



AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
of KUWAIT

AUK OCCASIONAL PAPERS

LIBERAL ARTS & BUSINESS SERIES

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ABOUT AUK OCCASIONAL PAPERS:

The AUK Occasional Papers publish articles and contributions concerning the liberal arts education and business in the Gulf or Middle Eastern contexts. Articles on the value of humanistic education in the application to business in the Arabian Gulf region will be considered as well as contributions on communities or regions of the world that have strong ties with the Arabian Gulf. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, AUK Occasional Papers does not accept technical or highly specialized material, nor does it publish in the areas of administration or training.

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Foreword by

MARINA TOLMACHEVA, PH.D. *AUK President*



Welcome to the inaugural edition of Occasional Papers of the American University of Kuwait.

Founded in 2004, American University of Kuwait is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and co-educational liberal arts institution of higher education. The American University of Kuwait offers our students a quality education based on the American College model. Our faculty work hard to create a caring environment where every aspect of students' development gets attention and support. Our program is designed to prepare students for the contemporary world where critical thinking, communication skills, and life-long learning have become imperative.

To achieve positive student learning outcomes, our faculty incorporate a wide range of educational practices into classroom instruction and mentoring. Moreover, our liberal-arts-oriented educational mission calls for a positive connection between teaching and scholarly activity. AUK professors are encouraged to share their research activity with students not only in the classroom but also at meetings and at an annual Liberal Arts conference which we initiated in 2006. This conference provides a forum for our international faculty to share their expertise and brings to the university their experience and wisdom and their passion for educating students 'broadly and liberally.'

Education is about more than subjects, disciplines, and a curriculum. Education is also about ideas. They provide for our students role models of people leading productive, professional lives and offer opportunities for learning and intellectual exchange. The concept of liberal education as a career-building foundation in the sciences, business and entrepreneurship invites a broad intellectual exchange. Our faculty are engaged in scholarship in all of its dimensions, and the papers presented in this first issue of Occasional Papers provide examples of scholars using their many talents to educate and inform the greater academic community. Enjoy this issue, engage our faculty in discussion, and look for more Occasional Papers from the American University of Kuwait in the near future.

Introduction by

JEREMY CRIPPS, PH.D. *AUK Professor of Business*

Dear Colleagues,

It is my distinct pleasure to introduce the first issue of Occasional Papers of the American University of Kuwait.

The papers that are printed in this issue are selected from papers presented at the first Kuwait Liberal Arts Conference, held on our Salmiya campus in May 2006. A quick perusal of the table of contents outlines the breadth of issues discussed - from cultural issues to e-government; from Middle Eastern literature to business ethics; from communication to philosophy; each of these papers focused around the main "liberal arts" theme.

To answer the question "what is the relationship between liberal arts and terrorism?" I encourage you to read on and discover. To discover the dreams of Descartes, I encourage you to read of his thoughts and how they may be a small part of our every day life. Consider the wide range of topics covered and enjoy how they will enrich your imagination and add depth to your consideration of these subjects. We trust you'll enjoy and appreciate the papers presented and reported here, and we would encourage you to contact any of the authors or me with your thoughts or comments.

Occasional Papers is also pleased to include a paper by Clifford Chanin which he presented at the dedication of our newest building on campus, appropriately named the Liberal Arts building. Dr. Chanin's paper continues our conference theme, and we trust you will enjoy reading his paper.

Our plan is occasionally to continue this liberal arts dialogue, so I urge you to look out for future editions of Occasional Papers of the American University of Kuwait.

BUILDING THE LIBERAL ARTS

Clifford Chanin

It is my great pleasure to be with you today to dedicate American University of Kuwait Liberal Arts Building. It is particularly moving for an American to be invited to your country to celebrate the development of a university that has chosen to call itself “American”. This is a complicated choice that might have been easy to avoid. Americans such as myself must acknowledge the honor you do us and ask again about the traditions that you are honoring. The choice of name states what you are doing in Kuwait and poses a question about the meaning of education and its role in society. By posing this deeper question AUK’s founders have crossed fully into the realm of the liberal arts.

Let me then take up this question, as it applies both in the United States and in Kuwait. My first observation is that there is nothing exclusively “made in America” about the educational approach that we are discussing today. The approach to learning that we celebrate with the opening of the Liberal Arts Building is certainly central to American higher education. The liberal arts today, in the US and here in Kuwait or anywhere else extend an intellectual and ethical tradition that goes back to Antiquity and passes through various civilizations – each of whom had critical contributions to make toward the further development of this kind of inquiry.

This chain of learning extends back from American universities into the Europe of the Enlightenment, before that to medieval monasteries, to Arab humanists, and then to the Greeks. The particulars of the liberal arts as we know them today have changed repeatedly, as human knowledge advanced and as intellectual curiosity evolved. At each step along the way, the liberal arts found a civilization in which they could be nurtured, in which previous knowledge could be translated and tested under new conditions, and in which scholars could develop a way

of thinking critically and independently that served not only the cause of knowledge, but the development of society.

The liberal arts are deeply connected to the idea of social development and to the choices that people can make, based on the application of their learning to their lives. The term “liberal arts” is derived from Latin and was intended to denote the knowledge that a “free man” needed to live freely and live well; the liberal arts were, in fact, contrasted with the “servile arts”, which described the knowledge appropriate to tradesman.

Today, there is a certain irony in recalling this older distinction between “liberal arts” and “servile arts”. Many of us have the sneaking suspicion that the hierarchy has been reversed, that the “servile” arts are hardly servile at all – and that the aspirations of professional and vocational development have overtaken the ambitions of the liberal arts. The argument is made that a globalizing economy demands specialization or concentration from the earliest moments of education, and that the questions of the liberal arts have somehow become secondary, if not altogether extraneous, to the success of an individual or society.

Before moving directly into this argument, we should perhaps have a clear sense of what the liberal arts are. Today, we think of themas including language and literature, history and art, music and philosophy. However, in their classical form, the liberal arts incorporated intensive study of grammar and rhetoric, as a means of mastering language and the logic of expression and argument. The liberal arts also included mathematics and astronomy, as a means of understanding the larger forces at work in the world. Some of these disciplines have declined in emphasis, while others have moved into realms of their own. So it is not really

in the particularities of the disciplines that we seek the essence of the liberal arts, since these particularities have changed over time.

It is not the particular content of the disciplines that forms the liberal arts. The means of learning is their defining feature. Here we can find greater continuities in the tradition of liberal learning, continuities that hearken back to the original sense of learning as a means of securing an individual's freedom and his or her place in the world. In this sense it is not simply the pursuit of knowledge, but the disciplined pursuit of knowledge, that marks the liberal arts: ways of learning that are intended to push the individual to a deep understanding of a subject, an understanding that incorporates both a respect for what has already been learned, and a commitment to draw one's own conclusions, even if they do not necessarily follow from the conclusions of the past.

To do this, one must learn to reason, solve problems, and exercise judgment. One must move from learning to action, and exercise leadership to apply the fruits of learning to society. One must be committed to continuing to learn, because the fundamental premise of the liberal arts is that knowledge is not fixed in place, but evolves over time in response to the exercise of the human capacity to learn.

But there is more. The act of learning holds an individual's character to the light. When faced with obstacles, how hard does someone push ahead? How does he accommodate new information? What does she do with opinions or perspectives that do not conform to her own views? Do they see education as the product of an individual mind, or is it rather the outcome of collaboration between students and teachers, between past and present?

Liberal learning requires facing these questions directly. Self-reflection and self-knowledge also emerge from this tradition. This is learning that links countless individuals in the quest of knowledge and constitutes a historical community of learning.

Here, we come to the societal interest in such learning. Society is inevitably influenced by numbers of individuals who learn, think and act in the ways I have just described. Robert Connor, who was president of the National

Humanities Center in the U.S, from its founding in 1989 until 2002 and is now president of the Teagle Foundation, described this learning as "the social contract that binds the university to the society that sustains it." It is the university's job, according to Connor, to serve society by producing generations of students with the capacity to live enriched lives and, through their actions, enrich the lives of their fellow citizens. Many kinds of knowledge support these contributions, but it is within the liberal arts that one obtains the habits of mind that sustain learning in general. The liberal arts at their inception included what we know today as the separate realm of the sciences. And even today, we know that scientific knowledge is produced by the methods of science - experimentation, independent verification and the testing of hypotheses - that share these essential traits with the liberal arts.

Some might say: "We are not at the inauguration of the Sciences Building. Why bother with the liberal arts, if science has already incorporated its approach to learning and come up with more practical ways of applying knowledge to the business world? Well, I am neither a scientist nor a businessman, so let me refer you to some who are.

Peter Benoiel was Chairman of the Quaker Chemical Corporation (with training as an engineer), when he gave a speech to the Association of American Colleges and Universities in which he said: "Plain and simple, a liberal education...is the optimal vehicle in the undergraduate years for preparing for a business management career... The undergraduate years of a student, especially if that student wishes a career in business management, would most profitably be spent not in taking business courses leading to a degree but rather in undergoing a liberal educational experience."

Such a course of study, according to Benoiel, will not only give the student "skills of analysis, synthesis, perception and critical judgment." But, he adds, "Such a program, designed to expose a person to the achievements, scientific, technical, political, social, philosophical and artistic, of great minds past and present, will nurture the heart and mind of the student, so as to incite to fever pitch his curiosity, increase his ability to assimilate new ideas and skills, nurture

and sensitize his spiritual, moral and aesthetic sensibilities, and promote the self-generation of perspective and overview.”

For those with a more scientific bent, let me refer to a past Dean of the Dartmouth College Medical School, Dr. Andrew Wallace. His concern was the interaction between doctors – men and women of science – and the people and society they served. Expertise was surely essential to the role doctors played in society, but it was not enough; in fact, expertise carried with it the risk of separating doctor and patient, of inculcating in the medical profession the idea that doctors need not be accountable, since they were the experts. Inevitably, Dr. Wallace recognized, this could undermine public trust in medicine itself. And so, he wrote, “An essential way for medical schools to restore public trust is to select and nurture professionals who see medicine in a broad social context, who have learned to listen to feedback, who are capable of responding and communicating clearly and honestly in those areas and about those issues where they are uniquely qualified to contribute.” I think you will see where I am heading in citing Dr. Wallace’s list of essential qualities for a doctor. As he put it at the beginning of his talk, “My most important message is that a liberal education is the best foundation for sustaining the values of our profession and for cultivating the kinds of doctors our country needs most.”

In questioning too much early emphasis on vocational training for undergraduates, I do not wish to defend liberal arts as simply vocational training by another name. I recognize that attendance at AUK entails important decisions about your future, and financial sacrifices by your families. It is important that, on graduation, each of you be prepared to participate in and contribute to Kuwaiti society and the global economy. The question, though, is how best to prepare yourself, and what you might expect from the university to which you have entrusted this preparation.

Here I return to the question of the American style of liberal education that AUK has embraced. Richard Brodhead, is the president of Duke University, wrote about a trip he took last summer to four Asian countries, where the economies are bustling and the need for well-educated university graduates is increasing daily. He told of Chinese colleagues who voiced “the

fear that Asian higher education is long on discipline but short on creativity and that the very strengths of their system may prevent the fostering of a versatile, innovative style of intelligence that will be the key to future economic advancement.” He concluded “We need to promote everything in our system that breeds initiative, independence, resourcefulness and collaboration. One of these is the liberal arts model of education...When we touch off real debate on serious, open questions and encourage students to have worthwhile thoughts of their own, we are developing an asset of the highest strategic as well as personal value: the habits of active, independent thought.”

And so I cannot help but point out that the most abstract qualities of liberal learning are also, it turns out, the most practical thing about them. Is this really any surprise? Your business professors will tell you of the complexities of the global economy and the need to be able to adapt quickly and incorporate new information into your decisions. These decisions reflect the questions you ask, the deductions you make, and your comfort with varied and multiple sources of information. This is the way that the liberal arts teach you to think: creatively, critically and adaptively.

In closing, let’s think about the world that your generation will inherit – and the need you will have to engage fruitfully with people different from you, where difference will, in fact, be more a part of your lives than it has been for any generation that came before. I hope you have found convincing the testimony I have offered from various educational and business leaders about the value of liberal learning in preparing for the work of your choice.

Aside from whatever professions you choose, each of you are citizens of the world. The requirements of global citizenship may never be formally codified, but they certainly include the need to understand how others think and act – and to find ways to think and act productively with them. These rules, if they are ever written, will also incorporate some understanding of change in the world – how it works, the tensions it creates, and the transformations it brings.

Change may be inevitable but seldom easy. You will each come to this encounter with change

in your own terms, but I want to share with you an interpretation of change that has stuck with me since I first read it years ago. That is, a way of framing the choice of living with change or rejecting it. It comes from the Syrian philosopher Sadik al-Azm, who describes how different peoples at different points in history have faced such a choice. He describes it as the conflict between the Dogmatic No and the Historical Yes.

For Sadiq al-Azm, at any given moment in time, the Dogmatic No seems to exercise a power that makes it unassailable. And yet, he adds, there is in history a trend toward saying yes - toward adapting to change and moving on from new

experience. Within each of us, not to mention within the societies we live in, there is the pull of yes and no. Each of us will set his or her own balance between the two, but I take much hope from the idea that over time, history will pull us toward saying yes - to change and, also, to one another.

And so I close by thinking that the doors into this building open onto the Historical Yes - the path of critical thinking, respectful learning and human fellowship. In living with the struggle between the Dogmatic No and Historical Yes in our time, we will still have much need of the liberal arts. I am honored to welcome them to their home on the AUK campus.



The AUK Board of Trustees at the opening ceremony of the Liberal Arts Building (AUK, December 2006)

THE ROLE OF A LIBERAL ARTS¹ EDUCATION IN BUSINESS

Jeremy Cripps

“The purpose of a Liberal Arts education is to open the mind, correct it, to refine it, to establish it to know; and to digest, to rule, to use knowledge, and to give the mind power over its own faculties”

-John Henry Newman “The Idea of a University”²

The artist Leonardo Da Vinci, designer of aircraft, and painter of the Mona Lisa called himself an “engineer.” The mathematician Luca Pacioli, Father of Accounting, who taught Da Vinci “perspective,” gave the world of business the Venetian business information system still in use to determine the “bottom line.” The Renaissance master, Michelangelo, an “architect,” gave us a variety of arts with the Pieta, the dome of St Peter’s Basilica, and the roof of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. And, among so many other Renaissance masters, all educated in the liberal arts, Marco Polo, with his fellow Europeans, traded as they expanded business in Europe and to the Far East and created the wealth that fostered great artistic and profitable business endeavor.

Two centuries later, moral philosopher and customs official Adam Smith of Kirkaldy, Scotland on travels with his pupil, began his inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations.³ And begat the study of economics in the West: James Watt, another mathematician, discovered the rotary power steam engine and gave his name to the electrical power so generated. John Macadam, a successful merchant, found a way to lower the cost of road building and thus facilitated the development of modern roadways and the

distribution of goods and services and facilitated international supply chain management.

South of the border,⁴ Abraham Derby perfected a technique for smelting iron ore using coke at Coalbrookdale in Shropshire with the intention of replacing brass with quality iron and in the process set off the Industrial Revolution. Contemporary Josiah Wedgwood, replacing wood and copper plates with durable simple pottery began focus on the modern business model aiming, with mass production, to satisfy the international consumer.⁵

What have all these people in common? Why do I bring them to your attention? They are my personal selection from hundreds of European artists and wealth creators. What is so important for students of business to realize is that these characters, from among so many others, all enjoyed the benefits of a liberal arts education. They, among so many others, made their business activity a success because their business activity was based on the knowledge they acquired from their study of the liberal arts. So the purpose of this paper is to examine the essence, the nature, of the Liberal Arts and, in particular, how knowledge of the Liberal Arts facilitates

“the excellence and rightness of trade and the conditions which must be fulfilled if transactions are to be valid, the need for equity in transactions, the rightness which lies beyond equity, and the need for the exercise in transactions of the compassion demanded by religion”⁶

1 The Liberal Arts (Artes Liberales) are the oldest educational tradition. They are mentioned for the first time in the writings of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) in Pro Archia and the delight they provide in and for themselves are highlighted in the Tusculan Disputations.

2 John Henry Newman, “The Idea of a University”

3 Adam Smith “Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” 4 Vols, Edinburgh, Scotland 1776

4 Between Scotland and England

5 Such as the Empress Catherine II, the Great of Russia who purchased 962 pieces in 1774

6 Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, “Kimiya e Saadat” (in Persian 11th century) trans by S.M. Ghazanfar in “Medieval Islamic Economic Thought”(London: RoutledgeCurzon, 201, p95.

On purpose, first let me frame my examination in the context of a phrase my high school teacher⁷ used to explain the education provided by the Liberal Arts.

The quest for truth is like knowledge of the forest. The idea at first seems simple.

Yet as we begin to study, we note that trees and shrubs and very many intricate undergrowths are just part of the wealth of knowledge that takes root to make up a forest. To better understand the forest we must therefore learn about trees and shrubs and very many intricate undergrowths; and as we learn of the plants and their bioecology we begin to become aware of the “idea,” the meaning of a forest.

And we realize that really the forest is not a simple idea.⁸

There are a plethora of facts to learn and relationships to understand. Trees and shrubs and undergrowths must interact to make a whole forest.

In the same way each of the Liberal Arts subjects we study at the American University of Kuwait gradually intertwine to enable faculty and students to understand the ever changing nature of business and economic development. Imam Ali expressed the need for constant adjustment to changes in our environment this way:

“Bring up your children other than the way you were brought up yourselves, for they were born for times other than yours”⁹

The liberally educated person begins to study the **artes triviales** or the **trivium**, the Greeks’ and Romans’ rhetoric, grammar, and logic. These are the ancestors of the English language three “**Rs**” namely **R**eading, **wR**iting and **aR**ithmetic. This

first elementary group of subjects, the sciences of language, communication, and philosophy remain today, as they have for thousands of years, the foundation of a quality education system.

The liberally educated person then continues study at the secondary and tertiary levels with the **artes reales**, the mathematico-physical disciplines known as the **quadrivium**. The Roman arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, being the natural ancestors of the so many more disciplines we include within the humanities, natural and social sciences, and lifelong (or professional) studies which make-up the curriculum of a modern Liberal Arts university.

The Arts are liberal because they are designed to train the “free” man. The aim is for free men to take advantage of our God given ability to think. Ibn Khaldun expresses this purpose in the Maqaddimah. He wrote

“God distinguished man from all other animals by an ability to think which he made the beginning of human perfection and the end of man’s noble superiority over existing things.”¹⁰

A feature of our humanity echoed by Renee Descartes 500 years later when he wrote

*“Je pense quai je donc.”
I think therefore I am¹¹*

The emphasis on developing our ability to think is necessary because “man is essentially ignorant and becomes learned through acquiring knowledge” and in particular, the Liberal Arts enable humans to arrange their actions “in an orderly manner” employing, as Ibn Khaldun noted:

7 Michael Dean, Housemaster at Eton, 1960

8 Bertrand Russell provides a similar allegory to the “cat” in his History of Western Philosophy”

9 Imam Ali, Ali bin Abi Talib .Fourth Caliph of Islam, from Hussain Mohammed Al-Amily, “The Book of Arabic Wisdom,” (Northampton, Mass: Interlink books, 2005) p35

10 Ibn Khaldun, “The Maqaddimah: an Introduction to History,” written 1377, translated by Franz Rosenthal (Oxford, England: Bollingen Series, Princeton University Press, 2005 Ed) page 333.

11 Rene Descartes, from Discourse on Method

Discerning intellect
Experimental intellect
Speculative intellect

So to transform our “nature and essence” from
“essential ignorance”
“by the acquired character of the knowledge we
possess”¹²

- Critical thinking
- Lifelong Learning
- Understanding Life as a whole

Critical thinking skill:

The mind is like a muscle;¹³ exercise provides the increasing strength of mind needed to grasp complex human ideas. Exercising the mind in one area, literature or psychology, or accounting, strengthens the relationship between the disciplines.

Thus reading “The Inn of the Poor”¹⁴ provides not just the writer Bedoun (Larbi Benya) an university teacher of comparative literature dreaming of writing ‘a minor Moroccan Ulysses’, but some insight into the psychology of defiance and some idea of the closed horizons of life in Morocco, and perhaps even a minicase study in inventory in Marrakech when, in the final pages of the novel, Benya gives us details of the items in his room.

Or reading “The Children of Gebelawi”¹⁵ provides interest and excitement for a class on history or comparative economic development or, as poetry is meant to do, a class on interpersonal communication.

Or noting that from one Arab woman’s perspective “The idea that women can’t live without male guardianship in every aspect of their life is really appalling,” and using Hayat Alyaqout,¹⁶ among others, to broaden our understanding of such issues.

