. Such an apperception is neither infidelity nor faith. Inwardly it has no name.

Now the literalists take the Holy Mosque to be that Kaaba to which people repair. Lovers, however, and the elect of God, take the Holy Mosque to mean union with God.⁸¹



81 Thus spoke Rumi, for instance. See Rumi's Discourses by Arthur J Arberry.

Interfaith dialogue from a Catholic perspective

Interfaith dialogue is now one of the Catholic Church's basic frames of reference, no longer a sideline but an essential component of the Church's entire mission. Apostolic activities and dialogue are structurally complementary, not mutually exclusive, aspects of the Church's global mission, with dialogue having its own particular value.

The change in Church's attitude in favour of interfaith dialogue was initiated during the II Vatican Council. For centuries back, the Church had been dominated by a polemical attitude towards non-Christian religions, coupled with feelings of self-sufficiency and superiority. Identifying itself as it did with the Kingdom of God, the Church saw itself as the one and only true path to salvation.

However, the New Testament scriptures themselves give room for interpretation not only as a criticism of religious arrogance but also as an incentive to a positive view of the members of other religions.

New Testament challenges

It is often overlooked that in the Gospels, the members of other religions appear over and over again as examples of genuine faith in contrast to the lack of faith of Jesus's fellow countrymen, members of God's chosen people, and even sometimes of the apostles themselves: the gifts to the infant Jesus of the wise men from the East (Mat 2: 1-12); the flight to Egypt by Mary and Joseph with the infant Jesus (Mat 2: 13-14); the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 29-37); Jesus's conversation with the Samaritan woman (Jn 4: 1-41); Jesus's casting out the devil from the daughter of a Greek woman, a Syrophenician by nation (Mk 7: 24-29).

What is more, Jesus condemned religious pride when he said of the Roman centurion in Capernaum, whose servant he had healed, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness" (Mat 8: 11-12). Indeed, the Roman centurion at the foot of the cross at the moment of Jesus's death was among those who said, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Mat 27: 54).

Realizing that the Holy Spirit descends both on pagans and on the baptised, the apostle Peter exclaimed: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10: 34-35). In another passage he would call upon Christians to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt 3: 15).

When preaching to Areopagus of Athens, the apostle Paul did not even hesitate to make reference to the wisdom of Greek poets when he said that "in [the Lord] we all live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said. For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17: 28).

The theology of the divine Logos

The dominant strand in the early centuries of the Church was a theology that did not reject or demonize the truth and values of other cultural, religious and philosophical traditions. To the

contrary, everything that was good and true in them was regarded as resulting from the operation of the divine Logos, the Word that runs through every period of time since the creation of the world. For the early Church, there was no place for doubt that the divine Logos operates not only within but also outside the Judeo-Christian tradition, sowing the seeds of truth in the human spirit and manifesting the heavenly Father to all humankind.

The divine Logos as the centre of the universe and of history is for everyone: "He is the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." However, beyond the Judeo-Christian revelation, it is fragmentary, its role to prepare for the gospel.

Justin, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria were early Church Fathers who held this view, open to spiritual values outside the Church. For Clement, authentic philosophy comes from God; mainly with Greek philosophy in mind, he even called it a covenant with God, of the same value and purpose as preparation for the gospel as the Law had for Jews. He also believed that Hindu and Buddhist teachers were authentic teachers of humankind, guided by the divine Logos.

However, the moment the martyred Church of a minority without political power was transformed into the Church of the majority with political power in 313, the Church of pomp and luxury, its ability to recognize others' spiritual values and to enter into dialogue almost completely faded away. Instead, it was dominated by a rigid theological faction that would ultimately deny the possibility of salvation for non-Christians, and even heretics and schismatics who ended their lives outside the Catholic Church: *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* – there is no salvation outside the church.

Dialogical thought would survive only on the margins of the mediaeval Church, in the writings of Peter Abelard, Raymond Lull and Nicholas of Cusa, or those of humanists such as Pico della Mirandola.

On the eve of the crusades, one of the rare conciliatory expressions about non-Christians from within the Church is that of Pope Gregory VII, who wrote to Anasir, the ruler of Muslim Mauretania:

"We (Christians and Muslims) recognize and believe in the one God, though in different ways, and daily praise and glorify the Creator of time and the Ruler of this world. For as the Apostle says: He is our peace, who hath made both one" (Eph. 2).

A momentous turn of events

The Church's new self understanding conceived at the Second Vatican Council did not result only in a dialogical attitude towards the modern world – the Church no longer sought to rule the world, but to serve it, and to learn from it in a spirit of friendly yet critical openness – but also in a more positive view of the non-Christian religions.

In fact, even as Vatican II was still in session, Pope Paul VI wrote in his encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964), a first in the teachings of the Church, of the need to introduce wide-ranging dialogue in the theory and practice of the Church as it faced the pluralism of the modern world. He set out the necessity of dialogue in anthropological and theological terms. The roots of dialogue lie within the structure of the human person. Spiritual growth is possible only on the basis of non-violent dialogue and communication. The dialogical practice of the Church should be a continuation and reflection of the on-going dialogue between God and humankind. Dialogue is an attribute of the revelation, and of God Himself.

Against the background of such reflections, Vatican II was the first council in the history of the Church to speak favourably of non-Christian religions, above all in *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions: "The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men" (NA 2).

Of crucial importance for a positive view of non-Christian religions and interfaith dialogue was the Council's recognition of religious freedom in *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Declaration on religious freedom:

"It is one of the major tenets of Catholic doctrine that man's response to God in faith must be free: no one therefore is to be forced to embrace the Christian faith against his own will. This doctrine is contained in the word of God and it was constantly proclaimed by the Fathers of the Church. The act of faith is of its very nature a free act. It is therefore completely in accord with the nature of faith that in matters religious every manner of coercion on the part of men should be excluded" (DH 10).

The Council therefore condemned discrimination of any kind:

"The Church reproveth, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, colour, condition of life, or religion. On the contrary, following in the footsteps of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, this sacred synod ardently implores the Christian faithful to 'maintain good fellowship among the nations' (1 Peter 2:12), and, if possible, to live for their part in peace with all men, so that they may truly be sons of the Father who is in heaven" (NA 5).

The documents of Vatican II attest to the belief in the presence of significant spiritual values and riches in all religious traditions, to a greater or lesser degree, the fruit not only of human endeavour but also of divine mercy, of the operation of the Word and Spirit of God. These positive values in non-Christian religions, invariably associated with the merciful mission of Christ, are described as "what truth and goodness these religions... possess (*Optatum Totius* 16), "precious elements of religion and humanity" (*Gaudium et Spes* 92), "seeds of truth" (General Audience 4) and "seeds of the Word" (GA 11), and "a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men" (NA 2).

Though it expressed no view as to whether non-Christian religions may objectively be institutions of salvation, or a way and means to salvation for their adherents, the Council saw the salvation of non-Christians as a real and unquestionable possibility, for "the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery" (GS 22). It went even further in not denying the possibility of salvation even to atheists and agnostics:

"Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things (Acts 17: 25-28), and as Saviour wills that all men be saved (1 Tim 2: 4). Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life" (*Lumen Gentium* 16).

The Council expressed considerable esteem for Muslims as well as Jews, particularly in *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions: "The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honour Mary (Maryam), His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

“Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom” (NA 3).

Muslims come immediately after Jews in *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: “But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans [sic], who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind” (LG 16).

Thus, though the Council acknowledged the inconsistencies, ambiguities and delusions in all religions (LG 17), it did not regard non-Christian religions as accretions of delusion and error, recognized that in them are spiritual, redemptive values that can enrich Christians themselves. It therefore called upon Christians to engage in “sincere and prudent dialogue” with non-Christians so as to recognize “the treasures a generous God has distributed among the nations of the earth” (*Ad Gentes* 11), for their spiritual patrimony is a basis for dialogue (see NA 2-3), not only congruous but also differing, as will later be explicitly stated by the Post-conciliar 1984 document *Dialogue and Proclamation* of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians (DM 26).

For the Council, to engage in interfaith dialogue is to collaborate with God’s redemptive plan in this world. The Church should ensure, through her work, that “whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil and the happiness of man” (LG 17).