In my accounting courses we use history, why and how the Gutenberg Bible printing presses moved from Heidelberg to Venice, where Pagnino published Pacioli¹⁷, author of debit and credit coincidentally in the year that whisky was first distilled in Scotland.¹⁸ We examine the spread of liberal arts to universities and note the correlation between post-Renaissance education and post-Renaissance economic development in Europe.

As the mind is exercised on mathematics, music, poetry, philosophy, and computer programming that muscle develops order. The brain, like the athlete’s body, needs structure and habit. The athlete who trains hard completes many exercises to gain strength in particular athletic events. So the mind needs a variety of subjects which contribute to strength of mind each in a slightly different and yet essential way.

And, as the athlete trains muscles with a diverse body of exercise, so research, discussion, examination and analysis train the liberal arts mind. Opinions, attitudes, values and beliefs are tried and tested in theory and in practice. As the liberal arts mind develops so opinions and attitudes and values and beliefs depend upon the individual’s own worthy evaluation of argument and evidence.

The graduate of a liberal arts institution no longer relies on the authority of parents, peers or professors. The graduates of liberal arts education “know themselves.”¹⁹

The graduates of liberal arts institutions recognize good judgment depends upon thoughtful and a rather extensive acquaintance with many areas of study and above all the ability to think and articulate thought independently. Especially the liberal arts graduate can think and articulate independently in the face of pressures, distortions, and mythical truths.

12 Ibn Khaldun, op cit: page 341

13 Robert Harris, On the Purpose of a Liberal Arts Education, 1991

14 Tahar Ben Jelloun, “The Inn of the Poor” (L’Auberge des Pauvres)

15 Najib Mahfouz, “The Children of Gebelawi,” (London: Three Continents Press, 1981)

16 See her website at <http://www.nashiri.net/e-hayat/>

17 Luca Pacioli, “Suma de Arithmetica, Geometria, Proportioni et Proportionalita,” (Venice: Pagnino, 1494)

18 The first official and indisputable reference concerning distillation of whisky in a document from the Scottish Exchequer Rolls 1494.

19 Translated, the motto, engraved over the main entrance to the Temple and the Oracle at Delphi was adopted, according to his biographer Plato, by Socrates as a principal for his liberal arts academy.

Two examples: Competent and less competent thinking on economic development.

1. Competent thinking:

The businessmen at Sevlievo in Bulgaria have put together the world's leading production company of white china products and related hardware and fittings. Here liberal arts graduates understood the potential of native skills, suitable environment, enthusiastic personnel, and the accumulated wealth of 'free' people in and around Sevlievo. Now at Vidima, Bulgarians are out-producing their competitors in Europe, and their product is both quality and price leader. These people understand economic development.

2. Less competent thinking:

The macroeconomists at the World Bank and the IMF in contrast have acted like technicians adopting unreliable models to project economic activity. They have yet to achieve as much in the way of economic development as their counterparts at Vidima. Indeed their record²⁰, including recent inappropriate advice in Malawi,²¹ which led to famine, they themselves agree, is inadequate. The World Bank at its recent 2002 conference in Monterey recognized that "much of the money that it has supplied has been badly used."²²

Thus the first practical advantage of a liberal arts education is the ability to think.

The skill of Lifelong learning:

Knowledge builds upon knowledge. When we learn something we tend to remember how we learned it, the process and the source. At a liberal arts university we do not simply acquire a giant pile of facts; we acquire the skills which will enable us throughout our lives to handle growing giant piles of facts. As we research commentary on language and literature on the World Wide Web, we acquire research skills we can apply to history and political science. When we write a report on and learn about systems of organization and behavior we can use them as analytical tools to learn how economic development organizations can improve and have

improved interpersonal functions to increase productivity. We can apply the theory we learn to case studies and discover practical solutions to existing problems.

In this liberal arts process we see the critical difference between simply "feeding" the starving and taking the time to teach them "how to grow food." We can not survive on a single meal; we need food for energy all our lives.

One of the great lessons for students is to take an inter-disciplinary (liberal arts) approach to dealing with life's problems. This familiarizes students with the six sequential steps that are necessary to make effective decisions in business. The process is set out in "The Effective Decision" and include how to:

1. *classify the problem*
2. *define the problem*
3. *analyze possible solutions*
4. *make the right (not the acceptable) decision*
5. *implement the decision*
6. *test the validity of the decision (through feedback)*²³

Two examples: Rose Oil and Government.

1. Comprehensive term thinking:

The economic development of Bulgaria's ancient rose oil industry requires definition of the market today and the future of that market. In Kazanluk and Karlovo each year we see the price of a kilo of rose petals rise from BL 1.00 to BL 1.60. Factors in this market include the maintenance of rose plants, the gathering in of petals, the process of distilling the oil from roses, the investment in modern distillery equipment, competition from Turkey, marketing to the perfumeries of Europe and many opportunities to extend the process to the production of lavender oil and other related flora. Successful producers, like the distillery at Enio Bonchev²⁴ have taken appropriate long-term strategic actions.

20 Detailed in evidence (Phillipines, Sri Lanka, Chile, Jamaica, Brazil, Zaire, Kenya, Turkey, etc.) may be found in Graham Hancock's "Lords of Poverty" (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1998)

21 The World Bank encouraged the government of Malawi to reduce food stocks, within no apparent guidelines, just before the food crops failed. The result has been famine and starvation in 2002.

22 Reported in The Economist, April 2002.

23 Peter F. Drucker, "On the Profession of Management," (Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School Publishing, 1998) page 20.

24 Enio Bonchev, Ltd, Architect Milanov 50, Sofia 1000

2. The absence of term thinking:

Kuwaiti students will be familiar with a summer of cuts in the supply of electricity and in the availability of potable water. The Ministries responsible for term thinking unfortunately employ a Byzantine process which generates inefficiency and a great poverty of initiative and critical thinking. In spite of an unusual abundance of financial resources, the product of surging world prices in oil, the Ministries in 2006 are unable to link the changing demographics and the relative paucity of some natural resources in such a manner as to guarantee a developed nation supply of electricity and oil to the 3,000,000 people living in Kuwait.

The second practical advantage of a liberal arts education is the lifelong ability to think.

The idea of Life as a whole:

A liberal arts education is of necessity a general education. A general education supplies a context for all knowledge and especially one's chosen area of specialty. Every discipline may only provide a partial view of knowledge; yet who is to know when something we learn will suddenly become useful. At school I now realize I had the good fortune to learn ancient Greek. "What was the point?" I probably wondered when my translations of Herodotus were rightly criticized.

Yet years later in East Europe that knowledge enabled me to read the Cyrillic alphabet. When I visit museums in Khurdjali and Varna and Sofia and the Thracian tombs in the Rose Valley and see quotations from Herodotus, somehow the exhibits are more beautiful and real.

At the American University in Kuwait knowledge of the Liberal Arts provides each student with their own map of our universe. The purpose is to learn the relative disposition of ideas and things, to gain a systematic view of reality, an understanding of hierarchies and relationships, and, as Kuwaiti membership of the World Trade Organization grows, how international business transactions are limited by perceptions of

corruption, and , perhaps more important, how those perceptions may be changed.

As abstract as this benefit may seem to the student, it is just this orientation that provides a stable foundation for a sane, an orderly, and a most enjoyable life. Niccolo Machiavelli wrote of the liberal arts advantage thus:

When the evening comes ... I enter the realms of history.

Here, always welcome, I enjoy reflection, reflection which is personal, reflection for which I was born.

I speak with history's greatest and ask the reasons for their actions.

And they, because of their humanity, answer me, and for hours

*I feel no boredom,
I forget every worry,
I relax completely."*

Niccolo Machiavelli, 1513

The psychologist who would fully understand the variety of mental problems his patients may suffer needs a wide-ranging general knowledge if he is to recognize some problems are biological, some spiritual, some the product of environment, and so on. Just so does the businessman who seeks a happy and productive workforce. Both require study in biology, theology, and sociology. Language, literature, accounting, communication, and a decent conversational understanding of the arts add to the depth of their competence.

Four Liberal Arts Thinkers

1. Marie Curie:²⁵

Double Nobel Laureate Curie was educated at the liberal arts Sorbonne. A teacher for her livelihood, she became interested in the discovery of radioactivity, pursued this interest to discover polonium and radium. More important her life's work was to promote the use of radium to alleviate suffering and to identify its therapeutic properties.

2. Christiane Nusslein-Volhard:²⁶

The Nobel Laureate was influenced by Goethe and her parents music and painting. She made her own dresses. She wrote, "I was intensely interested in things, obsessed by ideas and projects" she described "fond memories" of visits to her grandparent's farm and "missed having someone knowledgeable in plants and animals." She admits to being lazy, but notes how "school education was good and interesting, especially German literature." She recollects testing a new theory about evolution after reading Darwin in class. Study of the whole world and the liberal arts eventually led to a Nobel Prize in physiology (Medicine).

3. Jody Williams:²⁷

Ms. Williams holds a BA (Liberal Arts) from the University of Vermont, and Masters degrees in Teaching Spanish, ESL (English as a second language) and Advanced International studies. Her interest in humanitarian relief projects in Latin America began with education projects in Mexico and Nicaragua-Honduras. Her holistic approach led her to found the International Campaign to Ban Landmines which now has more than 1,000 NGOs and drives an unprecedented international effort to ban landmines and particularly to focus attention on the impact of armed conflict on children.

4. Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin:²⁸

Another product of liberal arts education, Mrs. Crowfoot Hodgkin initially combined archaeology and chemistry analyzing glass tesserae from Jerash in the Sudan where her father, an archaeologist, and her mother, an expert on early weaving techniques and botany, were working in the Egyptian Education Service. Her interest eventually turned to the chemistry of metals.

As with my initial list of exemplary liberal arts students, each of these Laureates personify the realization that life itself is a whole. For our lives are not divided in specialist academic disciplines. This then is the third purpose of a liberal arts education. The purpose is to ensure the liberal arts student gains the foundation of a broad education. Upon this broad reliable foundation the liberal arts student then gains an opportunity to choose for her/himself one or more areas of specialization in which s/he may enjoy a livelihood for all their life.

Two examples: The holistic approach to economic development.

1. Comprehensive economic development:

After the Second World War instead of a concept similar to the World Bank's "structural adjustment," the British Chancellor insisted on a "constructive compromise."²⁹ The policy reconciled multilateralism with private-enterprise capitalism. The British insisted on maintaining and investing in essential health educational and welfare facilities whilst at the same time concentrating on increasing productivity and redirecting trade. Their actions paved the way for an eventual multilateralism, but only after an appropriate period of adjustment.

25 Nobel Laureate for Physics in 1903, for Chemistry in 1911

26 Nobel Laureate for Physiology or Medicine, 1994

27 Nobel Laureate for Peace, 1997

28 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry in 1964

29 Sir Stafford Cripps, "The Dollar Situation: Forthcoming Discussion with U.S.A. and Canada, Economic Policy Committee (49) 73 July 4, 1949 PREM 8/1412 pt II.

Note that the period of adjustment lasted significantly less than the twelve years 1990 to 2002.

2. Less comprehensive economic development:

In Kuwait the capital market has yet to be comprehensively coordinated. Piecemeal structural changes have been implemented, but the financial markets are not analyzed as a whole. Thus the privatization process has lacked the infusion of skilled strategic management planning. The Central Bank has yet to require banks to provide European levels of development investment in the capital market. Kuwait banks continue to permit commercial entities to maintain accounts without the transparency and disclosure International Financial Reporting Standards require. Banks have managed to prevail against opening the Kuwait banking market to international competitors. Thus the market has yet to be opened up to competitive investment in the private sector and the funding of economic development and the attraction of foreign investment are not encouraged.

Throughout **Pro Archia**³⁰ Cicero identifies the human need for knowledge of many disciplines. “Omnes artes,” he writes “quae ad humanitatem pertinent” (all the arts which pertain to humanity) have a common bond. They are joined as if by a certain family relationship. And this provides a vital holistic dimension to the individual’s liberal studies. “To character” writes Cicero “the liberal arts add a certain methodical shaping that comes from learning, something indefinably extraordinary and splendid.”³¹

This splendid relaxing and refining of the mind is most human and is most befitting to a free man. The liberal arts nourish youth and entertain old age; they adorn success and provide refuge and solace in adversity; they give delight at home, and accompany us in our travels and in the excitement of our lives.

The third (and most practical) advantage of a liberal arts education is the realization that life is holistic, that our lives work and leisure must be taken together.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this paper is to define the role of Liberal Arts education in business and most particularly to make the purpose of a Liberal Arts education to students who chose to earn a degree in business administration.

Three overriding Liberal Arts principals provide the foundation for a well-educated person:

- Critical thinking skills
- Lifelong learning habits, and the
- Understanding that Life is holistic.

Given these skills the Liberal Arts graduate joins others in business to contribute to what a basketball coach might describe as “a full court press.”³² Such approach combines energy and commitment with skill and experience and the recognition that the only constant in our world is change.³³

Let me conclude now with the magical words of one of the world’s great authors. Here the poet describes for me the essence of the Liberal Arts.

All now to work with devotion.....

Let each hour new times mark.

In life’s wild and raging ocean

Knowledge is our Noah’s Ark.”³⁴

Ivan Vazov, Sofia, 1899

30 Marcus Tullius Cicero, “Pro Archia,” Loeb Classical Series

31 “Ratio quaedam conformatioque doctrinae”

32 Originally a Basket ball term, “full court press” refers in a figurative sense to the strongest possible pressure to achieve ones objective.

33 After Heraclitus (540 BC - 480 BC), from Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers

34 Ivan Vazov “Now to Work!” Anthology of Bulgarian Poetry, op cit.

LIBERAL EDUCATION AND TERRORISM

Nizar Hamzeh

Since the rise of terrorism in the Arab-Islamic world, and the inability of Muslim societies to contain it, a plethora of writers and scholars, in particular after September 11, 2001, have argued that lack of education including liberal education was a major cause of terrorist acts and support to terrorism. Others suggested that the long term answer to terrorism in its Islamic guise can only lie in liberal education.³⁵ The bulk of the arguments stress that if Muslims received the liberal education that was available to so many Westerners, the liberal view of relative pacifism, moderation, and tolerance would likely be furthered in what are presently violent, extremist, and intolerant nations.

This article, however, argues that the relevant literature and the data collected challenge the consensus that lack of education including liberal education fosters terrorism. It also argues that liberal education alone wouldn't be enough to eliminate terrorism for at least two reasons. Liberal education is still confined to the small elitist segment of the Arab-Islamic societies, those students who can afford high tuition costs of the few private schools and universities. Second, western liberalism is foreign to Islam, and for the former to take hold, change must come from within Islam. Unless these two conditions are met, the prospects for the emergence of liberal Islamic society free from terrorism are dismal.

Liberal Education vs. Terrorism

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, a consensus quickly emerged that lack of education, in particular liberal education, was one of two major causes of terrorist acts and the support of terrorism. The other major cause was poverty. Subscribing to this education theory are politicians, journalists and many scholars. For example, George W. Bush, President of the United States, said in a speech in Monterrey, Mexico, "because hope is an answer to terror...We will challenge the poverty and lack of education and failed governments that too often allow conditions that terrorists can seize."³⁶

The need for education, in particular liberal education, to combat terrorism was also expressed by officials responsible for administering educational or youth exchange programs between the US and the Middles. For example, Ambassador Theodore H.Kattouf, President of AMIDEAST, in a statement testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said "It is my firm belief that exposure to liberal education and values as academic freedom...are among the best tools that we have to inspire a new generation in the Arab Islamic world to resist the siren calls of those who would subvert one of the world's great monotheistic religion to their self interest."³⁷

35. Joel Kleinberg, "Judaism and Islam: Terrorism as Seen Through the Lenses of the Two Semitic Religions," <http://wings.buffalo.edu/philosophy/faculty/smith/courses01/papers/Kleinberg2.pdf> (accessed May 25, 2006), p.6

36. Cited in Bill Sammon, "President Urges More Foreign Aid," *Washington Times*, March 23, 2003, p.2.

37. <http://www.senate.gov/foreign/testimony/2004/KattoufTestimony041006.pdf> (accessed May 25, 2006), p.1

Many well regarded scholars also concur. For example, Noble Peace Prize laureate, Elie Wiesel claimed, “education is the way to eliminate terrorism.”³⁸ And Morton Deutsch asserts, “clearly, if we are to have a world free of terrorism, much effort will have to be directed at educating our students to have knowledge, attitudes and skills”³⁹ Others have suggested some form of “new colonialism” defined in part as exportation of liberal teachers from the colonizer to the colony.⁴⁰ If Muslims received the liberal education available to westerners, liberal views of moderation and tolerance would likely substitute the present violence and intolerant attitudes.⁴¹ As such spreading liberal education to Muslim countries (colonies) can’t be done by indigenous educators but only by western liberal teachers and possibly western trained teachers.

For better understanding of the link between liberal education and terrorism, conceptual definitions must be in order. Starting with the definition of liberal education, which is less controversial than terrorism, one is sure that reliable truisms are available. The Association of American Colleges and Universities defines liberal education as “a philosophy of education that empowers individuals, liberates their minds from ignorance, and cultivates social responsibility. It is characterized by challenging encounters, and more of a ‘way of studying’ than a specific course or field of study.”⁴² By its nature, “liberal education is global and pluralistic...to acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives.”⁴³

As such, liberal education is more than a means of increasing critical thinking and critical awareness fostered through the exposure to

philosophy, literature, music, art, and language. Liberal education is a way of life that values open minds, freedom, tolerance, and celebrates the rich diversity of the world cultures where violence and mistrust must give way to dialogue and reconciliation.

On the other hand, the definition of terrorism is inherently controversial. Schmidt and Youngman in their work *Political Terrorism* cited 109 different definitions of terrorism, which they obtained in a survey of leading academics in the field. From these definitions the authors found the following recurring elements:⁴⁴

1. Violence, force appeared in 83.5% of the definitions
2. Political 65%
3. Fear, emphasis on terror 51%
4. Threats 47%
5. Psychological effects and anticipated reactions 41.5%
6. Discrepancy between the targets and the victims 37.5%
7. Intentional, planned, systematic, organized, action 32%
8. Methods of combats, strategy, tactics 30.5%

However, some definitions like the U.S. National Counter Center for Terrorism emphasize more than other definitions the “sub-national,” “clandestine,” character of “politically motivated violence,” directed against a “noncombatant target.”⁴⁵ Other definitions included the state as perpetrator distinguishing between “state terrorism,” and “state sponsored terrorism.”⁴⁶ What is common to most definitions is the inclusion of terrorists’ goals of including fear in a target audience that transcend the physical harm caused to immediate victims through psychological effect, the ultimate purpose is persuasion. Brian Jenkins describes terrorism as a “theater.” According to him, “the objectives of

38. Cited in Baylee Simon, “Elie Wiesel Return to the UN,” <http://www.chron.org/tools/viewart.php?artid=725> (accessed May 26, 2006), p.2;

39. Morton Deutsch, “Response to the Terrorists Actions,” <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/icccr/Musing91.html> (accessed May 26, 2006), p.4.

40. Joel Kleinberg, “Judaism and Islam: Terrorism as Seen Through the Lenses of the Two Semitic Religions,” <http://wings.buffalo.edu/philosophy/faculty/smith/courses01/papers/Kleinberg2.Pdf> (accessed May 25, 2006), p.6.

41. Ibid.

42. Association of American Colleges and Universities, “What is Liberal Education?” <http://www.accu.org/press-room/media-kit/what-is-liberal-education.cfm> (accessed May, 2006), p 2.

43. Ibid.

44. Alex P. Schmidt and Albert I. Jongman et al., *Political Terrorism* (SWIDCO, Amsterdam and Transactions Books, 1988), p.5.

45. Wikipedia “Definition of Terrorism,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition-of-terrorism>.

46. Boaz Ganor, “Defining Terrorism: Is One Man’s Terrorist Another Man’s Freedom Fighter?” <http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/define.htm> (accessed June 1), pp.10-11.

terrorism are to frighten audiences through the use of dramatic and shocking acts, which include bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, the taking of hostages and hijackings...intended to produce fear that will change attitudes and behavior towards government and their policies."⁴⁷

Some analyses and news reports create the impression that Islam is the source of terrorism. I would attribute such an impression to at least two reasons. One, there is enough breadth of elasticity in the Qur'an more than the other two other religions of the book, Judaism and Christianity to enable both sides Muslims, in particular Islamic fundamentalists, and non-Muslims to draw whatever supporting meaning they wish.

For example, some non-Muslim commentators have pointed out that acts of terrorism are sanctioned by the Qur'an such as verse 193 of Baqara (Qur'an 2:193). It states, "Fight them the unbeliever until there is no dissension and the God is entirely Allah"⁴⁸ As for verse 33 of the Tawba (Qur'an 9:33), it renders the legitimacy of "terrorists acts: "He hath sent His messenger (Muhammad) with the guidance and the religion of truth, in order that they may set in above all religions, though averse is the polytheists."⁴⁹ However, other Muslim and non-Muslim commentators have argued that terrorism is neither sanctioned in the Qur'an nor in the Hadith (Prophet's sayings). For example, the Qur'an stresses the sixth of the Ten Commandments (Thou shall not kill): "Any one who murders any person who had not committed murder or horrendous crimes, and it shall be as if he murdered all people (5:13)."⁵⁰ This condemnation of killing people is also upheld in the Prophet's sayings: "He who killed himself will be awarded the same torment on the day of the judgment; that he should continue to kill himself in Hell, in the same manner as he killed himself in the mortal world."⁵¹

Second, contemporary Islam has produced more suicidal terrorists than all other creeds, modern or ancient. The teaching of Islam by Islamic fundamentalists was twisted to suit the political

ends of the terrorists' masterminds. An unshakable belief in the heavenly life as preferred to the worldly life, the reward of jihad and martyrdom, the mental discipline inculcated by rigid prayer and teaching, intolerance, authoritarianism, conspiratorial outlook, paranoia, austereness, refusing reality, rejecting change and resisting "infidel" knowledge and above all rejecting the diversity of cultures and accepting the other. In a nutshell, Islamic fundamentalists have taught ignorance and terrorism.

With such broad coalition in agreement that education and in particular liberal education is likely to combat or eliminate terrorism, one is driven theoretically to assume that there is an inverse causal relationship between liberal education and terrorism. To put it hypothetically, the higher the liberal education the less likely the terrorist acts. The question that yet remains to be answered is, what evidence links poor liberal education to terrorism?

The Evidence

Surprisingly, the relevant literature and data I have collected challenge the consensus. The available data on liberal education and terrorism is scarce on both the individual and national levels and, if found, is part of the overall data on education and terrorism. Nonetheless, both types of data point in the same direction and lead me to conclude that any connection between liberal education and terrorism is at best indirect and quite weak.

Studies on September 11 terrorist attacks show that many of the terrorists who planned and carried out the attacks were confused but highly educated with some exposure to liberal arts education, middle-class professionals. Ayman al-Zawahiri, Bin Laden's chief of staff, is a pediatric surgeon. Omar Sheikh, the kidnapper of Daniel Pearl, is the product of the same British public school that produced the film-maker Peter Greenway.⁵² Furthermore, of the 19 September

47. Brian M. Jenkins, *International Terrorism: the Other World War* (Santa, Monica, California: Rand, 1985, p.6.

48. Qura'n, verse 193, chapter 2 or Surat, 2.

49. Ibid, verse 33, chapter 9 or Surat, 9.

50. Ibid, verse 5, chapter 13 or surat, 13

51. Cited in Maruf Khwaja, "Terrorism, Islam, Reform; thinking the unthinkable," <http://www.werenotafraid.com/dynamic/?p=205> (accessed March 21, 2006), p.2.

52. William Dalrymple, "A Largely Bourgeois Endeavour," *The Guardian*, July 20, 2005, p.9.

11 terrorist hijackers, 8 were university students and the remaining were high school graduates. Of the 8 hijackers, 4 were trained pilots (Muhammad Atta, Ziad Jarrah, Marwan al-Shehhi and Hani Hanjour). Muhammad Atta, who is believed to have flown American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, had a B.S. in Architecture from Cairo University. He also was registered as a student of urban planning at the Technical University of Hamburg-Harburg in Hamburg from 1993-1999, and was considered a town planning expert.⁵³ Ziad Jarrah, who crashed United Airlines Flight 93 into the Pennsylvania countryside to prevent or end an assault by the passengers, was studying aerospace engineering at the University of Applied Sciences in Hamburg⁵⁴ Al-Shehhi, who had flown United Airlines Flight 175 into the South Tower, was studying German language in Bonn, in preparation to his enrollment in Bonn University.⁵⁵ Hanjour was the only hijacker to live in the U.S. prior to any intentions for a large scale terrorist attack. Reportedly, in 1996, he was enrolled in an intensive English language program in the University of Arizona, Tucson, and again in the University of Arizona, Phoenix. Hanjour is believed to have flown the American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon.⁵⁶

Public Opinion polls can provide information on which segment of population support militant activities or terrorism. Two months after 9/11, the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, in the West Bank city of Ramallah, conducted a public opinion poll of 1, 357 Palestinians age 18 or older in the West Bank, Gaza on topics including the September 11 attacks, Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and attacks against Israel. The poll reveals many things.⁵⁷ First, support for attacks against Israeli targets by Palestinian population is widespread (from 74% to 90%). Second, a majority, more than 60% of the population surveyed, believes that attacks against Israel that target civilians have helped to achieve Palestinian rights in a way that negotiations

couldn't have. These results, however, offer no evidence that educated people are less supportive of attacks against Israeli targets. As a matter of fact, the support for attacks is higher among those with high school education than among those with only an elementary school education, support is considerably lower among those who are illiterate.⁵⁸

To study the relationship between education and terrorism more directly, Alan Krueger of Princeton University and Jitka Malekova from Charles University in Prague, performed a detailed analysis of the participation in Hizbullah in Lebanon.⁵⁹ Hizbullah is a multifaceted organization that provides social welfare services, has political apparatus, and is also believed to have been engaged in terrorism.⁶⁰ The U.S. State Department and the British Home Office have both classified Hizbullah as a terrorist organization. Krueger and Malekova compared the background characteristics of 129 members of Hizbullah military apparatus who died in action in the late 1980's and early 1990's to the Lebanese populations from which they were drawn. In terms of education, the findings show that Hizbullah fighters are more likely to have completed secondary school than are people in the general population (47% versus 38%).⁶¹

A similar pattern holds for the Palestinian suicide bombers of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The same authors found a positive link between taking part in terrorism and educational attainment. Their results indicated that "more than half of the suicide bombers had attended school after high school (partial university education), while less than less than 15% of the population in the same age group had any post-high school education"⁶²

More to the point, in a recent study on 400 terrorist profiles by a CIA case officer, he found that more than ¾ of his sample came from the upper or middle class. The results also show that the vast majority (90%) came from caring, intact families. In addition, 63% had gone to

53. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohamed_Atta-al-Sayed (accessed June 2, 2006), pp.1-9.

54. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ziad-Jarrah>(accessed June 2, 2006), pp.1-6.

55. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marwan-al-Shehhi>(accessed June 2, 2006), pp.1-4

56. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hani-Hanjour>(accessed June 2, 2006), pp.1-5.

57. <http://www.pcpsr.org/survey/polls/2001/p3a.html>(accessed June 10, 2006), pp.1-6)

58. *Ibid.*, p.2.

59. Alan Krueger and Jitka Malekova, "Seeking the Roots of Terrorism," *The Chronicle Review*, June 6, 2003, <http://chronicle.com/free/v49/i39/39b01001.htm> (accessed June 10, 2006), pp.1-7.

60. For full analysis of Hizbullah's organizational Structure see Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004), Chapter 4.

61. Krueger and Malekova, "Seeking the Roots of Terrorism," p. 4.

62. *Ibid.*,

college as compared with the 6% that's usual to third world countries. While the data show that most terrorists come from natural sciences background, still some do come from a humanities background.⁶³ Surprisingly, the same study adds that only 15% were *madrassa* trained, (schools headed by religious sheikhs).

Similarly, Peter Bergen's study of 79 Islamist terrorists who had carried out five major anti-western attacks- the World Trade Center Bombing in 1993, the Africa embassy bombings in 1998, the September 11 attacks, the Bali nightclub bombing in 2002, and the London bombings on July 7, 2005- reveals that only in rare cases are madrasa graduates involved. Bergen's sample shows that only 11% of the terrorists had attended a madrasa. Yet , more than half of the group he assessed attended a university, making them as well educated as the average American: where as 54% of the terrorists were found to have had some college education or to have graduated from, only 52 % of the of the Americans can claim similar academic credentials. Significantly, Bergen found, of those who did attend college and/or graduate school, 48% attended schools in the West, and 58% attained scientific or technical degrees, in particular engineering and medicine.⁶⁴ Although the data shows that majority of terrorists came for sciences, this does not prevent the fact that the 48% who studied in Western schools were exposed to liberal education or taken at least one to two humanities courses as a requirement of most general education curricula in Western schools. It is not surprising that the majority of terrorists come from sciences background because technological skills are required to execute terrorists attacks. Such skills simply are learnt in technical not in humanities courses or the religious madrasa.

The French writer on Islamists, Gilles Kepel, has arrived at a similar conclusion. The new breed of global Jihadis, he writes are not the urban poor-as Tony Blair claimed-so much as "the privileged children of an unlikely marriage between Wahhabism and Silicon Valley."⁶⁵

On the other side of the conflict, the picture is not too different. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, numerous violent attacks against Palestinians were conducted by Israel Jews in the West Bank and Gaza, led mostly by Gush Emunim (Group of the Faithful). Those attacks included attempts to kill three Palestinian mayors of the West Bank cities, and to blow up the Dome of the Rock, the third holiest shrine in Islam.. Between 1980 and 1984, 23 Palestinians were killed by the Jewish underground, and close to two hundred were injured. Looking at the backgrounds of the perpetrators of those violent attacks, it is clear that the extremists were overwhelmingly well educated but with liberal education as well. The list included teachers, writers, university students, geographers and scientists.⁶⁶

It is true that the data on liberal education and terrorism, is indirect and suggestive not definitive, which accordingly prevents me from drawing strong generalizations. By and large, however, the majority of terrorists are educated and many of them are with university degrees from Western schools or universities, and whose curricula focus on liberal education whether in form or content. In fact, the data provides no support to the view that those in low level of education as well as those who are not exposed to liberal education are disproportionately drawn from to participate in terrorist acts.

The Road to Enlightenment

Even if one supposed that a broad humanities educational background might actually eliminate terrorism in the long run, liberal education alone would not be enough. For liberal education to produce effective results in combating terrorism and help pave the way for the emergence of liberal Islamic society, two major changes are required. First, liberal education should be spread on all learning levels, not just confined to a small number of private schools and universities in the Arab-Muslim countries. Second, Western liberalism is alien to Islam and change that needs to be made must come from within Islam itself.

63. Jason Soon, "Terrorist Profiles," <http://badanalysis.com/catalaxy/?p=401> (accessed June 10, 2006), pp. 1-5.

64. Peter Bergen, "The Madrassa Scapegoat," *The Washington Quarterly*, March 2006, <http://www.newamerica.net/index.cfm?article&DocID=2904> (accessed June 10, 2006), pp1-5.

65. Cited in Dalrymple, "A largely Bourgeois Endeavor," p.2.

66. Kruger and Malekova, "Seeking Roots of Terrorism," p. 5.

According to the Arab Human Development Report of 2003, Arab countries, during the last several decades, have embarked on educational programs that concentrate on revisions and modifications of the content of curricula and syllabi.⁶⁷ The report stresses that when it comes to the sciences; content is not usually a disputable issue, with the exception to some themes that touch on religious convictions such as Darwin's theory of evolution or social taboos such as sex education. But it is the humanities and social sciences that have a direct relationship to people and are supervised or monitored by both governmental and religious authorities in charge of designing curricula and issuing school books. As such non-science school subjects laud past achievements and immerse in both self-praise and blame of others, with the aim of instilling loyalty, obedience, and support for the regime in power or the religious authority supporting it. It is not surprising to find school books in many Arab and Islamic countries with a picture of the ruler, civilian or religious, on the front page or on related print course material.

The curricula taught in Arab and Islamic countries, some researchers argue, seem to encourage submission, obedience, compliance, and subordination rather than free critical thinking. In many instances, the contents of these curricula do not simulate the students to question or criticize political and social norms and axioms. Instead, "they smother their independent tendencies and creativity," as argued by the report.⁶⁸

Although few Western private schools and universities have existed in the Arab world, in particular those in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt (most were established by American or French religious mission), their liberal style education is confined only to a small segment of students who can afford high tuition costs. Noteworthy in this context is a trend that emerged in most Arab countries, in particular Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, is the establishment of private bi-lingual schools, which thrive on following Western-style liberal education. The

highest number of these schools are found in Lebanon (600), followed by Egypt (increased in recent years from 195 to 575).⁶⁹ The relatively high tuition fees of these private schools forced many people to turn to state schools wherever they exist. However, according to CRS Report for Congress, the rising costs and shortage of public educational institutions, in more impoverished nations, have forced parents to send their children to Islamic religious schools.⁷⁰ Although some religious schools teach secular subjects, in general religious schools offer a religious based curriculum or a set of core religious subjects, focusing on the Qura'n and Islamic texts.

The religious schools in most Arab and Muslim countries today, exist as part of educational infrastructure. Beyond instruction in basic religious pillars, they promote a militant form of Islam. They teach their Muslim students to fight the unbelievers and stand against what they see as the moral decadence of the West.⁷¹ Even in state or moderate schools, students are often instructed to reject the "immoral" and "materialistic" Western culture. Although schools in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, for example, teach subjects beyond religious studies, conservative Islamic teachings permeate the educational structural systems of these countries. Following the events of September 11, experts have maintained that the school curricula of these countries, foster anti-Western and anti-Semitic sentiments.⁷² A recent study by USAID denotes the links between "madrasas" and militant Islamic groups as "rare but worrisome," but also add that "access to quality education alone cannot dissuade all vulnerable youth from joining terrorist groups."⁷³

On the higher educational level the picture is no different from lower educational levels. With the exception to the few foreign universities, which provide broad educational background in humanities and social sciences, the absolute majority of Arab and Islamic Universities are either controlled by governments as in Syria, Libya, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, UAE or by religious groups backed by the government as in the case of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran and other

67. The Arab Human Development Report 2003 (United Nations Development Program, Regional Bureau for Arab States, New York, 2003), p.53.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid, p. 54

70. Christopher M. Blanchard, "Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas," CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Library Service, The Library Congress, February 10, 2005, pp.2-3.

71. Hussein Naquin, "Islam's Medieval Outpost," Foreign Policy, no. 133, Nov/Dec. 2002.

72. Michaela Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: The Politics of Education," International Affairs 79, no. 1 (London, 2003), pp.77-90.

73. Strengthening Education in the Muslim World, USAID Issue Paper NO.2, June 2003, pp.12-13.

Muslim countries in Southeast Asia. One main feature of many Universities in these countries is lack of autonomy and liberal education curricula. According to the Arab Human Development Report, "these contextual features have adverse effects on the degree of freedom allowed for education and research."⁷⁴ Under such circumstances, the chances of creating a free tolerant society are far from being reached sometime soon. Combating terrorism requires diffusion of liberal education, which is a responsibility of the government and civil society.

Another important change that needs to be made to eliminate terrorism must come from within Islam itself. In Christianity, Luther's reformation and other events forced Christianity to modernize itself. They incorporated more enlightened ideas, and evolved into a more tolerant and compassionate religion. Judaism did something similar. According to Joel Kleinberg, "Judaism's reform, conservative, and later Reconstructionist movements had similar effects, bringing in ideas of universalism, egalitarianism and equality."⁷⁵ No such movement has yet taken hold of any large number of Muslims. Why has Islamic reformation or "Islamic Protestantism" not developed thus far? For centuries, militant Islamic clerics and movements have used threats, intimidation, and outright murder to resist such reformation. Islamic graveyards are full of unsuccessful attempts of reformers, since the death of Prophet Muhammad. Attempts to reform Islam by bringing about enlightened ideas and reconciling faith and reason have been made from the *Mu'tazila*, a 5th century Islamic school that places reason before faith for human development, to Egyptian Shaykh Muhammad 'Abdu's concept of "Western learning", to Iranian 'Ali Shari'ati concept of "Islamic humanism" to the concept of "Islamic Protestantism" of Iranian reformist Dr. Hashem Aghajari.⁷⁶ Interestingly, Aghajari defines Islamic Protestantism as "logical, practical and humanist... a religion that respects the rights for all- a progressive religion, rather than a traditional religion that tramples the people."⁷⁷ Whether one agrees or disagrees with Aghajari's concept of Islamic Protestantism, the fact remains that in Islam, humanism is God's creation and that people are equal regardless to race, religion or nationality. One might even add that, the 'doctrine of justification by faith,' which Martin Luther upheld against the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, is equally rooted in Islam. Although the

Shi'a recognize a spiritual leader for ritual affairs, reality shows that such spiritual leadership is not singular but plural due to the presence of least five to six spiritual leaders (Sustani, Fadlallah, Khemenei, Shirazi, and Hakim). Such plurality decentralizes rather than centralizes Shi'a religious authority in one hand. As a whole, Islam has no Pope nor indeed requires mediators between God and the people. The claimant to Islamic papacy in modern times is when militant Islamic clerics and leaders hijacked Islam claiming that they are the only qualified interpreters of the Quran and the Hadith. Thus by having monopoly over understanding Islam, they replace the words of God by their own words. Accordingly, the militant ideologies holding modern Muslim societies at ransom have created a culture of ignorance and intolerance that not only denies inalienable rights to non-Muslims but strive for a war with other civilizations.

The road to enlightenment or Islamic reformation doesn't necessarily lie in a full adoption of Western liberal ideology or in changing the words of the Qur'an, but in the appearance of enlightened Mujtahids (qualified interpreters of Islamic law) who would be able to exercise *Ijtihad* (interpretation in Islamic law) by issuing fatwas (juridical opinions) that view Islam in a different more liberal way, perhaps they would declare terrorism as a crime against humanity. Enlightened Mujtahids should not only re-examine the Islamic curricula but work hard on removing all seeds of hatred, repulsion, and fanaticism towards the other and towards those whose religion and culture are different than theirs? An Islamic reformation, along with liberal religious curricula, should play a tolerant role as tolerance is a supreme value in the original scripture of Islam, which has been imprisoned by militant Islam. Many Qura'nic verses clearly emphasize freedom of belief and those should be big canons of liberal Islamic jurisprudence or the interpreters of the law who can link Islam to Western liberal experience. For Islamic reformation to take hold, enlightened Muslim clerics and scholars must be encouraged and supported by Muslims and non-Muslims. Only then can all Muslims understand fully that Islam is a religion of peace and that terrorism has no place in Islamic societies.

74 Arab Human Development Report 2003, p. 56.

75. Kleinberg, "Judaism and Islam: Terrorism as Seen through the lenses of the two Semitic Religions," p.7.

76. Eyelet Savyon, "The Call for Islamic Protestantism: Dr. Hashem Aghajari's Speech and Subsequent Death Sentence," <http://memri.org/bin/opener.cgi?Page=archives&ID=SP44502> (accessed April 25, 2006), pp. 1-7.

77. *Ibid*, p.5.

NAGUIB MAHFOUZ: A LIBERAL ARTS APPROACH TO MORALITY ISSUES IN LITERATURE

Pamela Allegretto-Diulio

One might ask “What does Naguib Mahfouz, the 1988 Egyptian Nobel Prize winner in literature have to do with the role of Liberal Arts?” Well, let’s assume that “Liberal Arts” implies what Dr. Ernest Nolan of Madonna University claims is “a program of study designed to foster capacities of analysis, critical reflection, problem solving, communication, computation and synthesis of knowledge from different disciplines. Its goal is to provide students with an intellectual, historical, and social context for recognizing the continuity between the past and future and for drawing on the human capacity of reason to understand human experience, to question the dimension of human enterprise, and to articulate the results of this process of thinking” (1). With this in mind and with the understanding that comparative literature plays a vital role in one’s ability to discern a vital link between past cultural, traditional, political, religious, and social milieu of a group to its contemporary and progressive counterpart, then certainly Naguib Mahfouz has earned the right to be a participant in the Liberal Arts tradition.

In this tradition of liberal arts, let us, like Mahfouz, lean on the side of radicalism, a term that often evokes resistance and a call for reform. Whether we consider the role of literature in Liberal Arts or ask if there is a connection to the discipline of business, the goal is still the same: Providing students with the challenge of research and investigation; inspiring them to question, to debate, to argue – even on issues dealing with morality. Additionally, we must stop considering each course as an individual entity, but to consider the Liberal Arts curriculum as one that integrates many

opportunities, including literature, to bridge the gap in how people critically respond to life-long questions, beliefs, problems, and to prepare them for roles in the business world. When people react to literature, whether fiction or otherwise, they begin to understand more about regional norms and how culture and religion often have blurred boundaries as is evident in the novels of Naguib Mahfouz.

Reading and studying the works of Naguib Mahouz, like other important writers of culture, will benefit almost any discipline. In the article titled “The Radicalism of the Liberal Arts Tradition,” Jackson Lears ponders that “if the liberal arts tradition is understood as a worldview, rather than a collection of courses, it poses a radical challenge to the managerial impulse – far more radical than self-proclaimed traditionalists” (1). Lears further asserts that “if we want to sustain and revitalize our concept of ‘what the university is for,’ we need to recognize the radicalism of the liberal arts tradition” (1). Therefore, I would like to consider the role that literature contributes to this tradition. For the purposes of this paper then, I will discuss the moral complexity of Mahfouz’s characters as they levitate on the surface of radicalism, which contributes to the ambiguity between a Western and Islamic Feminist understanding.