Post-conciliar developments

A further evolution in the Church’s teachings on religions, in which it attempts to integrate the redemptive uniqueness of Jesus Christ with the universal redemptive will of God, is found in *Dialogue and Proclamation*, jointly drafted by the Pontifical Council for Interfaith Dialogue and the Congregation for the Evangelization of People in 1991.

For the first time, a document issued with the authority of the Church’s teachings, following the trail blazed by Vatican II, affirmed that non-Christian religions are a path to salvation for their adherents, though still “unaware that Jesus Christ is the source of their salvation. The mystery of salvation reaches out to them, in a way known to God, through the invisible action of the Spirit of Christ. Concretely, it will be in the sincere practice of what is good in their own religious traditions and by following the dictates of their conscience that the members of other religions respond positively to God’s invitation and receive salvation in Jesus Christ, even while they do not recognize or acknowledge him as their saviour” (DP 29).

In other words, the adherents of non-Christian religions do not encounter the redemptive



Franciscan monastery in Krajeva Sutijska - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

grace of God in Jesus Christ despite or contrary to their religious affiliation, but by virtue of the religious practices of their own religious traditions.

As interreligious dialogue represents a specific form of spiritual enrichment, the Document underlines that Christians, practicing publicly and unambiguously their beliefs, step into the interreligious dialogue ready to “learn and accept from others and by others the positive values of their respective traditions” which sometimes may achieve “purification of the Christian faith.” (DP 37, 49).

This means that, to a greater or lesser extent, God abides in Word and Spirit in the lives, ethical practices, mysticism and creativity of the adherents of other religions, and it is therefore possible that Christians will encounter in them certain values and experiences that fall within the plenitude of the event of Jesus Christ, but that Christians have not yet adopted at either the cognitive or the practical level. For example, encounters with Jews and Muslims are a constant reminder of God’s transcendence and uniqueness, of His sublimity and otherness that always transcend any discourse on Him in terms of analogy.

It is noteworthy that *Dialogue and Proclamation* states that “the inchoate reality of this Kingdom [of God] can be found also beyond the confines of the Church, for example in the hearts of the followers of other religious traditions, insofar as they live evangelical values and are open to the action of the Spirit” (DP 35), and that the Church itself on earth is but “the seed and the beginning of that Kingdom” (DP 34). Thus interfaith dialogue is again seen as a joint endeavour to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

There can be no doubt that these and other shifts in the Church’s teachings on other religions are the fruit of the interfaith dialogue practised since Vatican II, to which Pope John Paul II gave an immeasurable boost, so much so that he may rightly be regarded as the “Pope of interfaith dialogue,” for which he found particular inspiration in the prophetic example of St Francis of Assisi. For St Francis, as Gwénolé Jéusset tells us in *Saint François et le Sultan*, his encounter with the sultan in Damietta in 1219 was the culmination of his conversion to the gospel, for in this meeting with Muslims he recognized brothers and sisters. Interfaith dialogue should in fact ultimately lead to conversion, not in the sense of forsaking one religion for another, but as an ever greater experiential and theological openness to God and deeper penetration into the truth of the relation between God and people in religions.

No wonder, then, that John Paul II chose none other than Assisi for the great interfaith gathering of 27 October 1986, bringing together 67 leaders from twelve different religious communities and churches to fast and pray for world peace.

“In a few days we shall go to Assisi... a place that St Francis transformed into a centre of universal brotherhood. Our differences are many and profound. In the past, they have often been the cause of painful conflict. Our shared faith in God is of fundamental value. In allowing us to meet as God’s creatures, it opens our eyes to universal brotherhood. This is why we want to begin this new path in Assisi.”

This was in many ways a revolutionary event, laying the foundations for interfaith prayer and making the “Assisi spirit” the calling of the entire Church.

Under the slogan “Together for Peace,” Pope John Paul II again convened a pilgrimage of peace by some 200 religious leaders to Assisi on 24 January 2002 to pray for world peace, reflecting his unshakeable desire for members of different religions to work together for reconciliation and peace in a plural world. Such authority on the part of the Pope would probably have been inconceivable without his talk of the need for the “purification of memories,” which he began in the Church by openly seeking the forgiveness of all those upon whom Christians had ever inflicted harm.

One of the central theological contributions to interfaith dialogue made by John Paul II was his constant emphasis on the universal – temporal and spatial – work of the Holy Spirit, of which the

fruits can be seen to this day beyond the visible bounds of the Church, in non-Christian religions, for “the Spirit is always and everywhere present and active.”

“The Church’s relationship with other religions is dictated by a twofold respect: respect for man in his quest for answers to the deepest questions of his life, and respect for the action of the Spirit in man. Excluding any mistaken interpretation, the interreligious meeting held in Assisi was meant to confirm my conviction that ‘every authentic prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in every human heart.’” (*Redemptoris Missio* 29).

Ultimately, however, interfaith dialogue is also an authentic expression of respect for the freedom of God.

The Global Ethic

Prominent among the various models of interfaith dialogue in the Catholic world, and indeed in the world as a whole, is the Global Ethic conceived by the Catholic theologian Hans Küng. Convinced that the globalization of the world’s problems requires the globalization of human ethics and responsibility, Küng drafted a Declaration of a Global Ethic, which was adopted by the 1993 Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago.

In a world marked by irrevocable and profound differences between religions, especially those of a dogmatic nature, the Global Ethic project reminds us of what is common to all religions: a shared system of fundamental ethical values, on the basis of which a global ethic may be constructed, as may the shared commitment of the adherents of different religions to the common good, including people of humanist inclinations, for they too share the same values, albeit on different grounds.

The two pillars of the global ethic are the principle of humanity – every human being, whether man or woman, white or coloured, rich or poor, young or old, should be treated humanely; and the principle of reciprocity, or the Golden Rule – what you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others.

With these two principles as a starting-point, the attempt was made to contextualize four fundamental, irrevocable guidelines around which all the great religious, humanist, philosophical and wisdom traditions are united:

- commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for all life: the age-old directive: You shall not kill! Or in positive terms: Have respect for life! [including animals and plants]
- commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order: the age-old directive: You shall not steal! Or in positive terms: Deal honestly and fairly!
- commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness: the age-old directive: You shall not lie! Or in positive terms: Speak and act truthfully!
- commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women: the age-old directive: You shall not commit sexual immorality. Or in positive terms: Respect and love one another!

In the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the global ethic is a programmatic challenge to the catholicity and Christianity of the Catholic community, as well as to its capacity for effective interfaith dialogue.

The first step in responding positively to this challenge is to adopt a spirit of self-criticism and to accept the shared commitment of believers and non-believers for the common good. The principle of humanity should be contextualized as a call to counter the evil of religious nationalism, and the principle of reciprocity as a call to the willing acceptance of responsibility for building trust and implementing human rights. A culture of non-violence and reverence for all life reminds the Catholic

community that non-violence and pacifism are central to Christianity; in our context, this demands that we break free of the “humanization and sanctification of violence” in the name of the ideology of “national” (ethnic) security. A culture of solidarity and a just economic order unconditionally requires the Catholic community to overcome its silence in the face of growing social injustice in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A culture of tolerance and living in truth calls upon the Catholic community, as the guardian of the national memory of Croats/Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to a process of healing and purification of historical memory by acknowledging guilt and seeking forgiveness for the evils inflicted on others, for only thus is it possible to overcome the grudges that reopen old wounds and exacerbate current hatreds. A culture of equality and partnership between men and women demands an active commitment by the Catholic community against sexual abuse and discrimination, in the knowledge that it is often underpinned by our patriarchal heritage, which is itself based on distorted representations of our faith.

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s other religious communities also face the same challenges of the global ethic project. Only if they respond positively and concretely to those challenges will they become a positive factor in social and interfaith dialogue. If they do not, they will lean towards the post-modern mentality of religion without God, which is none other than an ideological construct that encourages personal or collective insatiability and callousness.

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WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the fundamental ideas, history and practice of interfaith dialogue in the Catholic Church.</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alen Kristić: “Interfaith dialogue in the Catholic Church” and “Interfaith dialogue” • Appendices <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

► I) Presentation on interfaith dialogue in the Catholic Church (see Alen Kristić, “Interfaith dialogue in the Catholic Church”) (50 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- New Testament challenges
- the theology of the Divine Logos
- Councils
- the Global Ethic

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Group reading of the Decalogue of Assisi for Peace (2002) (see Appendix) (25 min.)