Morality is a term that is defined by culture and generation. As far back as the medieval romances, “morality” was part of the chivalric code of conduct. But what about morality in the 20th century? How do we attach a universal definition to “morality” when the codes of conduct are so different from one continent

to another, from one time to another? No matter how we try to define it, "morality" is a subjective term that is laced with the religious, social, and political structures of a culture. Adding to this complication, oftentimes "morality" is redefined within a culture as a result of the changing demographics and philosophies, causing a conflict within the boundaries itself. Finally, it goes without saying that when we think of a culture's code of morality, gender relationships automatically figure prominently.

It is precisely these discussions on topics such as morality that highlight the value of literature in the Liberal Arts tradition. Readers of world literature are empowered with critical analysis of themes that deal with humanity and the values of a culture. It is for this reason that Naguib Mahfouz is so well respected as an Egyptian author. His novels and short stories reveal the narratives of people from central Cairo who live broken lives only to seek escape from poverty, corruption, and great injustices in the rise of nationalism during the British occupation. In his monumental work, *The Cairo Trilogy*, written between 1946 and 1952, Mahfouz traces the radical changes undergone by three generations of a Cairene merchant family, dominated by the towering figure of its tyrannical patriarch, Ahmad Abd al-Jawad Al-Sayyed. Politically, it resurrects Cairo between 1917 and 1944, a crucial period in the history of Egypt which witnessed the rise of Egyptian and Arab nationalism under the leadership of Sa'd Zaghloul. It was a period in the transformation of a society passing brutally from a phase of relative innocence to disconcerting modernism with all its challenges and threats. Here, Mahfouz portrays the private agonies and pleasures of individual characters, paralleling the sociopolitical panorama of Egypt under British occupation. Rashed El-Enany points out that "[this] novel is invaluable for its perspective on the agony of the author's generation oscillating between the medieval religious values of their society and those of the modern, scientific and godless world they have come to know about through their contact with European thought" (212). As a result, Mahfouz's radical approach is to present the reality of the deplorable conditions in need of reform including the nation's approach to gender issues that posit

the female as a subservient being. Mahfouz illustrates these conditions in two of his famous works: *The Cairo Trilogy* and *Midaq Alley*.

In *The Cairo Trilogy*, the reader is emotionally trapped in the social realities and injustices that depict Cairo. Central to these realities are the double standards by which Al-Sayyed lives. For instance, the narrator provides a description of Al-Sayyed's lusty nature as he sits in Zubayda's flat, intoxicated with her fragrance, getting ready for an amorous night. He certainly loves women and friends; he also delights in music, singing, and dancing. This man, however, does not allow himself any expression of emotion at home apart from being stern, strict, and even cruel. This tyrannical patriarch is definitely the ruler of his home while living a secret life of self-indulgence. As is often customary to a man of such authority, Al-Sayyed's despicable morals are highlighted by the gentleness and purity of his wife, Amina. Mahfouz shows this disparity in their character and personalities throughout the family saga. For example, in the beginning of the trilogy, as a newly married woman, Amina objects to her husband's night-time escapades. Since a male was considered the dominant being in Egyptian households, Al-Sayyed would not tolerate any objection from his subservient wife. He raises his voice and shouts:

I'm a man. I'm the one who commands and forbids. I will not accept any criticism of my behavior. All I ask of you is to obey me. Don't force me to discipline you...You're just a woman, and no woman has a fully developed mind. (8)

Western ideals of equality immediately question the position of morality as it applies to gender relationships in Egyptian society during this time. These commands of Al-Sayyed set the tone for patriarchal dominion that was to instill fear in all of his family members, but oddly, he still remained the center of respect as that authority and caretaker of the family. Elizabeth Fernea, in her book titled *Women and Gender in Islam* shows Zaynab Ghazali in a 1981 interview as saying "a woman's first, holy and most important mission is to be a mother and wife" (241), a belief which may contribute to the reason why Amina

continued to accept her husband's commands without question. It is especially disturbing to a Western reader to know that Amina, completely isolated from society, has not been permitted to leave her home for over twenty-five years except on rare occasions when her husband accompanied her to her mother's home. One must ask "Is this a moral decision on the part of Al-Sayyed - to keep his wife isolated from men like himself? Or is it simply, brutality? To answer this question we must consider the cultural context in which Al-Sayyed exerts his authority. From a Western perspective, one is appalled that any human being would have authority over another, even in the case of a husband and wife; however, in Islamic tradition, there are also a variety of beliefs which contribute to the confusion. It is the disparity in the interpretation of Islam that contributes to this perplexity. The "conception of women's rights differ" according to interpretation, says Rebecca Foley in "Muslim Women's Challenges to Islamic Law" (59). She adds the following explanation:

Some women demand that they be provided with the rights due to them as mothers and wives, thus maintaining cultural legitimacy within the dominant Islamic discourse. Others demand a complete reinterpretation of Islam, based on gender equality. (59)

When the topic of "morality" presents itself in Western discussions, an interpretation and acceptance of certain behaviors is quite lenient as compared to what is acceptable in the Middle East under Islamic tradition. An example is in the dating culture. In the West, dating begins at a very young age and most socially well-adjusted youngsters have dated all through high school. However, Leila Ahmad tells us directly that "dating is not a moral issue in Islam. Men and women simply do not date openly. As for sexual encounters, premarital sex is a punishable crime and adultery is a capital offense." An unmarried female and male together in public is scorned and the morals of the female can be ruined for the rest of her life. More specifically, Egyptian males tend to be chauvinistic in a society which acknowledges and rewards male domination. That type of patriarchal system requires the support and loyalty of all members of the family in return

for security and protection. Without a credible social welfare system, supporting the family always comes first in Egypt. Therefore, morality issues are quite diverse from the western culture that has gradually moved to the "ME" generation of self-satisfaction and gratification.

While female voices began to raise humanitarian efforts in the male-oriented Egyptian culture, an "alternative voice to Western feminism was brewing," claims Leila Ahmad, "and it was wary, eventually opposing Western ideas, and searched a way to articulate female subjectivity and affirmation within a native, vernacular, Islamic discourse - typically in terms of a general social, cultural, and religious renovation" (174-75). The renovation was understood to be regenerative for the entire society, not just for women, hence the rights of women were not the sole nor even any longer the primary object of reform, but one among several. Part of the moral complexity develops out of imported Western doctrines like "socialism and communism," whereas Matti Moosa asserts that "Mahfouz desired an egalitarian system which would benefit the majority while not offending Muslim believers, something between capitalism and communism" (1). The discussion of morality continues in both Western and Eastern cultures and these discussions that originate often in the study of literature, provoke critical analysis. However, the modern call for reform is not new. The Egyptian Qasim Amin, advocated more than 100 years ago "that wom[e]n [are] the key to the progress or backwardness of a nation, and that change and evolution are part of the natural order that Muslims resist at their own peril" (Hoffman-Ladd 25).

In another of Mahfouz's famous novels, *Midaq Alley*, published in 1947, we witness his contempt for society's inability to reform the negative cultural influences that are often blamed on Islam. Here he presents the composite of the irrational female, who, merely reacting to stimuli and forces in her environment, does not empower her society to grow and improve; rather, this female contributes to and perpetuates the disease of this alley as a result of her oppression (32). For instance, the sexual prowess of the character, Hamida, is evoked through Mahfouz's description of the alley in "that hour of murky shadows" when women of the night set out in anticipation of their conquest (39).

Just as one expects of a harlot, Hamida, in one scene, is “wrapping her cloak around her ... walk[ing] slowly, conscious of both her gait and her appearance,” since she realizes she is the object of the gaze of two men. Although she is aware of her impoverished attire, she wears her cloak to “emphasize her ample hips and her full and rounded breasts,” while highlighting her “trim ankles” that are adorned with “a bangle” (39). Surely, Hamida is the creator of her own objectification and is guaranteed the gaze as she embarks into the alley and beyond. As Mahfouz unfolds the description of Hamida, it becomes evident that her function as a female character in this Cairene neighborhood is to sacrifice the moral code and to exploit her beauty in achieving an escape from her entrapment in the hopeless metaphorical alley of despair.

It is her quest for power that drives Hamida to lust greedily for money. And it is her imaginative conquest of money that motivates her to strive for freedom and liberation from the alley that has tied her up and offers no outlet. Mahfouz paints a vignette of the early twentieth century female who is caught between Islamic tradition and the desire to step out of the repressive paradigm offered by the poverty-stricken quarter where men lived quite poorly and women lived to provide for the men's needs. Though she is expected to live a life of purity, Hamida essentially has been living a life of poverty and fifth, which is enough to decay the very spirit that should be in any Muslim – namely, one of absolute submission to Allah. In reading a novel like *Midaq Alley*, readers of the Islamic tradition are quite familiar with the motivations and thought processes of Mahfouz's characters because they represent real people in the cross section of Egyptian and Islamic society.

Another scene in Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* shows a man by the name of Salim Alwan, who becomes one of Hamida's admirers. The father of a judge, yet not so worldly, he “scarcely understood anything apart from the world of commerce, and his opinions and beliefs were hardly above those of Abbas the barber,” another of Hamida's admirers (65). Although he is “eager to preserve his honor and dignity,” Salim could not deny an all-consuming desire (69). He is able to rationalize the class difference between Hamida and himself by marveling over her “pretty face, that body of sensuality and [her] beautiful

buttocks which were able to excite even a pious old man” (69). Rationalizing how he is permitted to seek the attention of Hamida, even though married to a good woman, he seals his doubt with a question that provides him with the permission to move ahead in pursuit: “What's wrong with me? Why should I deprive myself of something made lawful by God?” This question is not unusual for a Muslim man to ask himself. Fatima Mernissi tells us in *Beyond the Veil* that Islam “views the raw instincts [of man] as energy,” and unlike “the Christian concept of the individual as . . . torn between two poles [of] good and evil, flesh and spirit,” the Muslim's concept has “no connotation of good or bad” (27). More important is the “use of the instincts themselves that is beneficial or harmful to the social order” (27). In this understanding, Muslims would automatically realize that Salim Alwan, as representative of the Islamic male, does not find it necessary “to eradicate his instincts or to control them, but he must use them according to the demands of religious law” (27). Mernissi supports Salama Musa that it never was the intention of the Prophet Muhammad to abolish desires because “a complete abolition of concupiscence in a person would make him defective and inferior” (28). His intent is to have desire used for practical purposes, allowing man to be an “active servant of God who willingly obeys the divine commands” (28). With this understanding, we can easily understand the conflict that arises in the interpretation and evaluation of morality when juxtaposing Western ideals alongside of Middle Eastern culture and Islamic beliefs.

In Islam, sexual desire is a human function of the male species, but the female is generally put in the position of passive receiver. It is interesting to note that when a male character such as Salim Alwan is presented, he is to serve as an instrument to the vile ways (according to Islamic moral codes) of a female such as Hamida. His actions are excused or acceptable, whereas Hamida becomes the subject of the neighbor's critical scrutiny because she does not abide by Islamic rules for females. The ambiguity in these rules is constantly being addressed while the conceptions of women's rights differ. Rebecca Foley accounts for this in her discussion about two strategies. The first is the “Islamic equity strategy” which “pursues a rather conservative interpretation of the *Qur'an*

and *Sunnah* (59). In this view, Foley claims that “women and men have different natures, based on innate characteristics resulting in separate roles for each gender”; therefore, “women are best suited to being mothers and wives, and men are providers” (59). Contrary to this view, Foley presents the “equality strategy” that “rejects the notion of innate characteristics for women and men, and holds that their rights must be equal” (59). Followers of this model resist the traditional roles for women as prescribed by earlier interpretations of the Qur’an.

When Mahfouz takes the reader on this journey through the Cairene neighborhoods, he focuses on an ambiguous morality of people who struggle for identity. They do so in the midst of religious idealism and cultural traditions in the brewing unrest in the struggle for power and in their personal struggles to find individual meaning to their lives. In writing his novels, Mahfouz is most interested in a truth that can speak for all of his people, men and women alike. And in an article titled “The Arab Artist’s Role in Society,” Mona Amyuni explains that Mahfouz’s morality calls for “an absolute commitment to justice and truth” with “violent attacks on hypocrisy, cruelty, [and] corruption” (205). With excellent use of irony, Mahfouz denounces tyranny at home, in political parties, in leaders, and Amyuni quotes Mahfouz in saying it is “Egypt’s chronic disease.” Mahfouz is quoted again, this time by Jareer Abu-Haider as he wonders bitterly:

How long has this country of ours resigned itself to endure successive blows? Today Tawfiq Nasim, and yesterday Ismail Sidqi, and the day before Muhammad Mahmud. This sinister chain of tyrants which extends to prehistoric times. Every son of a bitch, puffed up by his own power, claims that he is the chosen guardian and that people are minors (incapable of managing their own affairs).

Therefore, the gender relationships and how they address morality issues, provide a vital link between Mahfouz’s narrative and the cultural, socio-political and religious movements in Egypt in the first half of the twentieth century. As we view these events through the complex moral lens, interwoven with various voices in feminist theory, both Western and Islamic, it becomes obvious that Mahfouz is what Cole claims “the grand chronicler of Egyptian life” and even “a personification of Egypt itself” (1), as he

provides a complex morality emerging from one generation and being modified in part to the various idealisms affecting Egypt. On Mahfouz’s mind is the idea that “we have fashioned [our life] ourselves ... There is no credit for this to any god ... solving our social and moral problems may alleviate our alienation, but it will not solve the original tragedy of death or isolation ... We live by hope, which means by myth ... and in the final analysis if we ask Mahfouz to which religion he belongs, he will probably say: ‘To a religion whose God is reason and whose prophet is freedom.’”

In the business of higher education and in the business of literature, a radical approach is often most successful when integrated into the liberal arts tradition. After all, the business of the world depends on the acquisition of answers that provoke further questions. These questions are often approached through the critical discourse and narratives that incite reform as is witnessed in the novels of Naguib Mahfouz. He has brilliantly captured the reality of Cairo in post-revolutionary activities through its poverty, its corruption, its injustices, and its despair. As is true to the liberal arts tradition, the works of authors like Mahfouz work as a subtle cry for reform amidst a radical backdrop of multi-interpretations of Islam and of culture. So perhaps we can finally reflect on the questions that opened this discussion and consider that Mahfouz is an adequate subject for further inquiry and questioning – that this discussion provokes further analysis and critical responses, thereby qualifying as a proper topic for a Liberal Arts program that promotes the radical challenges that are sometimes painful but necessary as we accelerate from the past to the present and on to a diverse future.

The role of literature provides an adequate forum by which these discussions enable students to become better critical thinkers. Literature enables students to witness the diversity of life from multi cultures around the world, whereby they are faced with their own understanding of issues like morality within the context of other cultures. In doing so, Liberal Arts is also a vital link to the world of Business where members must use their life-long experiences, cloaked in educational expertise, to analyze, to synthesize, to apply, and to evaluate complex problems that emerge as they become global citizens of the world.

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EPISTEMIC AND METAPHYSICAL BASES OF TODAY'S LIBERAL ARTS PEDAGOGY

Ann Scholl

Most educators today are familiar with Dewey's progressive theory of education, if not by name, by the project-oriented pedagogy that his theory inspires. Even so, what is labeled as progressive education today actually draws from existentialist, socialist and postmodern theories as well as progressive theories. Many have misconceptions about what progressive education involves. This leads to misapplication of progressive teaching methods in the classroom. Moreover, progressive theories of education imply that implementation of the theories involves a restructuring of the traditional university as a whole, rather than simply reconfiguring classroom assignments. This essay will explain the epistemic and metaphysical bases of today's progressive theories and how such theories might be applied in today's universities.

Metaphysics

Dewey's metaphysics does not accept the usual subject/object distinction, nor the analytical concept that knowledge concerns *knowing* a set of logically deducible or empirically verifiable conclusions. Following instead the Hegelian idealist and the empiricist tradition, Dewey holds that what we know is, in part, determined by our observations or experiences.⁷⁸ Taking seriously Locke's definition of a mind as an "experiencing subject of life," Dewey holds that the real object of our knowledge is our experiences, which include our observations of the world around us, our judgments about that world and the objects

that we observe.⁷⁹ We also carry "experiential baggage" with us from one experience to the next. What we observe and how we observe it is partially determined by prior experiences and judgments of those experiences.

Traditional scientific knowledge and empirical inquiry presumes that the observer/cognizer is an **objective** observer, observing the world from a distance, as a fan might watch a football game. What one knows is a separate and distant object or state of affairs. Dewey's metaphysics presumes that this objective observer position is not possible. According to Dewey, we observe and render judgements about the world, not as distant observers in the bleachers, but as participants in the world: we are players in the game of experiencing the world, not distant observers of our own experiences. By conducting intellectual inquiry and making warranted assertions about our world, we interact with the world and thus alter our experiences in the world.

Epistemology

In all the variations of analytic epistemology, including such theories as coherentism, constructivism, foundationalism and epiphenomenalism, most analytic epistemologists presume that the sort of knowledge one should gain from an education is a set of propositions that meet, at minimum, two or three basic criteria. Classical epistemology, for example, holds that knowledge is true belief, (Plato), or justified true belief (Aristotle and

78. John Dewey. *The Present Position of Logical Theory* (1894) and "Thought and its Subject-Matter," *Studies in Logical Theory*. University of Chicago. 1903

79. John Locke. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. See Chapter XXVII. 9-10.

following). Most contemporary theories usually add another criterion to counter the Gettier problem raised by Edmund Gettier III.⁸⁰ To gloss over diverse ideas here, most epistemologists hold that knowledge is a belief justified in a proper way, accurately describes the actual state of affairs, plus some other factor--such as an appropriate causal connection between the belief and relevant states of affairs--to defeat Gettier's difficulty.

In terms of traditional education, then, knowledge is gained when a student demonstrates that he has a sufficiently full set of true justified beliefs. Any performance knowledge gained should be used to acquire or demonstrate sufficient propositional knowledge. For instance, if a student is sufficient in mathematical knowledge, this is because the student can justify the true mathematical beliefs that she gained. Usually, this takes the form of students' learning a formula or formulistic ways to derive mathematical conclusions. A student learns the "proper" ways of doing addition, subtraction, geometry and so on. That is, a student learns an accepted *method* for deriving mathematical conclusions. The teacher provides mathematical methods to the students. In the humanities, we ask our students to write papers that demonstrate a justified conclusion about history, philosophy or a work of fiction. We demand theses, argumentation and conclusions, properly formatted and linearly argued. We evaluate, sometimes, in formulistic ways for failing to follow the appropriate rules of forms or justification. We provide students with rules and guidelines for success: do things this way and you will succeed. We might inform students that each must derive original conclusions, but we provide the mechanisms and formulas for so doing. This is, in Dewey's mind, a self-contradictory activity which says: be creative but let me tell you exactly how to do that.

Dewey sets aside these presumptions of analytic epistemologists and suggests that knowledge is instead a body of information and method of

analysis that one applies to *intellectual inquiry*.⁸¹ The emphasis here is on method of intellectual inquiry. The aim of human intellectual inquiry is to adequately explain the experiences that one has. Rather than drawing conclusions that are subject to "the criteria of knowledge," Dewey called the outcomes of inquiry "warranted assertions." Warranted assertions are acceptable explanations of the cognizer's experiences. That is, assertions are warranted by the intellectual inquiry used to develop them when they adequately explain the cognizer's experiences.⁸² These warranted assertions will then be revised or discarded as new experiences--and the explanations thereof--warrant. Knowledge, then, is not a static set of true, justified beliefs.

Initially, this is not greatly distinct from the traditional analytic definition because the analytic definition suggests that one still must use prior knowledge and intellectual skills, in some fashion, to justify a belief. However, unlike the analytics, Dewey does not view the justification methods used as a basis or skill for knowledge, instead suggesting that the methods used to derive explanations are themselves part of the knowledge; indeed, the core of knowledge. Knowledge in the progressive theory is the ability to explain well one's experiences, which is to intelligently inquire about and explain one's experiences.

The Progressive Classroom

Many of you have seen the film, *Dead Poets' Society*. This film highlights the conflict between traditional and progressive education in the 1950s & 60s, even portraying the perceived "danger" of progressive education. In the film, Robin Williams's character asks students to tear the introduction from their poetry textbooks. The crime of the text's introduction was that it provided a formulaic way to evaluate and critique poetry. Indeed, this is exactly what progressives hate. By providing students with a formula, a way to draw conclusions--or warranted assertions--a professor actually strips from students the

80 Edmund L. Gettier. Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? *Analysis* 23 (1963): 121-123. In this article, Gettier poses two case examples purportedly demonstrating that knowledge is not true justified belief. This simple four page article set the stage for the next 30 years of analytic epistemology, motivating the creation of new theories of the criteria for knowledge, such as Goldman's so-called Causal Theory.

81 John Dewey. "Some Stages of Logical Thought" Chapter 6 in *Essays in Experimental Logic*. Chicago: University of Chicago (1916): 183-219.

82 John Dewey. *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*. Univ. of Calif. Press. 1931

ability to gain knowledge. Students must create their own methods for evaluating their aesthetic (and other) experiences. Also absent from the *Dead Poets'* classroom was a syllabus which defined, formulaically, the path to success (or the demonstration of knowledge) in the class.

In a progressive classroom, the professor may still use many of the traditional methods: lectures, textbooks, videos, slides, etc. However, what differs is how the students interact with these methods. Most courses are surrounded by propositional acquisition: we want to know that certain propositions have been memorized and understood. "The speed of gravity is..." "Plato believed that..." In addition, professors, even when accepting the progressive theory, still often provide formulaic ways of succeeding in the class, acquiring knowledge or demonstrating knowledge.

Many have used the slogan, "hands on" to describe progressive teaching methods, meaning that students directly interact with the objects of their inquiry, whether it be a book, a scientific study or historical study. The professor and the teaching materials used do not mediate the students' interaction with their intellectual projects. True knowledge is the method(s) the student derives to engage in intellectual inquiry. The mistake often made by those promoting the progressive method is to suggest that all projects must be scientific or observations of the world --one can experience a book or an idea (indeed this is the very core of the rationalist v. empiricist debate.)

For instance, consider a 2nd grade class, in which students learn division, addition and subtraction. The students are not given a formula, or method for say, dividing 124 by 6. Students work in groups to create their own methods for division. Similarly, when assigning a paper in university, a professor does not provide specific guidelines for success: "Use Times New Roman, 12 pt" or suggest that a student must have a certain number or types of sources. The knowledge university wishes produce, in a Deweyian sense, is the

knowledge of engaging in a project of inquiry, and developing adequate methods for deriving warranted assertions about experiences--all of which the student must create individually or in groups. As Dewey states,

During the stage of precision, romance is the background. The Stage is dominated by the inescapable fact that there are right ways and wrong ways, and definite truths to be known. But romance is not dead, and it is the art of teaching to foster it amidst definite application to appointed task...I do not believe that there is any abstract formula which will give information applicable to all subjects, to all types of pupils, or to each individual pupil.⁸³

In short, in the Progressive classroom, the professor is a facilitator of inquiry, not the conduit of propositional knowledge. The professor is not the center of a classroom nor is the professor the academic or disciplinary authority in the classroom. The professor aids by asking questions, making suggestions, but determines neither the methods for success, the content, nor the projects inquiry themselves. The more a professor provides a formula for success or a method for conducting inquiry, the more a professor interferes with learning.

The Progressive University

So, how would the truly progressive university differ from the traditional university? In some ways, the progressive university would not differ from the traditional university. The university would have classrooms, library, labs, professors, textbooks; students would write examinations, papers and laboratory reports; professors would lecture and grade aforementioned exams, papers and reports. While a few evaluation methods, namely, the multiple-choice exam would be absent, Dewey's method does not discourage the essay exam or other "traditional" methods of evaluation. This is because these evaluation methods can be used as projects or methods of learning, if properly formulated. A student answering a question, "Evaluate Plato's ideas of

83 John Dewey. *The Aims of Education*. In *Classic and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*. Steven Cahn, ed. McGraw-Hill. New York. 1997

political power,” engages in intellectual inquiry. A student answering the question, “Explain Plato’s theory of power and three objections, as discussed in class or the text,” does not.

However, the progressive professor is not the center of the classroom, nor is a set syllabus the sacred text of the classroom. A progressive classroom does not have a syllabus as we know it today. Students define the projects in class, whether those projects are examinations, papers, presentations or reports. The second difference is how the standard teaching methods are used. Lectures or discussions become oriented towards students’ projects, rather than the passive acquisition of material. Textbooks are not mediated by the professors and textbooks would either be original sources or anthologies, not summaries or easily read descriptions of original material. For example, in philosophy, one does not read a textbook summary of Plato’s works that outlines Plato’s theory and the standard criticisms of Platonic ideas. Students read Plato’s works and derive their own interpretations and evaluations. More importantly, students develop their own methods for analyzing Plato’s works. The professor is a facilitator in terms of methodology, not a methodological tyrant.

The most significant difference is the amount of direction given to students. Traditional educational theory proposes that good teaching entails providing very clear and specific guidelines for success, methods of proceeding in projects. The good professor provides clear learning goals and objectives, with unambiguous methods for achieving those goals. Progressive educational theory suggests that this actually interferes with *real* learning. The more a student is told how to proceed, the less the student actually learns: the less the student creates a method for engaging in intellectual inquiry.

All of this entails that the university differs in more significant ways: for example, a geology course is conducted outdoors, with students asking questions, examining the world around them and relevant texts. The students inform the professor about their studies, rather than the professor reciting their studies. This expands the traditional classroom beyond not only a campus, but the world beyond the campus. Moreover, this also requires more time and more

student involvement in their studies. Time is spent determining the syllabus, the types of projects and evaluation methods used. This also demands students have a serious care about their education. Progressive education involves, most of all, more individualized attention in nontraditional ways on the part of the professor. This of course, entails that semester and class scheduling as we know it, must change. This also entails that universities must reconstruct programs, workloads and evaluation of student work.

Lastly and most significantly, progressive education deconstructs the common formulas we use to judge teaching success. An instructor is not evaluated on the tidy lectures, the well-organized, well-adhered to syllabus--let alone the rubrics created for categorical and easily explicable grading. Most of our teaching evaluation methods presume that professors are the center of the classroom.

I will leave us with two questions:

- **The progressive theory – is it preferable?**
- **If so, is it practical to implement?**

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS: A BOTTOM LINE MEETS A LIBERAL ART

Abigail Gray

“Higher education is changing profoundly, retreating from the ideals of liberal arts and the leading-edge research it has always cherished. Instead, it is behaving more like the \$250 billion business it has become.”—Business Week, December 22, 1997.

Introduction

Is a liberal arts education crucial to a healthy national economy? Does the market demand a well-rounded graduate with a broad education? Or does specialized training better meet the pressing economic needs of the marketplace? While teachers recognize the value of a liberal arts education, does anyone else? In a recent US national survey, eighty percent of freshmen college students surveyed indicated that their primary reason for going to college was to get a high paying job. In an age of increasingly career-minded students, can small private educational institutions meet the demands of the marketplace as well as generate the revenue required to maintain their commitment to the liberal arts experience? Or will the marketplace favor purchasing a portion of the liberal arts experience for half the price at a large, public research university? In this paper, the author explores these and other questions in an effort to get to “the bottom line on liberal arts,” with specific focus on the historic links between practical and liberal educational goals in American academe, the liberal arts graduate in business today, and business communication as a key competency in a liberal arts education.

The Historic Links between Practical and Liberal Educational Goals in American Academe

In the last four decades, the increasing costs of bloated university administrations have given way to downsizing, cost cutting, and outsourcing procedures. Classroom instruction has taken a backseat to specialized centers and special interest programs. Disinvestment in higher education has gutted good programs and raised tuition rates, while decreasing faculty salaries. Hordes of out-sourced part-timers who work for a far cheaper per course rate and literally no benefits teach a curriculum that does little to prepare students for the increasingly complicated, global, sophisticated, and competitive society that they face. Although grammar, traditional composition skills, oral presentation skills, critical thinking and reasoning, and analysis of ideas in history, literature, music, and the arts are central to a liberal arts education, many parents still “wince” when they hear their sons and daughters declaring a major in the liberal arts. Parents want their investment to pay off, and their children to be prepared for the demands of a knowledge-based economy. In a system whose roots seem narrowly utilitarian and market-oriented (e.g., land grant colleges, extension services, etc.), “corporatization” of academic programs to business interests is no stretch. Or is it? An examination of the historic links between practical and liberal educational goals in light of contemporary demands for liberal arts graduates and their business communication skills and abilities in no “stretch;” in fact, it is a historic inevitability.

In a recent (2005) article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Eric Hoover postulates the question, “*Can Small Colleges Survive?*” Hoover envisions the year 2015 as a time when families, politicians, and business leaders will have finally come to realize that a liberal arts education is crucial to the needs of the national economy (para 3). The idea is championed throughout the halls of academe today. Hoover cites Jess Lord, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at Haverford College, who recently said that “Nationally and collectively, we need to get out of our ivory towers and start discussing the larger social agenda...A liberal arts education is not a luxury...It’s like preventative medicine” (para 4). He cites Morton Schapiro, President of Williams College, who recognized the strong market demand for a well-rounded graduate when he said, “More people will figure out that, as opposed to more narrow technical training, a liberal arts education and the broad knowledge we sell is great job training” (para 8).

Why, then, does the academy’s reflection often appear distorted by academic sprawl, one person departments, bloated administrations, outdated technology, inadequate facilities, disassociated or disenfranchised faculty, and a system that not only fails to meet the needs of its faculty, staff, and students—but fails to meet the needs of the marketplace?

And if we are to approach this transaction as a business transaction, then what of the product these processes produce? Would you purchase it? In a recent (2005) article in *National Review*, author Victor Hanson laments, “The quality of education—as measured by either test scores or the ability of students to meet traditional course requirements—has declined over the last four decades” (p. 46). Hanson continues, indicating that politically motivated courses preclude a curriculum “that emphasizes grammar, traditional composition skills, oral presentation skills...the defense of one’s ideas during rigorous questioning...and attention to history, literature, music, and art” (p. 48). As Hanson explains “The modern public university teaches the student that his verbal and analytical shortcomings have little to do with his lack of discipline, effort, or talent, but instead arise from a variety of social and state pathologies—ranging from poverty and

racism to gender bias and public neglect” (p. 48). Well-meaning educators often feed the student-as-victim metaphor by embracing a “therapeutic rather than realistic” approach, and, as Hanson concludes:

“They give students perennial crutches, teach them to believe that others are responsible for their shortcomings, and persuade them that skills can somehow be obtained in ways less painful than the old academic notion of reading great literature, mastering English composition and basic math, and learning correct grammar.” (p. 48)

Many of these same faculty members argue that students should not be treated as customers or clients. But they are. They are our customers, they are our clients, and we are in the business of connecting these students to the power of ideas. John Flower, in a 2003 *Chronicle of Higher Education* article said:

“The millions of first generation undergraduates now in mass-market institutions ...have had little or no exposure to the power of thought within the liberal arts. They have no great interest in the life of the mind. The lack of experience on the part of these students in how to handle ideas—as contrasted to the immediate, hedonistic response of their senses—is both a national disgrace and a disaster.” (para 1)

Flower posits the question, “What do you think would help?” It would help, he suggests, “if humanities professors understood the motivations and ways of thinking of their students...The differences in thinking between these professors and their students inhibit the transfer of vitally important concepts and ideas” (para 5). Flower suggests that liberal arts and humanities professors get themselves “into the marketplace and onto the street in order to learn how to better communicate with their students” (para 5).

Into the marketplace. The message comes through once again: They are our customers. They are our clients. And we are in the business of connecting these students to the power of ideas. Our marketplace is the market place of ideas. It always has been. Gerald Holton (2002), in *How Instructors Can Provide a Liberal Arts Education*

in *Schools and University Classrooms*, reminds us of this when he quotes Cardinal Newman, who, in the *Idea of a University* wrote, “not to know the relative disposition of things,” to be untutored on the key issues of self governance, “is the state of slaves” (p. 53). Holton more recently added:

“And today, more than ever, not leading our young to their own freedoms by enlarging their intellectual powers condemns them to a renunciation of self-discovery, condemns them to a new slavery, makes them unable to escape a narrow life and a mindset prescribed for them by others.” (p. 53)

Thomas Jefferson knew this when he designed a curriculum for the University of Virginia, to include a list of subjects to be taught to “those who aspire to share in conducting the affairs of the nation,” those widely educated in a spirit of free inquiry; those who could then enable self government and a flourishing democracy (Holton, 2002, p. 56).

Harvard’s infamous Red Book (1945) also sought to create an informed citizenry by providing “a common learning for all Americans as a foundation for national unity,” meeting the “supreme need of an American education” namely “a unifying purpose and idea” (Holton, 2002, p. 57).

The liberal Arts is a marketplace of ideas. But it *is* a marketplace, and the informing spirit of a liberal arts education can be found in societal cornerstones, where bottom lines meet liberal arts. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, knew this. John Dickinson, who founded Dickinson College and several other colleges and universities, knew this. Both valued liberal education and commerce equally, embracing an American model of Higher Education that produced, as William Durden (2003) suggests, “citizen-leaders with the comprehensive knowledge and virtue needed to build a just, compassionate, and economically sustainable democracy” (para 4). According to Durden:

“For Rush, commerce and manufacturing were defining parts of that democracy to which liberal-arts education provided intellectual capital. For American higher education, Rush’s legacy—as well as that of several of

his contemporaries, such as his good friend Thomas Jefferson - was to offer to a scrappy nation, born directly out of a revolution, an ultimately practical vision of the liberal arts. That vision gave the new country an educational blueprint designed to prepare and commit college graduates to the useful responsibilities of building a democracy—through work in commerce and government as well as in cultural and spiritual institutions” (para 5-10).

The Liberal Arts Graduate in Business Today: Caught in the Crossfire

Why then do many colleges offering a liberal-arts education today ignore this legacy, belittling the world of business as “too crass an association” and promoting an elitism “inappropriate for the more inclusive and progressive ambitions of our nation” (Durden, 2003, para 11). Each day, we continue to encounter more and more interdisciplinary warfare in the ivory towers of academe as the “liberal artists” comes face to face with “professional schools,” the “dark side” per se. Are the warfighters destined to relegate cognitive complexity and philosophical pragmatism to mutual exclusivity? Jeremy Cohen, in *Mentoring Undergraduates with Professional and Liberal Arts Goals: The Mass Communication Experience* writes:

“How are we to overcome attitudes of consumerism and political apathy while simultaneously achieving an increasingly comprehensive academic mission? According to its catalogue, my own institution ‘recognizes its mission to educate students for citizenship in a society in which communication and information are a major commodity and the basis of the democratic process.’ It also accepts the charge to prepare students for employment, and embraces the goal of teaching sophisticated practices in the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of information.” (Cohen, 2001, p. 50)

According to Beverly Kahn (2002), in 1900, 70 percent of college students in the US attended liberal arts colleges, but today only 5 percent do (p. 54). Khan goes on to explain that, “In 1997, a Yankelovich survey focused on college-bound high school students and 74 percent of their parents stated that the goal of college is

to get a practical education and to secure a job” (p. 54). According to Kahn, her university, Pace University, is committed to the liberal arts experience. As she explains:

“67 percent of our undergraduate courses are in the arts and sciences. Yet, we find that 62 percent of our students have elected to declare majors in our professional schools of business, computer science and information systems, education, and nursing. Simply put, today’s students tend to be career-oriented, impatient, and focused on material rewards... The challenge we face is to assure that our students have a real liberal arts experience and become truly ‘educated,’ even when they are focused on careers” (p. 54).

Kahn (2002) goes on to say that, “A liberal education is intended to be transformative and liberating...It is meant to be a bridge to adulthood,” something that “liberates them [students] from the shackles of narrow perspectives and prejudices arising from both overspecialization and the failure to put knowledge in dialogue with values” (p. 55). She asks the question: “How do we assure that our students have a qualitative, transformative experience, especially when that is not what they are looking for?” (p. 55).

As these warriors arm themselves to fight consumerism and to enforce sanctions in an effort to assure students a “real” liberal arts experience, do they not find themselves shackled, prisoners of their own narrow perspectives and prejudices, their view limited by the parameters of their own disciplinary cells? Have the very “liberal artists” to whom students look for vision lost their own ability to put “knowledge in dialogue with values?” As Alan Greenspan said in the Summer 2003 issue of *Liberal Education*:

“America’s reputation as a world leader in higher education is grounded in the ability of these versatile institutions, taken together, to serve the practical needs of an economy and, more important, to unleash the creative thinking that moves a society forward. It is the recognition of these values that has attracted such a large segment of the world student population to our institutions of higher learning. Creative, intellectual energy drives our system forward. As the conceptual inputs to the value added in

our economic processes continue to grow, the ability to think abstractly will be increasingly important across the broad range of professions. Critical awareness, and the ability to hypothesize, to interpret, and to communicate are essential elements of successful innovation in a conceptual-based economy.” (p. 52)

It is in this dialogue between knowledge and values, between qualitative transformative learning experiences and the pragmatics of socio-economic sustainability, between societal rituals and systemic processes, where the liberal arts meet the bottom line.

Business Communication as a Key Competency in a Liberal Arts Education

William James, who taught physiology, psychology, and philosophy at Harvard suggested in 1907 that economics, geology, and even mechanics could be liberal arts if studied from a historical perspective focusing on great achievements. In *Liberal Arts: Vocation vs. Vocational*, Elizabeth Stone (2004) reminds readers that, in doing so, James reminded us that a liberal art is a matter of perspective rather than content (para 12). By way of both perspective and content, business communication is a key competency in a liberal arts education. In “Teaching Key Competencies in a Liberal Arts Education,” Edie Goldenberg (2001) explains:

“A liberal arts education is a meaningful introduction to fundamental questions, ideas, and methods in several fields of inquiry and an intensive introduction to at least one field, the major. In order to provide sufficient breadth, the several fields normally include exposure to the humanities, sciences and social sciences. A liberal arts degree does not signify training for employment in any immediate sense, even as it is widely recognized as an excellent foundation for a multitude of job opportunities and for graduate and professional study.” (p. 16)

How meaningful? According to Eric Hoover, in a recent (2005) *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, the answer to this question is also a matter of perspective. As Hoover suggests, “The leaders of liberal-arts colleges have failed to change

the widespread perception that their institutions are bastions of irrelevance, particularly among increasingly career-minded students” (p. 14). It can and had been argued, however, that the liberal arts do provide valuable education and training experiences for future employment--a natural extension, an unexpected consequence, even, as some may suggest, the baneful byproduct of their undesirable and illegitimate association with the pitiable “professions.” Dave Knowlton (2003), in *Preparing Students for Educated Living: Virtues of Problem-Based Learning Across the Higher Education Curriculum*, reminds us that a formal education should prepare students for participation in the labor market. As he suggests, “In the Information Age, business is shaped by constantly changing and socially constructed problems and factors that in turn shape the very nature of business and industry. Today’s graduates must be ready and able to engage in strategic decision-making, implement detailed operational plans, and envision strategic goals” (p. 7). As Knowlton explains, “Learning in the real world is a product of problem-solving. Such problem solving does not occur through processes of memorizing and mirroring; rather, it comes through processes of carefully defining and analyzing problems that exist in the organizational context for which one works” (p. 7). Durden (2003) echoes this sentiment:

“A liberal-arts education is not a mere luxury without practical consequence, but rather encompasses a distinctive preparing of students for positions of corporate leadership. It is time for administrators and faculty members to embrace with pride their graduates who pursue careers in business and finance and to incorporate, both philosophically and structurally, business into the intellectual core of the liberal-arts curriculum. Pursuit of the liberal arts...was expressly intended by Rush and others like him as the most useful preparation for a life of business accomplishment and leadership.” (para 13)

In a recent article called *Are Liberal Arts Dead?*, Jamieenne Studley, former President of Skidmore College, explains that the best education for an unpredictable future “provides the capacity and the tools to gather, interpret, challenge, and create knowledge; to combine ideas in new ways; and to communicate effectively” (p. 18).

She goes on to say that, “The best education creates the foundation for a life of continuous learning, of honor and meaning, and engagement and service....this type of education is called the liberal arts, because it liberates the mind” (p. 18). Studley reminds readers that business executives appreciate the long-term outcomes of a college education and the preparation not simply for a job but for a long and varied career: “...And they hire [liberal arts graduates] because it makes good sense in a global business environment marked by constant change. Rather than developing a trade good for one particular job, liberal arts graduates develop a broad base of knowledge and skills that prepare them for evolving challenges over the long haul” (p. 20).

In *Future CEOs May Need Broad Liberal-Arts Education*, Erin White (2005) reminds us that the next generation of leaders need wider international experience, maturity, leadership, problem-solving skills, ethics that survive scrutiny, and a take-charge attitude when it comes to their own career development. In an interview with White, Peter Veruki, Vanderbilt University’s Owen School of Management manager of external relations indicated that, “Companies are going to start to look at the fundamental value set of an individual and their basic education...Fast forward 20 or 30 years, we’re going to find [business leaders] who maybe majored in philosophy rather than business” (para 6).