► Plenary discussion (35 min.)

Raise the following questions



- Try to suggest specific interfaith actions based on the Decalogue of Assisi for Peace (2002) that would be feasible in the environment in which you live
- Can interfaith dialogue address ways of achieving a balance between the rights and duties of religious communities and religious individuals in the contemporary world view of plural societies, and if so, how?

► III) Group work (90 min.)

Divide participants into groups of five or six and give them the Appendices (the Franciscan Decalogue for Dialogue and the Golden Rule as the principle of reciprocity – a balance between rights and duties)

Questions for group work (if there are more than two groups, give the same task)



- try to identify similarities and differences comparing the Franciscan Decalogue for Dialogue with Leonard Swidler’s Dialogue Decalogue
- showing how they are grounded in your own religious tradition, share ideas on how to contextualize the fundamental principles and age-old guidelines on which the global ethic is based

After the group work each group will present its findings (30 min.)

► IV) Recommendations for joint action (60 min.)

Raise the following question at the beginning of the plenary session:



Can interfaith dialogue address ways of achieving a balance between the rights and duties of religious communities and religious individuals in the contemporary world view of plural societies, and if so, how?

Write the answers and joint solutions on a flipchart and summarize the conclusions

APPENDICES

1. The Franciscan Decalogue for Dialogue⁸²

1. Dialogue rooted in prayer

Dialogue with the adherents of other religions is not simply an encounter at the human level. It is a gift of God, and must therefore be rooted in prayer. Before St Francis went to the sultan, he prayed for strength and faith

2. Be subject to all creatures

Franciscans should not merely be on the same level as others, but below them, as *minores*. When meeting the adherents of other religions, brothers and sisters should not “make disputes or contentions; but let them be subject to every human creature for God’s sake.”

3. Be what you are

Dialogue is an encounter between two people or groups trying to understand one another. What is important is not just the place of meeting or its purpose, but above all what we are and the impression we give. St Francis called on brothers who enter into dialogue with other religions to be honest and sincere and acknowledge that they are Christians.

4. Among them

If a brother wishes “to go among the Saracens and other infidels...” St Francis used the phrase *inter saracenos et alios infideles* – *inter*, among, not *ad* – to. Brothers and sisters who enter into dialogue with people of other faiths should live among and with them and share their way of life.

5. Take the initiative

St Francis did not wait for the sultan to come to him – he went to the sultan to meet him. If we want to meet others, we must take the initiative. As Pope Paul VI told us, we must invite people to talk with us, not wait for them to take the first step.

6. Trust others

We must acknowledge to others that they too are honest and sincere in their faith and that they have profound reasons for choosing or remaining in their faith. Without trust and concern for people and their religious convictions, there can be no dialogue.

7. Act in life and words

St Francis differentiated two kinds of dialogue: the dialogue of one’s way of life, and the dialogue

⁸² Translator’s note: retranslated from the Croatian, as I have been unable to find an English version of these rules on the internet

of preaching. What impressed the sultan most was not St Francis's persuasive eloquence, but his way of life; he was touched by his poverty and his freedom from earthly things.

8. Work together

Following the example of the Gospel, St Francis sent the brothers in pairs to various regions to preach peace to the people, and he himself took brother Illuminato to accompany him to the sultan. Working together is crucially important to the Franciscan mission.

9. Understand rather than be understood

St Francis learned much from the sultan about modesty and willingness to listen. He was touched by the sultan's reception of him and of the prayerful zeal of the Muslims. For his part, the sultan admired St Francis and gladly listened to him.

10. As a tool of peace

After preaching peace to the crusaders in vain, St Francis went to the sultan not to fight, but as a tool of peace, and found that the sultan met him in the same spirit.

2. The Decalogue of Assisi for Peace (2002)

Gathered here in Assisi, we have reflected together on peace, a gift of God and a common good of all mankind. Although we belong to different religious traditions, we affirm that building peace requires loving one's neighbour in obedience to the Golden Rule: Do to others what you would have them do to you.

With this conviction, we will work tirelessly in the great enterprise of building peace. Therefore:

1. We commit ourselves to proclaiming our firm conviction that violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic spirit of religion, and, as we condemn every recourse to violence and war in the name of God or of religion, we commit ourselves to doing everything possible to eliminate the root causes of terrorism.
2. We commit ourselves to educating people to mutual respect and esteem, in order to help bring about a peaceful and fraternal coexistence between people of different ethnic groups, cultures and religions.
3. We commit ourselves to fostering the culture of dialogue, so that there will be an increase of understanding and mutual trust between individuals and among peoples, for these are the premise of authentic peace.
4. We commit ourselves to defending the right of everyone to live a decent life in accordance with their own cultural identity, and to form freely a family of his own.
5. We commit ourselves to frank and patient dialogue, refusing to consider our differences as an insurmountable barrier, but recognizing instead that to encounter the diversity of others can become an opportunity for greater reciprocal understanding.
6. We commit ourselves to forgiving one another for past and present errors and prejudices, and to supporting one another in a common effort both to overcome selfishness and arrogance, hatred and violence, and to learn from the past that peace without justice is no true peace.
7. We commit ourselves to taking the side of the poor and the helpless, to speaking out for those who have no voice and to working effectively to change these situations, out of the conviction that no one can be happy alone.

8. We commit ourselves to taking up the cry of those who refuse to be resigned to violence and evil, and we are desire to make every effort possible to offer the men and women of our time real hope for justice and peace.
9. We commit ourselves to encouraging all efforts to promote friendship between peoples, for we are convinced that, in the absence of solidarity and understanding between peoples, technological progress exposes the world to a growing risk of destruction and death.
10. We commit ourselves to urging leaders of nations to make every effort to create and consolidate, on the national and international levels, a world of solidarity and peace based on justice.

We, as persons of different religious traditions, will tirelessly proclaim that peace and justice are inseparable, and that peace in justice is the only path which humanity can take towards a future of hope. In a world with ever more open borders, shrinking distances and better relations as a result of a broad network of communications, we are convinced that security, freedom and peace will never be guaranteed by force but by mutual trust. May God bless these our resolutions and grant justice and peace to the world.

Violence never again! War never again! Terrorism never again!

In the Name of God, may every religion bring upon the earth Justice and Peace, Forgiveness and Life, Love!

3. The Golden Rule as the principle of reciprocity **(the balance between rights and duties)**

If we have the right to life, then we also have a duty to respect life.

If we have the right to freedom, then we also have a duty to respect the freedom of others.

If we have the right to security, then we also have a duty to create the conditions in which everyone can live in human security.

If we have the right to take part in the political life of our countries and to vote for our political leaders, then we also have a duty to take part in political life and campaign for the best leaders to be elected.

If we have the right to work in fair and reasonable conditions to provide appropriate living standards for ourselves and our families, then we also have a duty to work to the best of our abilities.

If we have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, then we also have a duty to respect to thought and religious principles of others.

If we have the right to education, then we also have the duty to learn to the best of our abilities and to share our knowledge and experience with others wherever possible.

If we have the right to benefit from the fruits of the earth, then we also have the duty to respect the earth and its natural resources and to preserve and renew them.

Interfaith dialogue – an Orthodox Christian perspective

This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.... For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

(Is. 14: 26; 66,:18)

Interfaith dialogue as a means of overcoming and accepting differences among other people that do not share the same or similar religious convictions is our reality, a fact of life, and also a necessity. The concepts of interreligious or interfaith dialogue can be considered from many aspects: the academic, the social and the theological, as well as from the perspective of our everyday lives.

One of the etymological meanings of the word *religion* is “to bind, to hold together” (from the Latin *re-ligare*) people in God, the sacred and the mystical. One could ask what kind of community and bond is concerned – a community that tolerates and respects gender, nation, and different kinds of faith, or one that excludes and includes according to the criteria it itself recognizes and applies.