Despite the figurative fist fights and vindictory verbal volleys between the liberal arts and the professional schools, outside the walls and halls of academe, a public speaks. And what they are saying is “Enough of war. Let peace prevail.” According to strategic organizational futurist Roger Herman, in a USA today article (2000) called *Liberal Arts The Key to the Future*, “In the future, a classroom-and-experience-based liberal arts education will be the core of the post-high school academic experience. All other learning will flow from this foundation. Specialized education, distance learning, corporate training, and other growth opportunities will find their roots in a liberal arts curriculum that will combine a transfer of fundamental disciplines with knowledge, skills, and love for learning” (p. 34). Herman suggests that, “While not losing their broad arts and sciences orientation, liberal arts programs will become more pragmatic to

prepare graduates to succeed after college” (p. 34) He goes on to say:

“Liberal arts curricula...provide a strong foundation for what is needed today—and tomorrow—in business, government, education, and not-for-profit organizations. With the incredible challenges that will face workers in the fast-changing business environment, strength in communication and critical thinking will be invaluable.” (p. 34)

Interestingly, while we wage wars on the homefront, ingraining and entrenching in our respective disciplinary bunkers, the merging, converging, compromising, and coalescing of the liberal arts and the professional schools continues to grow abroad. According to Colin Woodard (2002), in his article *Once-Communist Countries Make Way for the Liberal Arts*, “The American liberal-arts tradition...has been gaining ground worldwide over the past decade. Many educators believe the approach is becoming increasingly relevant in the new global economy, which, despite its technological demands, also needs flexible, innovative people who can work in many environments and constantly adapt to a rapidly changing workplace” (para 5). As students flock to private universities and branch campuses of US liberal arts colleges, which generally are accredited by US institutions, leaders of these pioneering institutions hope to strengthen not only the hiring prospects of their graduates, but also the societies themselves. Universities throughout the former Soviet republics, as they tackle the tasks of rebuilding and reforming shattered societies, are asking broad and penetrating questions in the classrooms. According to Woodard, as the Provost of Zayed University said: “It’s absolutely critical for students to have a good foundation in the liberal arts if they are going to be successful in the 21st century world. It’s not the specific things that you know that are most important, but your ability to apply what you know to strengthen not just the hiring prospects of the graduates, but democracy and civil society itself” (as cited in Woodard, para 9). Elizabeth Stone (2004), in “*Vocation vs. Vocational*” explains it well:

“Higher education is defined in relation to the culture that houses it, and if it is to survive as a useful institution, it has to become supple enough to shape itself to an evolving culture.

What we really need to keep our eye on is giving our students the opportunities we had—the chance to think critically about whatever subject engages us passionately, without making absurd and arbitrary distinctions between the liberal arts and job training. We also need to think critically about assuming critical thinking is compromised if it happens to have a practical yield.” (para 8)

Business Communication: A Bottom Line, A Liberal Art, and A Truce

A.J. Conyers, in *Vocation and the Liberal Arts (2003)* reminds us that “the classic understanding of liberal studies centers upon the work to be done *in* the learner, not *by* the learner” (p. 123). As he suggests, “What we are most concerned for in the liberal arts are not those things that we can use, but those things that can make us useful in that we are fitted for that “final cause which has called us forth” (p. 124). Or put another way:

“This does not at all mean that skill is unimportant; it may in fact be central. The *trivium* of liberal studies was precisely the acquiring of skill: grammar, in order to possess the tools of investigation and representation in language; dialectic in order to empower investigation through inquiry; definition, and discrimination; and rhetoric in order to represent to the affections what is their proper object and to the will its highest good, and so that the life of the community will be ordered by what is good, true, and beautiful.” (p. 124)

This is what this business of communication is all about. According to Joseph Voelker and John Campbell (2003) in “*Imagining the Future Citizen*,” when Franklin and Marshall College designed their new general education curriculum, a key question that guided their redesign process was, “At its best, what kind of citizen might a liberal education produce?” (p. 48). The redesign shifted the college emphasis slightly, from focusing on providing breadth of education, to focusing on influencing student motives, attitudes, and attributes. *This is what this business of communication is all about.* According to Goldenberg (2001):

“The goals of a liberal arts education are to provide students with a solid foundation for

problem solving; to help them understand others and interact effectively with them; to help students examine their own assumptions and avoid being taken in by a specious argument; to help students feel connected with others who have dealt with similar feelings or situations or problems; to open students' eyes and minds to the fascinations of other cultures and experiences; to provide a deeper sense of self and citizenship, and to develop valued employees, responsible citizens, and effective leaders." (p. 16)

This is what this business of communication is all about. According to strategic organizational futurist Roger Herman, an entire new set of skills will be needed in the workplace of tomorrow. That workplace includes the ivory towers of academe. The warriors who continue to attack their opponents, their adversaries, their antagonists may need to reexamine their roles as lifelong learners and, as Conyers suggests, revisit the work to be done *in* the learner, rather than *by* the learner. Herman envisions a future that includes a much heavier emphasis on negotiation, coordination, and facilitation rather than managing, directing, and controlling behaviors and skills. As he suggests, in the years ahead, there will but much more of a need for leaders who can "...think, collaborate, create, problem-solve, communicate, and lead. Demand will be high for individuals who have learned how to learn, have a strong, multidisciplinary education, and are able to adapt easily to whatever comes their way" (p. 35). According to Herman:

"The emphasis that the liberal arts curriculum places on critical and creative writing, speaking, and critical thought is appreciated by employers...In this fast moving world, spoken communications skills are essential, yet a high proportion of college graduates lacks the critical skills of being able to talk on their feet...Liberal arts, with its concentration on developing these skills, has a definite advantage." (p. 34)

Again, this is what this business of communication is all about. As Jamiene Studley reminds us, "Grounding in the liberal arts offers a window on history, culture, and human beings, on methods of intellectual inquiry, that transcends any particular subject, problem, moment in time, or job" (p.

18). Are the agents of the liberal arts able to transcend their own prejudices toward the "professions" and provide their students with this window on the world? Have the "professional schools" closed the door on examining how to live a life, settling instead on simply teaching the skills needed to earn a living? Has dialogue given way to discouragement, as both groups examine a workforce rather than educate a community? As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (2002), in *Liberal Education and the University: Prospects and Pitfalls*, reminds us:

"The Liberal Arts may be understood as a continuing conversation about the human condition and the power of the human mind. Innovation mainly occurs on the margins, and societies and cultures—civilizations—develop in explicit or implicit conversation with their predecessors." (p. 42)

In this paper, the author explored several key questions in an effort to get to "the bottom line on liberal arts," with specific focus on the historic links between practical and liberal educational goals in American academe, the liberal arts graduate in business today, and business communication as a key competency in a liberal arts education. We find that the current demand for liberal arts graduates and their business communication skills comes as no surprise; in fact, it is a historic inevitability. In a world where the weapon of choice is dialogue, the battlefield is the classroom, the warrior is the teacher, and the enemy is perceived and not real, let the conversation continue. Innovation and change can be effectively coupled with history and tradition, evolution with revolution, and we can look to the foundations our predecessors sculpted, Jefferson, Franklin, Rush, and others to envision a healthy, integrated academic future.

This is what this business of communication is all about.

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CROSS CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE WORK ETHIC: DIVERSITY, DISCRIMINATION AND ETHICS IN KUWAIT

Athmar Al-Salem, Mutlaq Al-Mutairi and Jeremy Cripps

The concept of the work ethic has received considerable attention in management and business administration literature⁸⁴. Both Islamic and Christian cultures find for origin a passage in the third chapter of Genesis⁸⁵. This passage has far too often been referred to “the Fall of Man.”⁸⁶ A recent translation of the Five Books of Moses rightly describes how this passage “has set the terms, not scientifically but symbolically, for much of the way we have thought about human nature ever since.”⁸⁷

Max Weber went so far as to propose that the development of capitalism and success in management and business was caused by the “Protestant work ethic.”⁸⁸ The protestant work ethic being derived from a spiritual thrust particularly attributed to the Protestant-Calvinistic faith: the protestant work-ethic being seen as “retribution” for eating from the tree of knowledge.”

In this context a far more human interpretation of the Genesis passage, as the source of personal growth in Man, is found more than a thousand years before Weber in the sayings and the practices of the Prophet Mohammed found in the Quran.⁸⁹ The Islamic work ethic focuses on the opportunities for humans to acquire skills and

technology⁹⁰ and counsels against begging and living as a parasite on the labors of others.⁹¹

While the attribution of the work ethic to religion may be attractive to the fundamentalist, in practice the links between religion and the work ethic hardly explain the significant differences between the cultural norms of work in the western world and the cultural norms of work in Kuwait, the Gulf States, and the Middle East.

There is an intriguing parallel between the literature on the work ethic and the literature on economics and western capitalism. For in much the same way that the Prophet Mohammed predicted Weber, so Adam Smith’s “invisible man”⁹² provided a new origin for western capitalism, since, a thousand years before Smith, Arabic scholars were describing market forces and even writing of the “invisible man”⁹³.

Unfortunately the focus of studies of the work ethic has tended to continue the focus on religion as a determinant of the work ethic. Although certainly one factor, our study identifies several other important factors.

84 For example: Abboushi, 1990; Congleton, 1991; Furnham and Rajamanickam, 1992; Jones, 1997. Most of the research on the work ethic focuses on the Protestant work ethic

85 KJV Genesis, Chapter 3 verses 1 - 19.

86 The fall of man begins to appear as a concept in the late Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, probably under Essenic influences.

87 Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses*, (New York: Norton & Co, 2004) p xii

88 Max Weber *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

89 Saheeh International Translation *The Quran* (Riyadh: Abulqaim Publishing House, 1997)

90 *Surrah*

91 *Surrah*

92 Adam Smith *The Wealth of Nations*, (New York: Random House Modern Library, 1994)

93 S.M. Ghazar Ed, *Medieval Islamic Economic Thought*, (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003)

Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to identify key themes which characterize the work ethic in Kuwait. Discussion with colleagues at other universities in the Middle East indicates that similar themes exist throughout the GCC countries⁹⁴ and the Middle East.

Methodology:

To gather data on perceptions of the work ethic in Kuwait students were given an assignment to examine the impact of the culture of employment in Kuwait. Students were expected to provide answers, in narrative form, to a series of questions on Kuwait work culture. Students selected their own places of business in Kuwait. The questions are shown in Exhibit 1. A summary of the businesses included in the study is attached in Exhibit 2.

1. Identify the code of business ethics at your business location. Is it written or verbal?
2. How important is the code of ethics to the company, and how strict are they about applying it?
3. Identify corporate policies regarding the working environments.
4. Is there any corporate discrimination on the grounds of?
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Equal Pay
 - National Origin
 - Pregnancy
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Retaliation
 - Sex
 - Sexual Harassment
5. What might be the problems that occur as a result of answers to question 3 and 4?

Exhibit 1: Questions on Workplace Culture:

Students were asked to consider the impact of

the culture they discovered on the work being carried out at the place of business they visited. As a follow-up, students were asked to consider the ethical implications of the business culture they found. A separate set of questions relating to business ethics followed. These are set out in Exhibit 3.

Government Ministries	3
NGOs	4
Private Sector Companies	6
Other Private Sector Organizations	3
Representative Institutions	16

Exhibit 2 Student Selection of Kuwaiti Business workplaces:

A total of 32 students (teams of two) took part in the study. The diversity of the businesses appears to provide a reasonable basis for the conclusions reached in this paper in the context of the work ethic in Kuwait. Further study might establish whether a similar work ethic is to be found elsewhere in the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf.

1. What business ethics operate at your company and what do they state regarding the working environments?
2. What is a Kuwaiti business code of ethics likely to state?
3. Do the companies in Kuwait follow a certain Code of Ethics?
4. Are these codes written or verbal?
5. How do ethics interfere with the way Kuwaiti company managers deal with work/problems/customers?
6. How important is the code of ethics to the company, and how strict are they about applying it?

Exhibit 3: Student Questions asked on Business Ethics Population Diversity

The population of Kuwait is carefully monitored by the Ministry of Planning through the issue of Residence Permits and the issue of Civil Identification cards. Exhibit 4 provides an analysis of the distribution of population by nationality and gender.

⁹⁴ GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and the Sultanate of Oman.

The population distribution of students at the American University of Kuwait by nationality and gender is shown on Exhibit 5. Students involved in our study appear to have approximately the same distribution. There appears no reason to suspect bias in their reports based on nationality or gender.

Terminology:

For the purposes of our study the following definitions were provided to students:

Discrimination:

Discrimination occurs when someone, or a group of people, is treated less favorably than another person or group because they do not receive fair and equal access (see below) under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation.⁹⁵

Workplace discrimination:

Workplace discrimination can occur where workplace conditions, employee benefits, training and performance measurement offered as part of employment differ significantly.

Fair and equal access:

At the non-discriminating workplace every employee should have a “fair go,⁹⁶” that is a fair and equal ⁹⁷ opportunity to be employed without regard to:

- Age
- Disability
- Equal Pay
- National Origin
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual Harassment⁹⁸

Distribution	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Kuwaiti	369,614	375,575	745,189	34.62%
Other Arab	373,268	159,810	533,078	24.76%
Asian	495,710	231,820	727,530	33.79%
African	1,281	206,	2,487	0.12%
European	6,068	4,272	10,340	0.48%
American	5,400	3,496	8,896	0.41%
Australian	454	363	817	0.04%
Non-stated nationality	62,775	61,663	1,244,380	5.87%
Total	1,314,570	838,205	2,152,775	100%

**Source: Kuwait Ministry of Planning (kuwait-info.org)*

Exhibit 4: Kuwait Population Analysis

Workplace conditions:

Refers to the normal work conditions in the workplace including safety measures/procedures and facilities.

Employee benefits offered:

Any emoluments provided to the employee in the form of reward for performance, provided on the basis of a scale and amount known to the employee before commencing activity. Employee benefits may not include the provision of basic health care and contractual terminal benefits.

Training:

Any ‘off-the-job’ training programs to improve employee performance.

Performance measurement:

The methodology employed to determine who is considered and selected for transfer, promotion, retrenchment or dismissal.

Distribution	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Kuwaiti			531	69.2%
Syrian			39	5.0%
Other Arab			125	16.3%
Asian			23	3.0%
Canadian			19	2.5%
American			13	1.7%
British			4	0.5%
Other European			8	1.0%
Non-stated nationality			5	0.8%
Total	414	353	767	100.0%

**Source: Registrar, American University of Kuwait.*

95 References include United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and 1979 Convention on the elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the US Federal Laws Prohibiting Job Discrimination.

96 Equal Opportunity: A Fair Go in the Workplace: P.L. Duffy Resource Centre Equal Opportunity: “A Fair Go,” that is a fair opportunity for the employee at her/is Workplace (<http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/careers/equal.htm>)

97 Reasonable ref

Exhibit 5: American University of Kuwait - Student Population Analysis

Responses to Questions on Workplace Culture

We have summarized the common responses students received to the questions on Workplace Culture (questions shown at Exhibit 1)

1. Identify the code of business ethics at your business location. Is it written or verbal?

In general businesses in Kuwait employ a “top-down” written or oral code of business ethics. The code of behavior or code of ethics is rarely written and circulated to all employees in the government sector. In the private sector a code of ethics may be included in the contract but employees do not appear to pay much attention to the terms in the contract.

The employment of a multinational multilingual workforce means that management considers that the circulation of a written code of ethics would not improve ethical performance. Thus the code of ethics in practice is circulated by word of mouth and enforced by appropriate action by management being taken when a breach occurs.

The opportunity for employee explanation of perceived breaches of the code of ethics may not be available. Written procedures for due process are usually absent.⁹⁹

2. How important is the code of ethics to the company, and how strict are they about applying it?

As mentioned above, little attention is paid to the code of ethics in either the government or private sectors.

Normal “western” work disciplines are abused. For example although “Punctuality is expected” in general “the locals may arrive late.”¹⁰⁰ Attendance on a timely basis is unusual for Kuwaitis and

adherence to agreed times for appointments frequently ignored.

The payment of wages even for government employees may be delayed. For example in 2005 the employees of the Nibraj Cleaning Company, a Kuwaiti firm, rightly claimed “they had not paid their wages for five months.”¹⁰¹

3. Identify corporate policies regarding the working environments.

No formal distribution and enforcement of “western” health, education, and welfare standards are in place. However Kuwaiti Labor Law does include general provisions related to work environment conditions.¹⁰²

These general provisions are not monitored / inspected on a regular basis, nor does there appear to be significant management emphasis on meeting any benchmark standards. While safety is emphasized by management in certain hazardous industries, specific corporate policy on clothing (helmets for construction workers, goggles for machine operators, etc.) does not appear to be supported either by the issue of appropriate safety equipment or the enforcement of safety codes of conduct.

There are certainly examples of Kuwaiti employment rules incorporated in Kuwaiti law being disregarded. For example an Amiri decree ordering a mid-day break during the hottest part of the day in the summer of 2005 was widely ignored. Pictures of workers at the workplace taken and published in the Kuwait Times and other publications were not followed up with prosecution of the employers involved.

4. Is there any corporate discrimination on the grounds of?

In general there exists one set of employment rules and regulations for Kuwaitis and a separate

98 Discrimination categories: source United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission website (<http://www.eeoc.gov/> - facts and guidance)

99 However employees do have certain rights under the Kuwait Labor Laws.

100 Kimberley Roberts “Do you know the culture f time?” see http://international-business-center.com/international_newsletter/volume2_issue5.htm

101 Story published by Kuwait newspapers April 2005 and noted on Aljazeera. Net (<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/64E280A9-526D-41DA-91B8-1F18AD64FA11.htm>)

102 Kuwait Law of Labor in the Private Sector.

set of practices for “expats.”¹⁰³ This is further substantiated as the Labor Law in Kuwait provides separate Laws for employment in the Public Sector,¹⁰⁴ employment in the Private Sector,¹⁰⁵ and rules for the employment of domestic helpers of all kinds (drivers, servants, cooks, maids, etc.).¹⁰⁶

- Age

Foreign employees working in the public sector in Kuwait “shall be less than 65 years old.”¹⁰⁷ In addition there are provisions excluding the employment of juveniles.¹⁰⁸

Retirement for Kuwaitis follows 25 years of government service for Kuwaiti men and 15 years of government service for Kuwaiti women. Retirement provisions for the expats living in Kuwait are determined by contracts in force and agreed by both parties to such employment contracts.

- Disability

The principle handicap for disabled people is the absence of any legislation requiring Kuwaiti employers to provide handicap access and other specific provision of facilities for those with disabilities. There is no equivalent of the proposed European Union law¹⁰⁹ prohibiting discrimination against disabled people.

- Equal Pay

Kuwait has no legislation to encourage, provide, or enforce equal opportunity and equal pay for work activity.

- National Origin

In Kuwait, 80% of the Kuwaiti population is Arab; the non-Kuwaiti Arabs contain a large group of Egyptians and also stateless Arabs, locally known as Bidoon.¹¹⁰ Other large groups of immigrants include Indians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Philipinos. [See Exhibit 3]

Discrimination on the ground of national origin is quite explicit. For example, for positions at government Ministries, the rates of pay will be directly related to national origin.¹¹¹ Further advertisements for employment often specify national origin, as do some advertisements for tenants of apartments.

One Canadian student, offered a position at a leading technology company, was questioned as to her country of origin (since her name was in the Middle Eastern style). On admitting her family was of Lebanese extraction she was offered the Lebanese rate of pay for the position (considerably less than the Canadian rate). On complaining and asking to be paid the Canadian rate, the student was told that she should think herself fortunate that she was not being offered the (significantly lower) Pakistani rate of pay for the position.

- Pregnancy

A pregnant woman in Kuwait has the right to 30 days leave before delivery and forty days after delivery according to the Labor Law.¹¹²

Expats are rarely hired if pregnant. On getting pregnant they may expect to have their contract terminated for cause.

103 “Expats” refers to all non-Kuwaitis who have taken up residence in Kuwait

104 Decree Law No 15 for the year 1960 as amended by Resolutions 6 & 14 (1979) and 2 (1990 and 3 (1993) and other amendments.

105 Kuwait Labor Law No 38 of 1964.

106 Specific exceptions to Labor Laws.

107 Decree Law No 15 for the year 1960 - see Mohammed H Al Dallal, Ed Kuwait Legal Guide, (Al Khebra Legal Consultants and Lawyers: Kuwait, 2005) p 33.

108 Juveniles are “males or females between 14 and less than 18 years of age - Walid I Kaaki Trans, Kuwaiti Laws You Need to Know in Plain English (Kuwait: D&K Publishing and distributing Co, 2005) p 148

109 European Law on Disability proposed 12 March 2003

110 Bidoon (trans. without) is a term used in Kuwait to refer to Arab residents of the country who do not hold full citizenship. Bidoon may be refugees who have illegally entered a Kuwait to avoid poverty or war, or those who have settled there since 1920 but who have not been recognized by the state. They are not afforded the rights of a full citizen of the country. Bidoon are not considered to be “expats.” Before 1990, the majority of Bidoon were Bedouin settlers from the northern Arabian Peninsula.

111 Evidence of such selection from unpublished salary tables indicated by Ministries and Private Sector employers.

112 Kaaki op cit page 149

- Race

Little distinction is made in Kuwait between race and national origin. In their conclusions and recommendations, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: Kuwait,¹¹³ expressed concern about expulsions and other discriminatory measures against especially vulnerable groups of foreigners, including Palestinians, stateless Arabs, Bidoons, Iraqis and nationals of countries which did not participate in the anti-Iraq coalition, and the treatment of foreign domestic servants. The Committee was concerned that no specific measures had been envisaged to eliminate discrimination with respect to descent, national or ethnic origin.

Recently the government of Kuwait has made efforts to improve the situation. However long-standing culture has seen the employment of domestic servants from the Asian sub-continent. Nationals from these countries are therefore generally rewarded for their labor on the basis of national origin rather than education or ability.

- Religion

Religion-based bias is an emerging issue in workplace. Today's mix of trends - globalization, the "new economy," a tight labor market, and a population growing older and more varied is making religious diversity in the workplace a civil rights issue: one with bottom-line business implications.

Although taking measures to deal with this issue is a sound business move, religion is largely a taboo topic that is supposed to be checked at the door.¹¹⁴ Yet, as elsewhere in the gulf, preference is naturally given to Muslims, except in key management positions.

- Sex

Since disparate treatment based on gender is generally considered direct discrimination there is certainly gender discrimination in the workplace. The Labor Law forbids the employment of women "during the night" except in hospitals, clinics, and certain approved places. Further

women may not be employed in hazardous jobs or dangerous industries.¹¹⁵

However the situation is complex and the rights of women in the workplace in Kuwait are not necessarily based simply on gender. Any gender discrimination needs to be seen in the context of the possibility for a company policy to exclude certain people from jobs or promotions. Certainly the absence of specific workplace non-discrimination legislation means that there can be gender discrimination in the Kuwaiti workplace.

Also noted is that at the workplaces the prevailing national culture of respect and courtesy lent certain preference to women. Women are, for example, expected to go to the front of queues.

- Sexual Harassment

There is no specific legislation in Kuwait mentioning sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is covered by legislation since the Labor Law specifically sets out conditions for the work environment. This legislation certainly expects employers to take actions appropriate to the prevention of unwelcome verbal or physical sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Court decisions have established clear precedents against sexual harassment.

5. *What might be the problems that occur as a result of answers to question 3 and 4?*

The clearest implications of the answers to questions 3 and 4 are that the technology of management¹¹⁶ available in Kuwait makes it almost impossible for an entrepreneurial economy to exist. What prevents the emergence of an entrepreneurial economy in Kuwait is the absence of the application of modern management:

- To new business entities. This can be seen in the absence of modern work environments, the use of technologically outdated services,¹¹⁷ and

113 U.N. Doc. A/48/18, paras. 359-381 (1993).

114 Athmar Al-Salem, Baker Education

115 Kaaki, op cit: page 149

116 Peter F. Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, (New York: HarperBusiness, 1986) p 14.

117 Manual rather than automated services at most Kuwaiti Ministries (Issue of Visas: issue of driving licenses, etc.); manual rather than automated business practices even in the private sector (manual counter collection of payments; the unreliability of postal and other basic services. The extraordinarily narrow band width and low penetration of the Internet (such that the US Embassy and the British Council, among others, operate their own satellite systems).

the use of technologically outdated practices.¹¹⁸

- To SMEs¹¹⁹ where Kuwaitis appear to think that the best form of management is the unchallenged “top-down” approach.
- To non-business (health, education, and welfare organizations, etc.)¹²⁰ and in particular to the wasted potential of the Tourist industry.¹²¹
- To enterprises apparently not considered ‘real’ businesses;¹²²
- And “above all, to systematic innovation: to the search for and the exploitation of new opportunities for satisfying human wants and human needs.”¹²³ For example the extraordinary delays in awarding contracts to develop the Northern Oilfields; managerial reliance on “expats” in major sectors of enterprise; and the empty Diabetes research Center at Dasman.

This absence of the technology of modern management, what Drucker described as “entrepreneurial”¹²⁴ management was seen by our students to be caused by four especially anti-entrepreneurial strategies:

- No encouragement (for example, research and development expenditure) on innovation, on the systematic cutting the price of product and process, and continuing efforts to retain leadership. To the contrary the mercantilist system of sponsorship merely encourages the market to develop non-competitive competitors.
- The absence of “creative imitation” that is the relative absence of the practice of applications of new technology to old activities (such as the employment by Hattori of Japan of quartz power to revolutionize the watch industry). Kuwaiti reliance of American fast-food chains, American style shopping malls, and “expat” technology provide excellent examples of a lack of creative imitation.

- No search for an ecological niche beyond the production of oil. Yet the natural oil resources offer an extraordinary resource for funding further search for and development of additional ecological niches. These might be in the area of desert development. Solar energy, diabetes cure, or financial activity.

- Little interest in changing values or characteristics of products in such a way as to provide attractive service to the customer. To the contrary, in spite of economic development based on the innovative technological exploitation of natural resources (albeit expat processing, drilling for, and post refinery by-products of oil), adherence to outdated custom and practice is in place. This is particularly true in the field of education where the opportunity for experimentation and leadership in the capital-intensive education of math and sciences appears to have been ignored.

Further our students noticed directly anti-entrepreneurial characteristics of the Kuwaiti business environment:

- “Fear,” fear of job security discourages innovation and initiative. Fear limits performance. The worker who is insecure is afraid to express ideas, afraid to ask questions. “The common denominator of fear in any form, anywhere, is loss from impaired performance.”¹²⁵ Kuwait is no exception. For example, mistakes noted by an Asian construction worker in Kuwait are unlikely to be mentioned by that worker for fear of the consequences of being seen to expose weaknesses of others above them in the construction worker hierarchy. The importance of “driving out fear” and the relationship between fearful workers and their inability to serve the best interests of their employer has been noted at length by W. Edwards Deming.¹²⁶

118 Use of reinforced concrete rather than steel beam structure for building tall buildings, employment of Egyptian scaffolding, employment of Indian Chartered Accountants (rarely qualified in International Accounting Standards), employment of teachers and Professors with less than first-class educational qualifications.

119 SMEs = Small and Medium Enterprises

120 Readily observed in the absence of public school technical equipment (Internet, computers, and calculators, etc.) and at the ill-equipped public health and welfare facilities in one of the wealthiest, per capita, countries in the world.

121 Apparent failure to finance Kuwaiti heritage, the National Museum and the unhurried government initiative to develop Falaika island and other potential tourist attractions.

122 For example manual operations at travel agencies in Kuwait where e-ticket travel has yet to be introduced by Kuwait Airways, the national airline.

123 Drucker, op cit: p 14

124 Drucker, op cit p 143

125 W. Edwards Deming *Out of the Crisis*, (Cambridge, Mass: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Center for Advanced Engineering Study: 1982) page 59 et seq

126 Deming, op cit

- “Poor communication,” the apparent inability even within quite small organizations for people in different departments to communicate. Poor communication arises when employees do not share a single language, when they do not share problems in the hunt for solutions to those problems, and particularly when an organization does not communicate with customers.

- “Management failure,” to lead rather than supervise. The absence of leadership is particularly evident in so-called K-industries (Kuwaiti controlled enterprises such as Kuwait Airways and the many Kuwait Oil Company subsidiary petroleum companies). In these enterprises the managers rarely have the knowledge to lead. They attempt to supervise expats who actually carry out operations. Leaders would know the work they supervise; unfortunately far too often Kuwaiti managers do not have the knowledge or experience necessary to inform upper management of conditions that need improvement.

- The absence of training. The standards of what work is acceptable and what is not are far too flexible in Kuwait. Poor work standards begin with an elementary lack of discipline on attendance at work. Poor work standards are further actively encouraged by the absence of training and, absence at training programs, and the almost complete absence of follow-up to see that the objectives of training have been implemented. Classic is the example of so-called “security” staffs that speak neither Arabic nor English, open the hood and the trunk of a car without any knowledge of what they are looking for, and are unable to ask or answer questions concerning the purpose of their activity.

Our students noted that management decision making is a process by which managers respond to opportunities and threats by analyzing options and making determinations about specific organizational goals and courses of action. Organizations should therefore develop and document their procedures for dealing with dilemmas as they arise.

The apparent absence of such documentation and development may be illustrated in the responses to a series of follow-up questions on ethical policy at Kuwaiti companies.

Codes of Ethics

For this research we focused on the appearance of ethics in the workplace in Kuwait. We wanted to get an idea of the shape of corporate codes of ethics, whether all employees were informed, how well the employees followed the code, how managers dealt with the appearance of unethical behavior and how employees considered the issue of ethics at their workplace. Naturally the conduct of Kuwaiti business is greatly influenced by the labor law (Attachment II) of the Ministry of Social Affairs in Kuwait [see selected passages of the Labor Law for the Private Sector in Exhibit 6].

Translations of selected passages from The (Kuwait) Labor Law in the Private Sector

Law Number T38 of 1964-Chapter 7

Salaries and Wages:

- Article No. (28) provides that the salaries and wages are the basic payments paid to the employee separate from other allowances, rewards, commissions, or other periodic incentives.
- Following amounts are deemed to be an integral part of the salary or wage: to Increments.
- It is an additional payment to the employee for a specific reason such as seniority, increase in the consumable prices, or for additional family members.
- This increment should be done in the form of a contract binding for both parties.

Incentives

- The incentive is the amount of money paid to the employee for an excessive effort by him/her resulting in minimizing the company's expenses.

Commission

- It is a pay usually made to employee in the form of a percentage for deals performed by him/her.
- Commission is paid for the representatives and correspondents as an integral part of his/her pay.

Rewards

- It is the amount paid for the employee in seasonal occasions such as new years and Eid.
- It is paid equally for all the employees regardless of his or her grade.
- These rewards become obligatory and compulsory if it is mentioned in the work contract.

Tips and presents

- The amounts paid by the clients to employees of a certain company for their good services.

- The employer takes in to account when appointing his or her employee that the later may get such rewards from a company client and so would consider it when deciding the employee's salary.

Allowances

- Allowance is the amount payable to the employee for a specific task. It is considered as a payment or sub payment for the duty he or she performs.
- It is actually a compensation for the employee for payments incurred by the employee in advance such as travel allowance, re-location allowance, etc.
- It should be separate from the original pay.

Profit Sharing

- In this case, the employee is much more concerned with the success of the organization and expanding the scope of its work as he/she will be receiving a share from the profits.
- This payment should be agreed upon between the employer and the employee by which the employer is obliged to pay the employee a percentage of the profits in addition to his/her pay.

Chapter 12

Compensation for Labor Injuries and Diseases:

- The labor law tackles the compensation of laborers for professional injuries and diseases caused in the field of your work.
- The article provides for the laborer is not entitled for compensation in case the accident as a result of a mistake by his or her side.

Exhibit 6: Translation of selected passages from the Kuwait Labor Law

In Kuwait a large number of foreign based corporations employ workers from diversified communities (Exhibit 5). Inevitably the actual code of ethics at an enterprise will be influenced by company hiring policies and the discriminatory practices already outlined in the responses we received to our first series of questions. We noted that some companies might have a written code and for other companies the code of ethics is verbal.

Here follows a summary of the responses we received upon enquiry:

1. What business ethics operate at your company and what do they state regarding the working environments?

Kuwaiti enterprise management noted that they operated strictly within the framework of the Labor Law for the Private in Kuwait. The scope of this lengthy document (almost 300 pages in Arabic) extends to work permits and those who are eligible to obtain a work permit, the recruitment and employment of employees. The Labor Law does not specify the need for a code of ethics except and in as much as the law requires the work environment to prevent damage or harm to employees and so implies an ethical code of behavior at the workplace.

The Labor Law is supplemented by commentary in *Kuwait Alyom*, a weekly published magazine which updates employers about modifications to labor laws, Amiri and court decisions which provide guidance as to the interpretation of those laws.

When asked, Management notes that normally employees are informed about the company ethics at the start of their employment. Therefore they are expected to know the applicable rules and labor laws in Kuwait. We understood that "all the employees know that ethics is a sensitive and almost sacred subject in this company," that "we make sure that they (employees) know the law that relates to all the departments in the company," and that this "is for special reason, and that is so that they know how to act right." We also understood from management that "if the employees see another employee, whether from their department or not, acting wrong according to the law they could report whatever they saw."

Company policy on punishments and rewards may be posted on bulletin boards or handed out on the day of the employee's acceptance in the company. According to some company management, Islam plays a big role in their decisions. Other companies have a policy requiring an applicant to omit details of religion, and nationality (although nationality may affect pay) to make personnel evaluation is made without religious or racial discrimination.

We did not discover any underlying consistency in either written or verbal codes of ethics, except that, although reference to ethical behavior might be included in a written contract, management recognized the fact that many employees, if able to read their contract, might not read or even remember the references to ethical conduct except in very general terms.

2. What is a Kuwaiti business code of ethics likely to state?

All the companies that we interviewed, except one, have a set of written ethics. However we found that Kuwait companies do not create their own Code of Ethics. Companies prefer to look to some social codes, rules and even laws as the base of their Code of Ethics. We did not find a consistent set of cannons of ethical behavior such as those which would include employer and employee duties:

- to protect the assets (including people), the infrastructure, and the company product
- to act honorably, honestly, justly, responsibly, and legally
- to provide diligent and competent service
- to report discrimination and
- to advance and protect the corporate mission and objectives.

Kuwait, a Muslim country, is well known for a strong relation to culture and customs that are correlated in Islam. We were told, for example, that “people who are raised in a proper way and taught what’s right and wrong according to their religion would find it hard to do illegal actions and would prefer to go by the book instead of doing unethical things.” Another said that “if Kuwaitis understand ethics and stick to them, the market will be better than it is now.” While the desire for ethical behavior is strong, the necessary infrastructure to enforce codes of ethics appears weak.

We found that culture, religion, time has significant influence on the creation of the Code of Ethics. Diversity is tolerated in modern Kuwaiti companies and organizations as the Kuwaiti economy depends on an expatriate work force. However while management hope to approach employment objectively; they are aware that culture leads them too often to

evaluate employees on the basis of stereotypes, particularly in the case of race, when they are hiring employees.

We noted that management felt that Ethics change over time. Therefore there was no need to have a prescribed code of ethics. Since the ethics in Kuwaiti society change; as time passes written codes of ethics would need to be modified to match the societal changes. Company wide awareness of a Code of Ethics was not seen to be an important measure to focus attention on company goals. The diversity of employees, the frequent absence of a single operating language made the implementation of a code of ethics difficult. Regretfully, mistreatments of and discrimination against employees do happen in modern Kuwaiti companies. The absence of enforcement and monitoring of codes of ethics at Kuwaiti companies allows companies to look at immediate short term benefit at the expense of long-term betterment.

We noted, from employee interviews, that companies working with codes of ethics rarely employed consistent procedures to evaluate situations when those codes of ethics appeared to be broken.

3. Do the companies in Kuwait follow a certain Code of Ethics?

As noted above, companies in Kuwait do not follow one certain code of ethics.

4. Are these codes written or verbal?

As noted most Kuwaiti companies have a written code of ethics.

5. How do ethics interfere with the way Kuwaiti company managers deal with work/problems/customers?

Many problems arise as conflict occurs between cultures. For this reason some Kuwaiti companies require their staff or sections of their staff to be from a single specific nationality and sometimes also religion.

The employment of different nationalities one team can cause them to form groups. These groups may act, or may be seen to act, to

exclude other groups. Such groups may also hinder personnel interaction and the transfer of technology.

Kuwaiti management finds difficulty in dealing with work/problem/customers in the context of ethics. The solutions appear usually to be one-off ad hoc solutions made without reference to codes of ethics. One Kuwaiti management cycle sees highly qualified western management being employed to set-up successful business, being followed by the employment of cheaper less well qualified non-western management who manage to keep the business going initially but flounder as the business model changes and the necessary innovation and initiative is absent, being followed in turn by a return of western managers to rescue the enterprise.

6. How important is the code of ethics to the company, and how strict are they about applying it?

Our conclusion is that a code of ethics is not considered to be very important by managers in Kuwait. Although there may be written codes they appear to be largely for show. Employees are likely to be unaware of the contents of the operational code of ethics at their place of employment because their employer does not provide them with a copy of the code of ethics in their language and as a separate document.

Discrimination on the grounds of nationality certainly exists in Kuwait and employees do not enjoy the sort of protections of their rights which they might expect in western countries.

The absence of strict codes of ethical behavior in employment is a major contributory cause of the lack of innovation and initiative shown in Kuwaiti enterprise. Our students realized that when every Kuwaiti company makes and enforces consistent codes of ethics, the private sector is likely to expand and job opportunities for Kuwaitis will expand.

In this connection we also noted a lack of transparency within Kuwaiti organizations. We noted that certain information in companies is considered confidential. The reason is a desire to present only the good side of the enterprise.

The wish is to give an impression of infallibility. Western businesses are more realistic, they expect mistakes to be made, learning to take place, and corrections to be made. In any business mistakes are made, Kuwait is no exception. However the lack of transparency sends a clear message to employees to avoid focusing attention on areas where mistakes are being made. Thus the mistakes become a feature of the business activity, lessons are not learned, and far too frequently necessary corrections are not made.

Conclusion

This research was an important practical exercise for our students in relating the theory of the work ethic and the theory of the employment of a code of ethics with practice in the business environment of Kuwait. The research is also useful to those interested in doing business in Kuwait. Our research indicated that Kuwait proved to be a relatively typical example of the work ethic and work culture in the GCC and in Arab countries in the Middle East.

A final exercise for our students was to determine the cannons of what they felt should now be covered in written Codes of Ethics in Kuwait. In developing such a Kuwaiti cannon for corporate codes of ethics, the following principles were agreed, that Kuwait corporations should:

1. Identify the key stakeholders of the company, and the organization's responsibility to each in accordance to the Islamic moral code.
2. Define ethical values or draw up specific behavioral guidelines for each of the stakeholders that companies interact with (keeping promises, honesty, respect for people, justice etc).
3. Investigate what other ethical codes influence employees behavior in the organization, and design the corporate code so as not to clash with these external codes of conduct.
4. Monitor Company dealings with stakeholders,¹²⁷ to focus on gaps between the Islamic code of conduct and actual behavior.

127 Using independent monitors similar to J.D. Power in the United States for interaction with each class of stakeholder.

5. Formally determine how to narrow the gaps uncovered in step 4.
6. Form a written system of internal control in order to track specific practices.¹²⁸
7. Formulate a policy and procedure for responding to reports of unethical behavior.
8. Annually evaluate the code. Report on gaps that exist.

When implementing the code of ethics, our students determined that several mechanisms are needed to ensure success. Principals and Senior Managers must be involved during the whole process. New recruits must learn about the organizations ethical standards before the start of their employment. They need to receive a copy of the code of ethics in their native language and the language of business adopted by the corporation. They need to have a written procedure for reporting potential violation of the code of ethics.

In the interests of the future economic development of Kuwait our students believe that Kuwaiti companies must find a way to get the grey area of ethics down in black and white. While the main purpose of a code of ethics is to define acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, the by products of the employment of a code of ethics include the promotion of high standards of practice, the provision of benchmarks for corporate self evaluation, and establishment of a framework for professional behavior and responsibility of which every Kuwaiti may be proud.

128 Likely to be required in the future by IFRS (International Financial reporting Standards).

MALICE IN WANDERLAND: WHAT LIES AHEAD IN CORPORATE REPORTING PROCESS?

Ralph Pallium

Introduction

Alice in Wonderland tended to give herself very good advice (though very seldom followed them through). At one time Alice recalls trying to box her own ears for having cheated herself in a game of croquet she was playing against herself pretending to be two people. Later she despised this as she felt that there was hardly enough of herself left to make one respectable person. Businesses throughout the world find themselves in wonderland. The selective and acceptable reporting of economic events by different accounting systems, compounded by alternative accounting methods and estimates, make financial statements an approximation of economic reality. The tendency to delay accounting recognition of some transactions suggests that financial statements lag behind reality. The difference between reality and imaginary is often referred to as the agency problem. An essential characteristic of this problem is risk attitudes of principals (shareholders) and agents (management). Shareholders are considered risk neutral in their preferences for individual firms. They are in a position to diversify their shareholdings across multiple firms. Agents on the other hand have security and income that are inextricably linked to one firm. It would not be surprising to find agents exhibiting risk aversion in decisions regarding the firm. Immediately one's attention is drawn to the opportunity costs that arise for the risk-neutral shareholders who prefer that agents maximize their returns. The risk differential between agents and principals creates a problem in principal-agent relationship. It is within this framework that supervisory and incentive alignment mechanisms that alter the risk orientation of agents are set up. Powerful incentives act upon agents as they exercise their judgment, particularly when the judgment can trigger a stock market response that will, in turn, affect the firm in numerous ways. The

responsibility of agents is to manage earnings. From a principal's perspective not all of the methods used to achieve this goal are equally desirable. Agents can either increase productivity or they can strategically manipulate accounting choices to affect earnings. The latter method need not come with any associated changes in productivity. Consequently, there is misstatement of the financial results and position. The calculus of earnings management is considered within the confines of agents' treatment of risk. Using an agency theory framework, this study examines the techniques used by agents to manage and manipulate sales revenue and ultimately earnings.