At a conference on interfaith dialogue held in Istanbul in 1998, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew asked how we can participate in interfaith dialogue when each of us believes that our religion is “true.” The Patriarch suggested two paths, guidelines for Orthodox Christians. The first relates to peace and the way peace can be achieved, so that people of different faiths come to mutual understanding and tolerance with the help of their own faith and their life *in* faith. Mutual understanding, along with a full understanding and profound study of the teachings of the faith – its holy scriptures, the teachings of the holy fathers – is the second path that leads us to dialogue with people of another faith, and to respect and understanding for them. Patriarch Bartholomew also spoke of his belief that, despite historical conflicts, peace, mutual understanding and tolerance are possible (Papademetriou, *An Orthodox Christian View of Non-Christian Religions*).

Three attitudes towards non-Christians may be identified within the Orthodox oecumenism of salvation:

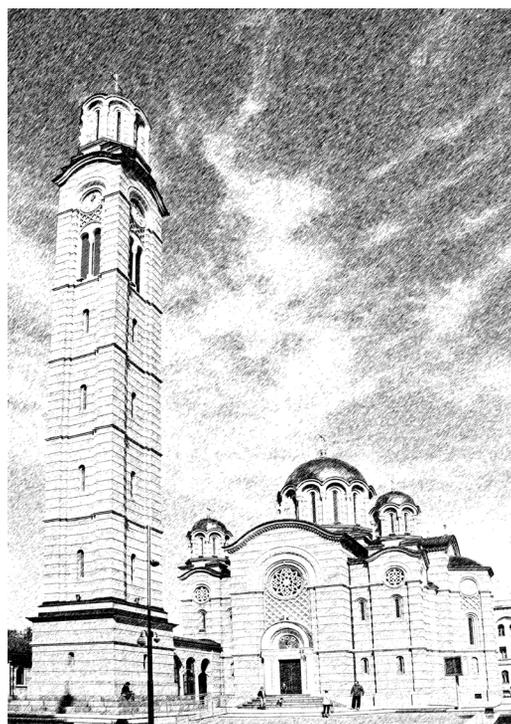
- ▶ *Inclusivism* (non-Christians can be saved only through the grace of God)
- ▶ *Exclusivism* (salvation is through Christ and the Church alone)
- ▶ *Cultural pluralism* (salvation can be achieved by the practice of non-Christian religions in which there is *truth* that is also valid in Christianity).

Most Orthodox theologians adopt the inclusivist view, but there are some who would agree with the views of cultural pluralism while firmly rejecting syncretism and relativism. Alexander Schmemmann, for example, writes, “If secularism in theological terms is a heresy, it is primarily a heresy about man. It is the negation of man as a worshipping being” (Schmemmann, *Worship in a Secular Age*). It is not identical with atheism; for people can have a vertical and a horizontal relationship with God, which is essentially a relationship of love. The Trinity is a *perfect* typological example of the reciprocity of love, and it is impossible to be an authentic human person without that kind of love, which binds us *in* communion with God, “for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2: 4); we are created in the image of God (see Gen 1: 26). Father Papademetriou writes: “These and other similar Biblical statements affirm the Truth claim of Christianity. They are the Word of God, explicitly and implicitly proclaiming fundamental beliefs of the Christian Orthodox Tradition,” and says these statements

speak to humanity as a whole: “the Trinitarian objectives are universal. They encourage an attitude of inclusiveness as we inquire into relationships with other religions.” “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3: 8).

“Religions ... ought to create reliable bonds between God of the divine and humans, as well as between men and women of different walks of life, nationalities, races, genders, and faiths. Any look at the present global situation, however, shows that religious beliefs divide more than they unite people” (Ingeborg, *Like Rosewater: Reflections on Interreligious Dialogue*). “Active engagement in interreligious dialogue [is] the only morally viable choice in the face of religious pluralism. It is the only way that contributes to peace” (ibid) and understanding between the adherents of different religious traditions.

Interfaith dialogue is thus a greater imperative than any other. This is particularly true in the light of the “Balkan perspective” of our subject, where in recent decades the aptitude of our religious leaders has been, and is still being, put to the test. In his *Orthodoxy and Islam in the Balkans*, Paul Mojzes writes that the representatives of religious communities in the Balkans during and since the 1990s have met only in the presence of “foreigners,” and that dialogue begins and ends only in their presence (Mojzes, 407-21). Not long after the 1995 Dayton Agreement, an Interfaith Council was founded in Bosnia and Herzegovina, headed by the leaders of the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Islamic community and the Jewish community, who meet regularly. With their assistance and that of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), the Interfaith Council of Kosovo was founded in 2000. At the inaugural assembly, representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Islamic community undertook to work together to build peace, promote human rights and combat injustice.



Orthodox Church in Banja Luka - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Ecumenical Movement

Unlike the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church has a theologically defined attitude towards other religions, documented in *Nostra Aetate* – the Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, one of the documents of the Second Vatican Council of 1965. On the other hand, the 1920 Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch, which includes references to the relation of the Orthodox Church to other churches, is recognized as an important document for the ecumenical community as a whole and for the founding of the World Council of Churches.

Our Church believes that the coming together of the Churches and their fellowship and cooperation are not excluded by the doctrinal differences between them. In our view, this fellowship is highly desirable and necessary. It may be beneficial in many ways to the genuine interests of each church and the entire Christian body, and also in preparing and advancing towards the blessed unity that will be achieved in the future in accordance with the will of God. (Đakovac, *Pravoslavlje i Druge Religije*)

Visser't Hooft, the WCC's first Secretary General, refers to the Encyclical as among the fundamental documents that inspired him to advocate including the Orthodox Church in the formation and work

of the WCC. "George Florovsky and Nicholas Zernov ... portrayed the first image of modern Orthodoxy in an ecumenical context. Several principles and convictions formulated by them, particularly in the field of ecclesiology — the eschatological dimension of the church, the church as realized kingdom of God, ecumenism *in time*, catholicity as 'orthodoxy,' cosmic salvation, Christian prophetism" (Bria, 216-17).

Fellowship and dialogue with all human beings can be understood as the essential principle of universal love, which is at the very heart of Christianity, though it should be noted that dialogue based on the principles of understand others does not mean syncretism or the abrogation of the diversity of the Christian faith, but rather calls for consistency and its constant renewal, for it is a "living faith." "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn 4: 18).

Some national churches, such as the Serbian, Greek, Romanian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, have been active members of the WCC since its formation in 1948. Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras set out his official position on the ecumenical movement in his 1952 Encyclical, though the Russian Orthodox Church was still keeping its distance. The Orthodox Churches have never had a single, shared, unchanging view of ecumenism since the WCC was founded. They do not reject it as such, but their criticisms are many and frequent, from papism through the understanding of what ecumenism means to ethical issues such as the ordination of women, abortion and homosexual partnerships.

In the Orthodox Church, the ecumenical movement is seen essentially through two lenses – as *visible unity* and *invisible unity*. Visible unity is the unity of the Church in Christ, while invisible unity is in the community. This distinguishes between "one and the same ecumenical movement" and ecumenism in the sense of *oikoumene* (Greek for "the inhabited world"), implying bridgeable and unbridgeable differences between the Christian churches and the goals of ecumenism, such as

- the restoration of Christian unity (*koinonia*) – divisions and differences between Christians and their communities and churches are not in accordance with the Gospels
- the restoration of visible unity, however difficult a process it may be, entailing forgiveness, mutual respect, prayer and theological dialogue (Fitzgerald, 105-34).

In 1997 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew addressed the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, saying, "Visible unity must be centred in Jesus Christ and founded in the truth of the Apostolic Faith," and that the doctrinal and ethical issues that divide us must not be ignored, but that rather we must seek reconciliation and unity through witnessing to the faith "which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1: 3).

Orthodoxy and Islam

The Orthodox Church, says the Albanian Patriarch Anastasios, has been in contact with Islam from the very beginning, since Islam "emerged very near the geographical places where Orthodoxy flourished" (Anastasios, *Byzantine and contemporary Greek Orthodox approaches to Islam*). Dialogue between the two religious traditions went through various stages, from active dialogue and criticism at the level of the theological debates held by John Damascene or Gregory Palamas through conflict to interfaith dialogue in the modern age. The points of departure centred around the concept of the Trinity, the prophethood of Muhammad, the nature of Jesus Christ – who is God-Man in the Orthodox Church but one of the prophets in Islam – and the forms of ritual. Patriarch Anastasios writes, "Here the dialogue can do nothing more than correct the misunderstandings created by fanatics. The dialogue can contribute to expressing greater accuracy in descriptions of religious experiences, thereby making it possible to arrive at clear distinctions and freedom of choice" (ibid). The most fruitful dimension of this dialogue continues to centre on the modern age and its challenges – secularism, the alienation

of modern society, environmental issues, human rights, and justice and peace in this world. It should be noted that all dialogue requires mutual understanding and respect regardless of past events, but should also take into account current circumstances, new facts, and the desire to start afresh or to continue on solid foundations. Clause 11 of the Ecumenical Charter, headed "Cultivating Relations with Islam," provides guidelines for Christian churches for dialogue with Muslims:

Muslims have lived in Europe for centuries. In some European countries they constitute strong minorities. While there have been plenty of good contacts and neighbourly relations between Muslims and Christians, and this remains the case, there are still strong reservations and prejudices on both sides. These are rooted in painful experiences throughout history and in the recent past.

We would like to intensify encounters between Christians and Muslims and enhance Christian-Islamic dialogue at all levels. We recommend, in particular, speaking with one another about our faith in one God, and clarifying ideas on human rights. We commit ourselves:

- to conduct ourselves towards Muslims with respect;
- to work together with Muslims on matters of common concern.

(from <http://www.antioch.com.sg/cgi-bin/Agora-Pub/get/expressions/155.html>)

However, the experience of the "Balkan perspective" speaks of entirely different circumstances, in which such statements often remain a "dead letter." Relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Islamic community are still pro forma. Official meetings and encounters are held, season's greetings are sent for Eid and Christmas, but both parties still stand firmly by their own side while allowing politicians to score points at election time. The members of the religious communities, meanwhile, find their own ways to meet and, though they still remain few, they have considerable assistance from interfaith NGOs. Young people attend interfaith seminars, go to church, mosque or synagogue, listen to lectures, and share each other's holidays - taking iftar together, celebrating Christmas and the two Eids, and exchanging Easter eggs. One thing is certain, God's words and blessings find their way to ears that want to hear them. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom 11: 33).

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WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the significance and practice of interfaith dialogue from an Orthodox perspective</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marija Grujić, Interfaith dialogue from an Orthodox perspective, Appendices <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

►I) **Presentation on the significance and practice of interfaith dialogue from an Orthodox perspective (See Marija Grujić, *Interfaith dialogue from an Orthodox perspective*) (50 min.)**

Explain the following in particular

- The Orthodox oecumenism of salvation and three attitudes towards non-Christians (inclusivism, exclusivism and cultural pluralism)
- The World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Movement
- Orthodoxy and Islam

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

►II) **Joint reading of Clause 11 of the Ecumenical Charter which provides guidelines for Christian churches for dialogue with Muslims (see Appendix) and the Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch of 1920 (25 min.)**

► **Plenary discussion (35 min.)**



Raise the following questions

- In your view, what does “fellowship and cooperation between the churches” mean?
- What is your experience and what are your suggestions for dialogue between Orthodox Christians and Muslims?

►III) **Group work (90 min.)**

*Divide participants into three groups and give each sections of the **Appeal for Theological Affirmation** (see Appendix)*

Each group should receive four sections of the Appeal

Participants are asked to answer the following questions in the light of the Appeal:



- How does the Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann see the role of the Church in the modern world; what is the role of theologians and of believers?
- What is the understanding of dialogue between religions on this text?

After the group work each group will present its findings. Encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

►IV) **Recommendations for joint action (60 min.)**

Raise the following question at the beginning of the plenary session:



Based on what you have heard so far, what actions could be taken to improve interfaith dialogue between Orthodoxy and other religions, and what is the role of the faithful in this dialogue?

Write the answers and joint solutions on a flipchart and summarize the conclusions

APPENDICES

Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarch, 1920

Our Church believes that the coming together of the Churches and their fellowship and cooperation are not excluded by the doctrinal differences between them. In our view, this fellowship is highly desirable and necessary. It may be beneficial in many ways to the genuine interests of each church and the entire Christian body, and also in preparing and advancing towards the blessed unity that will be achieved in the future in accordance with the will of God.

Clause 11 of the Ecumenical Charter, headed “Cultivating Relations with Islam,” provides guidelines for Christian churches for dialogue with Muslims:

Muslims have lived in Europe for centuries. In some European countries they constitute strong minorities. While there have been plenty of good contacts and neighbourly relations between Muslims and Christians, and this remains the case, there are still strong reservations and prejudices on both sides. These are rooted in painful experiences throughout history and in the recent past.

We would like to intensify encounters between Christians and Muslims and enhance Christian-Islamic dialogue at all levels. We recommend, in particular, speaking with one another about our faith in one God, and clarifying ideas on human rights.

We commit ourselves:

- to conduct ourselves towards Muslims with respect;
- to work together with Muslims on matters of common concern.

Alexander Schmemmann, “An Appeal for Theological Affirmation”

Theme 1: Modern thought is superior to all past forms of understanding reality, and is therefore normative for Christian faith and life.

In repudiating this theme we are protesting the captivity to the prevailing thought structures not only of the 20th century but of any historical period. We favor using any helpful means of understanding, ancient or modern, and insist that the Christian proclamation must be related to the idiom of the culture. At the same time, we affirm the need for Christian thought to confront and be confronted by other world views, all of which are necessarily provisional.

Theme 2: Religious statements are totally independent of reasonable discourse.

The capitulation to the alleged primacy of modern thought takes two forms: one is the subordination of religious statements to the canons of scientific rationality; the other, equating reason with scientific rationality; would remove religious statements from the realm of reasonable discourse altogether. A religion of pure subjectivity and nonrationality results in treating faith statements as being, at best, statements about the believer. We repudiate both forms of capitulation.

Theme 3: Religious language refers to human experience and nothing else, God being humanity's noblest creation.

Religion is also a set of symbols and even of human projections. We repudiate the assumption that it is nothing but that. What is here at stake is nothing less than the reality of God: We did not invent God; God invented us.

Theme 4: Jesus can only be understood in terms of contemporary models of humanity.

This theme suggests a reversal of "the imitation of Christ"; that is, the image of Jesus is made to reflect cultural and counter-cultural notions of human excellence. We do not deny that all aspects of humanity are illumined by Jesus. Indeed, it is necessary to the universality of the Christ that he be perceived in relation to the particularities of the believers' world. We do repudiate the captivity to such metaphors, which are necessarily inadequate, relative, transitory, and frequently idolatrous. Jesus, together with the Scriptures and the whole of the Christian tradition, cannot be arbitrarily interpreted without reference to the history of which they are part. The danger is in the attempt to exploit the tradition without taking the tradition seriously.

Theme 5: All religions are equally valid; the choice among them is not a matter of conviction about truth but only of personal preference or life-style.

We affirm our common humanity. We affirm the importance of exploring and confronting all manifestations of the religious quest and of learning from the riches of other religions. But we repudiate this theme because it flattens diversities and ignores contradictions. In doing so, it not only obscures the meaning of Christian faith, but also fails to respect the integrity of other faiths. Truth matters; therefore differences among religions are deeply significant.

Theme 6: To realize one's potential and to be true to oneself is the whole meaning of salvation.

Salvation contains a promise of human fulfillment, but to identify salvation with human fulfillment can trivialize the promise. We affirm that salvation cannot be found apart from God.

Theme 7: Since what is human is good, evil can adequately be understood as failure to realize human potential.

This theme invites false understanding of the ambivalence of human existence and underestimates the pervasiveness of sin. Paradoxically, by minimizing the enormity of evil, it undermines serious and sustained attacks on particular social or individual evils.

Theme 8: The sole purpose of worship is to promote individual self-realization and human community.

Worship promotes individual and communal values, but it is above all a response to the reality of God and arises out of the fundamental need and desire to know, love, and adore God. We worship God because God is to be worshipped.

Theme 9: Institutions and historical traditions are oppressive and inimical to our being truly human; liberation from them is required for authentic existence and authentic religion.

Institutions and traditions are often oppressive. For this reason they must be subjected to

relentless criticism. But human community inescapably requires institutions and traditions. Without them life would degenerate into chaos and new forms of bondage. The modern pursuit of liberation from all social and historical restraints is finally dehumanizing.

Theme 10: The world must set the agenda for the Church. Social, political and economic programmes to improve the quality of life are ultimately normative for the Church's mission in the world.

This theme cuts across the political and ideological spectrum. Its form remains the same, no matter whether the content is defined as upholding the values of the American way of life, promoting socialism, or raising human consciousness. The Church must denounce oppressors, help liberate the oppressed and seek to heal human misery. Sometimes the Church's mission coincides with the world's programs. But the norms for the Church's activity derive from its own perception of God's will for the world.

Theme 11: An emphasis on God's transcendence is at least a hindrance to, and perhaps incompatible with, Christian social concern and action.

This supposition leads some to denigrate God's transcendence. Others, holding to a false transcendence, withdraw into religious privatism or individualism and neglect the personal and communal responsibility of Christians for the earthly city. From a biblical perspective, it is precisely because of confidence in God's reign over all aspects of life that Christians must participate fully in the struggle against oppressive and dehumanizing structures and their manifestations in racism, war, and economic exploitation.

Theme 12: The struggle for a better humanity will bring about the Kingdom of God.

The struggle for a better humanity is essential to Christian faith and can be informed and inspired by the biblical promise of the Kingdom of God. But imperfect human beings cannot create a perfect society. The Kingdom of God surpasses any conceivable utopia. God has his own designs which confront ours, surprising us with judgment and redemption.

Theme 13: The question of hope beyond death is irrelevant or at best marginal to the Christian understanding of human fulfillment.

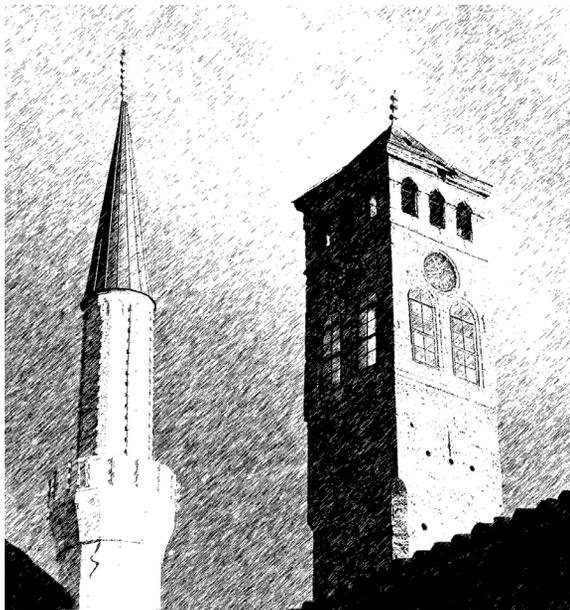
This is the final capitulation to modern thought. If death is the last word, then Christianity has nothing to say to the final questions of life. We believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and are ". . . convinced that there is nothing in death or life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers, in the world, as it is or in the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths-nothing in all creation.).

Interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective

Dialogue has always been an important part of the Islamic religious and cultural heritage, requiring Muslims to do all they can to bring people together and to God, on the basis of the message and principles of the Revelation of the Qur'an and the *sunna* (practice) of the Prophet Muhammad a.s. Particular attention is paid to dialogue with Jews and Christians, but that with others is also important. To a greater or lesser extent, Muslims have tried throughout history to foster a dialogical spirit and

openness, as attested by the surviving examples of multi-religious societies in the regions of the world that have been under Muslim rule. In our time, the issue of dialogue is once again acute in this world of globalization, desecularization and increasing pluralization and the integration of millions of Muslims in Western European countries. In secular, democratic societies with international human rights standards, interfaith dialogue is vital if we are to achieve equilibrium and harmony between the religious and the secular, the spiritual and the material.

Muslim communities do not have a central hierarchical structure, and as a result each in its own way, in line with the demands of its own socio-cultural circumstances, devises ways of interfaith dialogue, involving at times joint approaches such as the initiative "A common word between us and you."



Gazi Husrev-Beg Mosque and Clock Tower in Sarajevo - Photography and editing by Sanja Vrzic

Qur'anic methods and principles of dialogue

For Muslims, the Qur'an is the word of God and the primary source of their faith, from which they draw the moral, ethical and legal standards that should run through their entire lives. Some of these messages relate to interfaith dialogue, and to respect for the other and different. Muslims are required to conduct their lives in accordance with the precepts of the Qur'an, and to strive to build peace and establish dialogue by applying the Qur'anic principles and methods of dialogue.

Three principles of dialogue are:

1. **Knowing one another** (Ar. *ta'aruf*, to know, to understand, to develop a relationship) is the first important principle of dialogue: "O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another" (Qur'an, 49: 13). This is a crucially important argument for religious and non-religious pluralism, attesting as it does to God's plan to create diversity and to call upon people to know (*ta'aruf*), acknowledge and accept diversity and to live with others in peace.
2. **Peace building** (Ar. *islah* – to build bridges, to bring peace, to restore trust and resolve conflicts). In the Qur'an, God describes peacemakers (*muslihun*) as people who enjoin to charity or honesty, or who set things to rights between people (Qur'an, 4: 114). A prerequisite

for building peace and trust is doing good, being charitable and honest, which means that advocating peace is desirable, but not enough if not accompanied by good works.

3. **Debate** (Ar. *mujadala* – discussion, debate, clarification) is the third principle, intended mainly for theological debate in intra-religious and interfaith dialogue. According to Abu Nimer, debate has its own rules and procedures of conduct, forbidding aggressivity, attack and undermining the credibility of the person with whom one is debating, and requiring one to respect one's interlocutor (see Qur'an, 29: 46).

If these three principles are to be effective in practice, it is important to keep to the dialogical methods recommended in the Qur'an:

The three methods of dialogue are:

1. **Virtue or excellence** (Ar. *ihsan* – literally, that which is beautiful) is also recommended in dialogue so that it may be conducted in a civilized manner, with good intentions towards others. Though God leaves us the possibility of returning injustice with injustice, He in fact recommends forgiveness and goodness: "Not equal are the good deed and the evil deed. Repel with that which is fairer and behold, he between whom and thee there is enmity shall be as if he were a loyal friend" (Qur'an, 41: 43).

2. **Wisdom and good advice** (Ar. *hikmah wa al'maw'izah*) is another important method recommended in the Qur'an: "Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way" (Qur'an, 16: 125).

If dialogue is conducted with wisdom and good advice as a means of reaching out to others, it will give results, making the interlocutor feel safer, more relaxed and more confident. It is inadmissible to denigrate anyone, even if they have different views from us, for according to the teachings of Islam, God is ultimately the judge of every one of us, and He alone has the absolute prerogative to judge and pass verdict on our disagreements.

3. **Help and support** (Ar. *ta'awun* – help, shared endeavour for good) is the third Qur'anic method for successful dialogue: "Help one another to piety and godfearing; do not help each other to sin and enmity" (Qur'an, 5: 2). This principle is crucial nowadays, particularly in post-war societies where trust between people must be rebuilt, both within an ethnic and religious group and between different religious and non-religious groups and individuals. Joint humanitarian action and helping those in need can sometimes be a more powerful tool for building trust between people and creating a friendly atmosphere than a thousand fine words. Best of all, however, is to use both kind words and good deeds, which will help towards successful dialogue and peace building.

Present-day models of interfaith action

In the latter half of the 20th century, once they were free of colonial rule, Muslim countries paid closer attention to dialogue and reconciliation, both within their countries among different religious groups and communities, and with their former colonial masters, who began to accept Islam as a monotheistic religion regarded, along with Judaism and Christianity, as a religion of salvation. Worldwide, the revolution in the means of communication brought the Islamic world view into contact with other world views, humanist, philosophical and religious, at various levels, adding to their willingness to engage in dialogue with non-Muslims. There are hundreds of local interfaith dialogue initiatives on the part of Muslims around the world; here, two of the most influential of today will be presented.

The Fethullah Gülen movement

In the early 20th century, the great Muslim thinker and reformer Said Nursi launched an initiative to institutionalize dialogue between Christians and Muslims. However, as his ideas were disapproved of by the Ottoman authorities, he lived in exile, unable to put his ideas into practice. Despite this, a young imam, Fethullah Gülen, who was born in Turkey in 1941, would take up his philosophical and Sufi ideas to initiate dialogue and tolerance between Muslims and non-Muslims. He made dialogue an imperative for Muslims, extending it to every social stratum and the most diverse of world views. In Fethullah's view, we are connected to every part of the universe, and dialogue with everything around us is thus our natural state. In the late 1990s, after working in Turkey for several decades, government pressure led him to move to the United States. Though political changes and democratization in his native country later made it possible for him to return, he decided to stay in the USA. Inspired by his ideas, the followers of Fethullah Gülen's movement have set up more than fifty centres for dialogue around the USA, Turkey and most European countries. His vision is universalist and insists on non-violence, tolerance, respect and, above all, love (*muhabba*) as the greatest cosmic force holding everything together. His movement successfully combines all three Qur'anic methods of dialogue: virtue or excellence, wisdom and good advice, and help. At the social level, he recognized that it is by helping and serving others that the purpose of dialogue – to reconcile people with each other and humankind with God and nature – is best achieved.

A Common Word Between Us and You

In October 2006, a month after Pope Benedict XVI gave his controversial speech in Regensburg, 38 Muslim authorities and religious scholars sent him and other Christian leaders an open letter, later to be known as "A Common Word Between Us and You," drawing his attention to his unjust, incomplete and partial interpretation of jihad as "holy war" and explaining that reason is an important gift of God to humankind, but that it cannot encompass the transcendent God, which only the heart of the true and faithful believer is capable of. A year later, 138 signatories presented the final form of the open letter at a conference in Amman under the patronage of King Abdullah II of Jordan. Several other Muslim scholars have since signed the letter, which now has more than 300 signatories. Mustafa Cerić, Reis ul-ulema of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was among the first signatories to the open letter, and has presented it at numerous conferences and forums around the world.

The Common Word was inspired by the Qur'anic verse:

Say, "People of the Book! Come now to a word common to us and you, that we serve none but God, and that we associate not aught with Him, and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from God.' And if they turn their backs, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'" (Qur'an 3: 64).

Among the reasons given for the initiative is the importance of dialogue and peace and, in particular, of building good relations with Christians, who along with Muslims form more than half the world's population:

"Muslims and Christians together make up well over half of the world's population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians. The basis for this peace and understanding already exists. It is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbour. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity. The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity." (A Common Word: Summary and Abridgement)

A Common Word addresses two of the greatest commandments in the Bible and the Qur'an: love your God and love your neighbour:

"Love of God in Islam is thus part of complete and total devotion to God; it is not a mere fleeting, partial emotion. As seen above, God commands in the Holy Qur'an: *Say: Lo! my worship and my sacrifice and my living and my dying are for God, Lord of the Worlds. / He hath no partner.* The call to be totally devoted and attached to God heart and soul, far from being a call for a mere emotion or for a mood, is in fact an injunction requiring all-embracing, constant and active love of God. It demands a love in which the innermost spiritual heart and the whole of the soul—with its intelligence, will and feeling—participate through devotion." (A Common Word: Summary and Abridgement)

Love for one's neighbour should consist not only of kind words and feelings, but also be accompanied by help and service, as the Qur'an tells us:

It is not piety, that you turn your faces to the East and to the West. True piety is this: to believe in God, and the Last Day, the angels, the book, and the Prophets, to give of one's substance, however cherished, to kinsmen, and orphans, the needy, the traveller, beggars, and to ransom the slave, to perform the prayer, to pay the alms. And they who fulfil their covenant when they have engaged in a covenant, and endure with fortitude misfortune, hardship and peril, these are they who are true in their faith, these are the truly godfearing. (Qur'an, 2: 177)

You will not attain piety until you expend of what you love; and whatever thing you expend, God knows of it. (Qur'an, 3: 92).

A hadith records that the Prophet Muhammad explained the rights of the neighbour as follows:

It is to help him if he asks your help, to lend him if he asks to borrow from you, to satisfy his needs if he becomes poor, to console him if he is visited by an affliction, to congratulate him if he is met with good fortune, to visit him if he becomes ill, to attend his funeral if he dies, not to make your house higher than his without his consent lest you deny him the breeze, to offer him fruit when you buy some or to take it to your home secretly if you do not do that, nor to send out your children with it so as not to upset his children, nor to bother him by the tempting smell of your food unless you send him some.

A peaceful and safe world, where concern for the welfare of one's loved ones and neighbour comes first, may be built on the basis of these two commandments common to Muslims and Christians, which can also apply to the adherents of other religions and to atheists and agnostics.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, NGOs and individuals are involved in both multi-religious initiatives and multi-religious dialogue. In their efforts to promote and advocate peace and reconciliation, people of faith draw upon the potential of their religious heritage, thereby practising multi-religious dialogue – dialogue between people of faith, and also between them and those who do not believe. The common goals of building a safe and advanced society may bring together various groups in the community, who may include the use of religious arguments in their endeavours.

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WORKSHOP		
<p>Objective To introduce participants to the significance and practice of interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective</p>	<p>Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Plenary discussion • Individual and group presentations 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zilka Spahić Šiljak, <i>Interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective</i>, and Appendices <p>Duration: 240 min.</p>

► I) Presentation on the significance of interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective (see Zilka Spahić Šiljak, *Interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective*) (50 min.)

Explain the following in particular

- Qur'anic methods and principles of dialogue
- Three principles of dialogue (**knowing one another, peace building, debate**)
- Methods of dialogue (**Virtue/excellent, wisdom and good advice, help and support**)
- Current models of interfaith action in Islam

Leave at least ten minutes for questions at the end of the presentation

► II) Group readings of sections from *A Common Word Between Us and You* (see Appendix) (25 min.)

► Plenary discussion (35 min.)

Raise the following questions



- do you think that these words are applicable to the society or community in which you live? If so, how?
- what do the views and proposals in the *Common Word* text mean in practice?

► III) Group work (90 min.)

Divide participants into three groups and give each one of the passage from the Qur'an (see Appendix)

Questions for group work:



1. in what way does the Qur'anic text require believers to work together and support each other in interfaith dialogue?
2. do you think that interfaith dialogue is an "obligation" for believers?

After the group work each group will present its findings. Encourage participants to ask each other questions (30 min.)

► IV) Recommendations for joint action (60 min.)

Put the following question at the beginning of the plenary:

On the basis of what you have heard and read so far, what actions could be taken to improve interfaith dialogue between Islam and other religions, and what is the role of believers in that dialogue?



Write the answers and joint solutions on a flipchart and summarize the conclusions

APPENDICES

1. Selected passages from the Summary and Abridgement of "A Word Common Between Us and You"

"Muslims and Christians together make up well over half of the world's population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians. The basis for this peace and understanding already exists. It is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbour. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity. The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity."

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

INTRODUCTION

On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It entered into force as an international treaty on 3 September 1981 after the twentieth country had ratified it. By the tenth anniversary of the Convention in 1989, almost one hundred nations have agreed to be bound by its provisions.

The Convention was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a body established in 1946 to monitor the situation of women and to promote women's rights. The Commission's work has been instrumental in bringing to light all the areas in which women are denied equality with men. These efforts for the advancement of women have resulted in several declarations and conventions, of which the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is the central and most comprehensive document.

Among the international human rights treaties, the Convention takes an important place in bringing the female half of humanity into the focus of human rights concerns. The spirit of the Convention is rooted in the goals of the United Nations: to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity, and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women. The present document spells out the meaning of equality and how it can be achieved. In so doing, the Convention establishes not only an international bill of rights for women, but also an agenda for action by countries to guarantee the enjoyment of those rights.

In its preamble, the Convention explicitly acknowledges that "extensive discrimination against women continues to exist", and emphasizes that such discrimination "violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity". As defined in article 1, discrimination is understood as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex...in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field". The Convention gives positive affirmation to the principle of equality by requiring States parties to take "all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men"(article 3).

The agenda for equality is specified in fourteen subsequent articles. In its approach, the Convention covers three dimensions of the situation of women. Civil rights and the legal status of women are dealt with in great detail. In addition, and unlike other human rights treaties, the Convention is also concerned with the dimension of human reproduction as well as with the impact of cultural factors on gender relations.

The legal status of women receives the broadest attention. Concern over the basic rights of political participation has not diminished since the adoption of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1952. Its provisions, therefore, are restated in article 7 of the present document, whereby women are guaranteed the rights to vote, to hold public office and to exercise public functions. This includes equal rights for women to represent their countries at the international level (article 8). The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women - adopted in 1957 - is integrated under article 9 providing for the statehood of women, irrespective of their marital status. The Convention, thereby, draws attention to the fact that often women's legal status has been linked to marriage, making them dependent on their husband's nationality rather than individuals in their own right. Articles 10, 11 and 13, respectively, affirm women's rights to non-discrimination in education, employment and economic and social activities. These demands are given special emphasis with regard to the situation of rural women, whose particular struggles and vital economic contributions, as noted in article 14, warrant more attention in policy planning. Article 15 asserts the full equality of women in civil and business matters, demanding that all instruments directed at restricting women's legal capacity "shall

be deemed null and void". Finally, in article 16, the Convention returns to the issue of marriage and family relations, asserting the equal rights and obligations of women and men with regard to choice of spouse, parenthood, personal rights and command over property.

Aside from civil rights issues, the Convention also devotes major attention to a most vital concern of women, namely their reproductive rights. The preamble sets the tone by stating that "the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination". The link between discrimination and women's reproductive role is a matter of recurrent concern in the Convention. For example, it advocates, in article 5, "a proper understanding of maternity as a social function", demanding fully shared responsibility for child-rearing by both sexes. Accordingly, provisions for maternity protection and child-care are proclaimed as essential rights and are incorporated into all areas of the Convention, whether dealing with employment, family law, health care or education. Society's obligation extends to offering social services, especially child-care facilities, that allow individuals to combine family responsibilities with work and participation in public life. Special measures for maternity protection are recommended and "shall not be considered discriminatory". (article 4). "The Convention also affirms women's right to reproductive choice. Notably, it is the only human rights treaty to mention family planning. States parties are obliged to include advice on family planning in the education process (article I O.h) and to develop family codes that guarantee women's rights "to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights" (article 16.e).

The third general thrust of the Convention aims at enlarging our understanding of the concept of human rights, as it gives formal recognition to the influence of culture and tradition on restricting women's enjoyment of their fundamental rights. These forces take shape in stereotypes, customs and norms which give rise to the multitude of legal, political and economic constraints on the advancement of women. Noting this interrelationship, the preamble of the Convention stresses "that a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality of men and women". States parties are therefore obliged to work towards the modification of social and cultural patterns of individual conduct in order to eliminate "prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women" (article 5). And Article 10.c. mandates the revision of textbooks, school programmes and teaching methods with a view to eliminating stereotyped concepts in the field of education. Finally, cultural patterns which define the public realm as a man's world and the domestic sphere as women's domain are strongly targeted in all of the Convention's provisions that affirm the equal responsibilities of both sexes in family life and their equal rights with regard to education and employment. Altogether, the Convention provides a comprehensive framework for challenging the various forces that have created and sustained discrimination based upon sex.

The implementation of the Convention is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Committee's mandate and the administration of the treaty are defined in the Articles 17 to 30 of the Convention. The Committee is composed of 23 experts nominated by their Governments and elected by the States parties as individuals "of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention".

At least every four years, the States parties are expected to submit a national report to the Committee, indicating the measures they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. During its annual session, the Committee members discuss these reports with the Government representatives and explore with them areas for further action by the specific country. The Committee also makes general recommendations to the States parties on matters concerning the elimination of discrimination against women.

The full text of the Convention is set out herein

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Noting that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

Noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

Noting that the States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights have the obligation to ensure the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights,

Considering the international conventions concluded under the auspices of the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

Noting also the resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

Concerned, however, that despite these various instruments extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,

Recalling that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity,

Concerned that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs,

Convinced that the establishment of the new international economic order based on equity and justice will contribute significantly towards the promotion of equality between men and women,

Emphasizing that the eradication of apartheid, all forms of racism, racial discrimination, colonialism, neo-colonialism, aggression, foreign occupation and domination and interference in the internal affairs of States is essential to the full enjoyment of the rights of men and women,

Affirming that the strengthening of international peace and security, the relaxation of international tension, mutual co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems, general and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control, the affirmation of the principles of justice, equality and mutual benefit in relations among countries and the realization of the right of peoples under alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and independence, as well as respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, will promote social progress and development and as a consequence will contribute to the attainment of full equality between men and women,

Convinced that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields,

Bearing in mind the great contribution of women to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, so far not fully recognized, the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children, and aware that the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination but that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole,

Aware that a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women,

Determined to implement the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and, for that purpose, to adopt the measures required for the elimination of such discrimination in all its forms and manifestations,

Have agreed on the following:

PART I

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

(a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

(b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

(c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;

(d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;

(e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;

(f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;

(g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

Article 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

Article 4

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

Article 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

Article 6

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

PART II

Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Article 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

PART III

Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical

education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

(g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

(h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;

(b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;

(c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;

(d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;

(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;

(b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

(c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;

(d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically

in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Article 13

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

- (a) The right to family benefits;
- (b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;
- (c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

- (a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;
- (b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;
- (c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;
- (d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;
- (e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment;
- (f) To participate in all community activities;
- (g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;
- (h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

PART IV

Article 15

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.
2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of

men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.

3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

Article 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same right to enter into marriage;

(b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;

(c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

(d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;

(f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;

(h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

PART V

Article 17

1. For the purpose of considering the progress made in the implementation of the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) consisting, at the time of entry into force of the Convention, of eighteen and, after ratification of or accession to the Convention by the thirty-fifth State Party, of twenty-three experts of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention. The experts shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the representation of the different forms of civilization as well as the principal legal systems.

2. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.

3. The initial election shall be held six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention. At least three months before the date of each election the Secretary-General of the

United Nations shall address a letter to the States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties.

4. Elections of the members of the Committee shall be held at a meeting of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At that meeting, for which two thirds of the States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

5. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. However, the terms of nine of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election the names of these nine members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

6. The election of the five additional members of the Committee shall be held in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this article, following the thirty-fifth ratification or accession. The terms of two of the additional members elected on this occasion shall expire at the end of two years, the names of these two members having been chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

7. For the filling of casual vacancies, the State Party whose expert has ceased to function as a member of the Committee shall appoint another expert from among its nationals, subject to the approval of the Committee.

8. The members of the Committee shall, with the approval of the General Assembly, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.

9. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

Article 18

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect:

- (a) Within one year after the entry into force for the State concerned;
- (b) Thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

2. Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

Article 19

1. The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure.
2. The Committee shall elect its officers for a term of two years.

Article 20

1. The Committee shall normally meet for a period of not more than two weeks annually in order to consider the reports submitted in accordance with article 18 of the present Convention.

2. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. (amendment, status of ratification)

Article 21

1. The Committee shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the

General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States Parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit the reports of the Committee to the Commission on the Status of Women for its information.

Article 22

The specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their activities. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

PART VI

Article 23

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions that are more conducive to the achievement of equality between men and women which may be contained:

- (a) In the legislation of a State Party; or
- (b) In any other international convention, treaty or agreement in force for that State.

Article 24

States Parties undertake to adopt all necessary measures at the national level aimed at achieving the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 25

1. The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

3. The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

4. The present Convention shall be open to accession by all States. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 26

1. A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any State Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. The General Assembly of the United Nations shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such a request.

Article 27

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying the present Convention or acceding to it after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 28

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.

2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.

3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to this effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States thereof. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received.

Article 29

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of the present Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 30

The present Convention, the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, duly authorized, have signed the present Convention.
Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

Resolution 1325 (2000)

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and recalling also the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls, Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. Encourages the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. Urges the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. Further urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. Expresses its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. Urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respectfully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable

to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. Emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. Encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. Reaffirms its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. Expresses its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. Invites the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. Requests the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.