Reliable and comprehensive information on the companies' financial condition is fundamental to effective corporate management, market discipline, and official oversight, and thus should be a very high priority. If such information is not available, management decisions may not be conducive to sound governance principles. Moreover, managers and owners (especially in cases where ownership is widely dispersed) may not be aware of the true financial condition of the institution or, if they are, they may wish to conceal it; and the public may thus be misled. Ultimately, this prevents the market discipline from working.

Typically, tasks at a corporation involve the following: Firstly, a big picture of the corporation's mission and goals are established. Secondly, an application of this big picture to specific product, service or program is formulated. Thirdly, a program of activities is considered for the corporation to fulfill its strategic initiatives. Within the confines of each of these tasks the issue of ethics and integrity has become increasingly important. A strong sense of ethics and integrity is critical to maintaining trust

and credibility associated with each of the tasks identified above. With specific reference to tasks associated with the accounting function, media reports have exposed executives engaged in a wide array of fraudulent accounting practices and other misconduct. The cumulative net impact of these fraudulent actions is still being determined. When each of the tasks identified above fosters an aggressive “numbers driven” corporate culture obsessed with meeting financial projections, CEOs impose and demand compliance with unrealistic revenue and other targets. CEOs communicate this to different executives who are expected to achieve these figures by any means necessary. Until recently, failure on the part of executives to achieve unrealistic objectives, the accounting function was brought to help in the rescue. The fraudulent practices through which many corporations manipulated its financial performance are a result of simple accounting entries made by accountants to merely conform to the unadjusted and quarterly results thereby meeting the CEO’s projections. The new trend would be a cross-functional one. The extent to which management would use the profit impact and strategic role of a marketing department in furthering the dysfunctional objective of CEO’s should be considered.

For long the cry from marketers has been the injustice that marketing has not achieved its rightful place at the top of the business agenda. Any marketer who merely used the four Ps of marketing: product, price, place, and promotion would be treated with contempt by accountants. In a maelstrom of change, CEOs have found that marketers have failed to put enough attention on the most important P in business: profitability. It is now natural that the marketing function will take its rightful position of influence, namely creating value for the CEO. The question is how? The public will increasingly be (mis)directed in support of companies whose products, services and solvency are exaggerated. Once the capacity of the corporation to honor its obligations is in doubt or the sale agreement has been breached or the product or service become non-performing, the value of the product or service to the public becomes impaired.

Accounting for marketing

There’s a new business paradigm for the marketing function that goes well beyond sales force effectiveness. Innovative technology and

communication methods facilitate information sharing across marketers and buyers in a supply chain. A single sale can generate a strong relation of entanglement which results into a less accurate measurement of sales. The marketing or sale of goods and services has an impact upon each and every financial component. The fundamental accounting equation is expressed in terms of three financial components:

A (Assets) = OE (Owners’ Equity) + L (Liability)

The balance sheet also contains all three financial components. Furthermore, accounting equation states that the total organizational assets are equal to the sum of liabilities and owner’s equity. Assets are future economic benefits visualized as a consequence of past transactions. Past transactions will invariably include the activities of the marketing department which can render the corporation into a certain obligation. Liabilities are probable future sacrifices of economic benefits arising from present strategic obligations. Equity is the residual interest in the assets after deducting the liabilities. Many marketers are ignorant of the fact that their conduct with particular reference to the mere sales transaction places accountants in a position of jeopardy and ambiguity when it comes to recording the entire sales conduct. When one talks of value adding impact of marketing, then one is talking of the impact that marketing has over owners’ equity. When a sale is concluded, assets in the form of cash on hand or accounts receivable would increase. Depending upon the selling price and the cost price of the merchandise sold, owners’ equity would either increase in the case of a profit or decrease in the case of a loss. Liabilities could increase should marketers make any promises such as product warranty, money-back guarantees and frequent consumption (loyalty) programs. Poor documentation of sales transactions, the wrong accounting for sales treatment, lack of transparency, weak internal controls, and fraudulent sales agreement can wreak havoc not only on corporate and personal reputations but also on profitability. The incidence of financial restatements associated with proper accounting for marketing will be a future trend. The areas of concern will be income recognition, how, when and where are the goods moved to. Bogus revenue will also be an issue within the confines of income recognition and finally, the misstatement of liabilities resulting in a misstatement of owners’ equity. The accounting

profession has long devoted considerable effort to defining the requisites for revenue recognition. No area has perplexed accountants more in recent years than revenue transactions

Income recognition and recording of sales

Prominent cases of the Securities Exchange Commission illustrate the problems of recording revenue. It would be vitally important to determine where accounting failures occurred and what lessons can be learned from those mistakes. Many of these releases relate to companies in high-growth areas such as technology, and the research identifies several high-risk areas that should be view with increased skepticism. When companies recognize revenue, they assert that a transaction actually occurred, and was recorded on a timely basis at the proper amount. A revenue transaction occurs when a company transfers goods or services to a customer, the earnings process has been substantially completed, and the likelihood of collection is reasonably assured. While revenue is generally recognized when service is rendered or merchandise is shipped, various problems may cast doubt on the economic substance of the transaction. Occasionally, a company may record sales revenue for goods that will be shipped later. For example, if the customer has a legitimate reason for requesting delayed shipment, such as a temporary lack of storage space, revenue recognition may be proper. Auditors must be unusually skeptical before accepting such revenue as legitimate. Assuming that bill-and-hold goods are material, the description and quantity of goods should be confirmed directly with the customer. In addition, the auditor should ascertain the business purpose behind the delayed shipment.

Frequently, customers are induced into accelerating purchases by offering discounts for buying seasonal merchandise months before they normally would. Although some companies may provide letters signed by the customer that request a delayed shipment, such a letter does not by itself provide adequate evidence that a revenue transaction has occurred, because the company may have persuaded the customer to write it. Some kind of direct customer contact is necessary in order to obtain critical information about the transaction. The accounting function must always consider the economic substance of the transaction before attesting to the client's

revenue presentation. Moreover, until recently an increasing number of sales transactions were accompanied by side letter agreements (SLA). Side Letter Agreements convey special rights to the customer where collection is made contingent on the ultimate resale to an end-customer. Identifying the existence of SLAs can be difficult, especially when the company's accounting personnel are unaware of them. Ultimately, the most effective safeguard is a reliable internal control system that prohibits side agreements and is aggressively monitored by top management and internal auditors. If such monitoring policies are absent, auditors should design procedures to search for SLAs. Experience shows that SLAs have often been used to enhance sales in the computer software and medical equipment industries.

Companies are aware that their auditors expect to see shipping documents to support sales entries. In malicious schemes, goods are shipped and shipping documents generated while the merchandise is routed to a warehouse controlled by the seller. A variation of this scheme is to ship merchandise to a freight forwarder, thus giving the impression that goods have been shipped to a customer. A freight forwarder accepts merchandise from clients and stores the goods until sufficient quantities are accumulated for shipment at favorable bulk rates. Freight forwarders can reduce shipping costs and improve service; however, a sales transaction should not be recorded until the freight forwarder releases the merchandise to the carrier. Shipments to controlled destinations may be difficult to detect. Auditors should examine shipping documents with skepticism. If the company uses freight forwarders, the auditor should exercise extreme caution about revenue transactions recorded near the client's fiscal year-end. Auditors should determine whether such goods were picked up by a freight forwarder, then contact the freight forwarder and determine whether the goods were released to the carrier by the fiscal year-end, a necessary requirement for revenue recognition. Finally, when customers have the right to return goods, the amount of sales revenue is contingent on the quantity of goods that may be returned. In these circumstances, revenue should not be recorded at the sale date unless the seller can make a reasonable estimate of returns. Where returns can be estimated, auditors must obtain evidence that an adequate allowance for sales returns is provided. The

ability to make reasonable predictions of returns will vary, and a high degree of predictive power is not always needed. To determine the required degree of accuracy, auditors should study the sales contract. The more liberal the firm's return policies, the greater the need for precision in estimating returns.

Fictitious Revenue

Fictitious revenue may be recorded in numerous ways. For example, a company might appear to have sold merchandise to a customer but also enter into another contract to purchase goods or services from the same customer. To make these schemes appear realistic, the company must receive cash payments from the purported customer and repay the customer later to cover the offsetting contract. The objective is to make the top-line revenue growth look better. An effective way to detect such a scheme is to compare a list of the company's customers with a list of its vendors. If a company appears on both lists and the transaction amounts are similar, the auditor should investigate further. Fictitious sales schemes are not always elaborate. Less complex methods include shipments of bogus products or defective products. Companies shipping goods to a customer and recording revenue, even though the customer had agreed only to evaluate the product, constitutes fictitious revenue. In some extreme cases, goods are shipped and booked as revenue although the customers had not ordered the goods. They should be skeptical about large revenue transactions recorded near the fiscal year-end. Companies trying to meet sales targets, supporting documentation should be examined with skepticism and due professional care. Purchase orders should be examined for conditional language that may indicate the sale is contingent on some future event. In reviewing purchase orders, auditors should look for cancellation clauses that could negate the sale. Auditors should read sales contracts and look for cancellation privileges and lapse dates. Revenue should not be recorded until the cancellation privilege lapses. The absence of a requested shipping date on a purchase order may indicate that the customer will notify the seller when shipment is to occur, which might mean that no exchange is presently being requested. While a careful review of documentation may identify fictitious revenue, analytical procedures may provide circumstantial evidence that revenue has been overstated. Accordingly, it is not surprising

to read of constant revenue misstatements. As business transactions become more complex, unscrupulous individuals will find new and innovative ways to distort revenue. Companies increasingly engaging in multiple-element transactions may obscure the proper revenue recognition rule. A critical question is whether the company can separate the product related revenue from the other services and thus allow the immediate recognition of the portion of the revenue that relates to the transfer of the product.

Deciding when it is appropriate to recognize revenue in the financial statements, and how much to recognize, is a much more complex task than it would appear to be. There is an extensive body of literature on the topic and many authoritative accounting standards have been issued over the years in an attempt to define both broad principles and specific guidance. Most organizations face a number of complex issues that must be considered in order to ensure that its revenue recognition practices comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Many authors have examined the various revenue recognition rules and have concluded that when the manipulation starts, it usually starts with the recognition of revenue. However, the impact of their incentive properties of accounting information in a principal-agency setting is yet to be considered on a wider scale. The recording of sales involving both product sales and customer services would become an increasing area of earnings management and manipulation. This would entail the manipulation of inventory levels and accounts receivable data to conceal the adverse side effects of the recording process of sales. Moreover, managers can control the timing of the firm's sales as a result income recognition and recording of sales that provide desirable incentives to CEOs will be utilized by corporations obsessed with playing the number game. It cannot be ignored that accrual accounting distinguishes revenues from cash inflows and expenses from cash outflows, recognizing the differences between income and cash flows as liabilities or assets. The principles which govern the recognition of revenues and expenses are the key determinants of the properties of accrual accounting information which can measure the financial impact of a wide variety of transactions, from the simplest retail exchange of cash for physical goods to

complex trades of intangible assets whose value and useful life is uncertain. Should there be flexibility, there also ought to be ambiguity, and where there is ambiguity, there is the opportunity for abuse.

Recording expenditure

Like income recognition expenditure poses another challenge. Expenditure can be capitalized or expensed. Expenses for some pervert reasons may be delayed resulting in an overstatement of net income and ultimately owners' equity. Capitalizing expenditure also has the same impact on owners' equity. The general rule is that those expenses incurred in generating the income that is recognized should be matched together. Companies that do not follow the matching principle tend to present distorted results. If a company capitalizes regular operating expenses, it is doing so inappropriately, most likely to artificially boost its operating cash flow and look like a more profitable company. Such companies cannot hide expenses forever, and this practice will be discovered within a short period of time.

Recording costs as expenses are most consistent with the GAAP matching principle. According to the matching principle, expenses should be recognized in the same reporting period as the related revenues. By amortizing its operating expenditures over multiple periods, companies are only recording a portion of the expenses in the reporting period that they occurred and generated revenue. This misreporting of costs as assets has detrimental effects on current and potential investors and creditors since it leads to inaccurate financial statements. By capitalizing the costs rather than expensing them as they occur, companies are overstating their net income because it did not include the full portion of expenses. Essentially, net income will be overstated by the costs capitalized during the fiscal year less the depreciation portion of capitalized items. Whether a cost is recorded initially as an asset or as an expense depends upon whether it is probable that future economic benefits will be obtained. By including the word "probable" in the phrase, it is noted that there is always a degree of uncertainty whether those future economic benefits will be received. Thus, whether a cost is accounted for as the acquisition of an asset or as the incurring of an expense depends, to some extent, upon management's expectations

regarding the future. When management thinks a cost incurred probably will result in acquiring future economic benefits, the accounting for the cost is to recognize an asset. Otherwise, the cost incurred is recognized as an expense of the period. Finally, not disclosing all expenses associated with the recognized revenue could have the same results as not disclosing all liabilities contingent or otherwise associated with the sale.

Conclusion

Earnings manipulation destroys incentives within the corporate hierarchy. Top management has incentives to over-report earnings. Revenue recognition must feature as a malice that is going to be increasingly used in the coming years. The determination of the quality of earnings is a task that needs to be taken more seriously. First, the revenue must be "earned," which is generally understood to mean that the sales process is complete. In the case of goods, legal title has been, or is on the verge of being, transferred to a willing buyer. In the case of services, the service in question has been rendered. The second requirement is that the seller has to be reasonably certain of collecting the money publicly claimed (or, in accounting parlance, *recognized*) as revenue. The history of accounting chicanery is in large part a history of many attempts—some of them more ingenious than others—to evade those two requirements. One of the simplest revenue recognition games is also one of the most common. Essentially, it is an attempt to dodge a rule known to every first-year accounting student: Goods shipped on consignment cannot be booked as revenue. Neither condition of revenue recognition has been fulfilled—ownership and its attendant risks have not been transferred, and since the goods might not even be sold, there can be no certainty of getting paid. This paper confirms that a universally accepted fact is that accounting standards are required to establish more clear benchmarks for certain accounting complexities and also to ensure that there are checks and balances in their implementation

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E-GOVERNMENT IN THE GCC

George Kostopolous

Introduction

The *Digital Age* has revolutionized the marketplace, as well as the business-to-consumer and business-to-business relations. Now, the same force is transforming the model and protocol of interaction in extra-government and intra-government communications. The result of this transformation has been a new relationship in *government-to-citizen*, G2C, *government-to-business*, G2B, and most important in *government-inter-agency*, G2G, communications that is now Web based. Considering that, governments are mainly information producers, rather than information receivers, the Internet presents it self as the ideal intermediary becoming the 24/365 passive call center for government-citizen interaction. Of course, nothing prevents it from being an interactive call center, as well, and this is where the ultimate challenge lies. Governments, around the world, and especially in the Gulf, responding to the society's continuously increasing cyber skills and wanting to capitalize on the Internet technologies, are funding numerous e-government projects aiming at enhancing their own productivity as well as that of their constituencies - citizenry and business alike. Most projects are Web based, while others are high-tech telecommunications based. Government administrations have recognized that an e-government portal - serving as the gateway to a National *Web Depository* - can simultaneously meet two important objectives, a national one and an international one. The national objective is operational and dual. On one hand, it is to serve as a *Depository of Documents* and a one-stop information center - and on the other, to be a fully interactive service provider with call center capabilities functioning as the government's *Transaction Processing System* offering tactical automation. The international objective is strategic and dual. On the other hand, it is to serve

as a worldwide *showcase*, and on the other, a permanent *promoter* of that country's political, cultural and business aims. In that respect, the GCC States, rather lead in e-government initiatives and in services delivery. Over the past two years, country after country, has initiated programs attempting to Web-enable the government-to-citizen and government-to-business interaction, also making it impersonal. This is significant *governance transformation* that will only have a positive impact on the path toward a transparent G2C relationship. In the area of education, the information and communication technology has become a cornerstone, and it is identified as "*the one and only international language*" [1]. As a result, similarly to the *digital firm*, more and more government agencies are moving employees from the *front office* to the *back office* of government service. Ultimately, the *front office* of government will be the Web, kiosks strategically located in areas of high foot traffic, as well as the SMS capabilities of the omni present mobile phones. While in most countries around the globe e-government is treated as unavoidable, in the Gulf, the e-government vision has been placed on the top of the government priorities and with very impressive results; often serving as a G2C interaction display. What is of special interest is that many e-government projects are remarkable strategic innovations, rather than merely online replicas of offline government services. Yet, in most cases, e-payments over e-government portals remain a goal to be attained.

Observation and Concerns

Despite the numerous advances in e-government, all across the Arabian Gulf - from Kuwait to Oman with exceptional vision displayed in Dubai - there is a widespread fear that the *digital divide* will make the fruits of e-government inaccessible to the majority of the society due

to lack of *cyber literacy*. Beyond the *digital divide*, an additional concern is also being expressed about another *divide*, namely the “*speed divide*” [2], where the haves will have broadband access to the Internet (10Mb/s), while the have-nots will have a mere telephone modem connection (56Kb/s). Consequently, the accessed content will be, respectively, *rich* and *poor*, at least when it comes to multimedia. “*Unless these infrastructure deficiencies are eliminated, the surge in Internet users ... will definitely cause problems.*” [3] The general fear is that the Internet access facilitators - the backbone access providers and the Internet service providers - in order to maximize their return on investment will not meet the access demand. As a result, the growth rate in Internet utilization will decline. Another concern is the way e-government projects are being reviewed and funded. Such projects in the Gulf appear to be “*budget-based projects rather than being in project-based budgets,*” [4] and “*to move from vision to reality, such a transformation needs a committed leadership, a sound strategy, a seamless cross-coordination between various agencies and organizations as well as the know-how.*” [3] Despite the various concerns, there is a very positive outlook toward e-government in the Gulf, with several believing that the e-government initiatives not only will show that the “*government is too rigid*” [5], but will also serve as an agent for change. As a result, there is a high expectation for government processes streamlining, modernization and reforms. The implementation of the e-government projects requires skilled human resources that not available within the governments themselves. Consequently, consultants and local partners are been contracted for assistance and most important for *technology transfer*.

Kuwait

The Emirate of Kuwait has been very active in e-government with a variety of projects and activities, such as, the development of a Judiciary Information Database, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme [6]. Organization of Kuwait’s first e-Government Conference sponsored by the Al-Faris Group “to create awareness among business and IT executive ... to deploy latest web technologies” [7]. The sponsorship of a large e-Government conference was held in Kuwait, in April 22-24, 2002, with the support of Microsoft [8]. The participation of a

wide range of consultants included the Al-Bared Group, which “has committed itself to finding a workable solution for the implementation of an e-government infrastructure in the State of Kuwait.” [9] In collaboration with the Kuwaiti government, FAPCO is in the advanced stages of setting up the infrastructure of E-Government services and solutions for the State of Kuwait. This project can be best defined as the first electronic public library in the Gulf, and will include more than 800 pages translated into six different languages. The website is an official source for all sorts of information, public data, geography, history, photos, and references about the State of Kuwait. [10] Kuwait having realized the need for a comprehensive and strategic plan for addressing the issue of developing and maintaining an e-government service “created the Secretariat for the Central Technical System” within the Ministry of Planning. In spring of 2002, Kuwait launched an international tender for proposals - based on a detailed e-Government Project “Product Specifications” - seeking responses from e-government experienced companies. [11].

Bahrain

The Kingdom of Bahrain has been the first to introduce e-voting. During February 14-15, 2001, the 200,000 Bahraini voters participated in a referendum where they had the opportunity to express their position in a variety of national issues. As a voter’s registration identification card, their CPR card (Central Population Registration Card) was used. The card has a significant amount of information on it that is optically encoded in a two-dimensional bar-code scheme. “The 2D barcodes on the card contain securely encrypted data to guarantee consistency of the personal information and the eligibility of the voter in a matter of seconds.” [12] The scheme is based on a technology developed by Symbol Technologies, Inc. [13].

Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia makes extensive use of the Web as a bulletin board, with the most visible e-government effort being the creation of a special website serving the informational needs of the Umra pilgrims. Initially designed as an extranet for use between the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and the travel agent and tour operators,

it is eventually growing into a major portal for all related services, such as visas, and travel and accommodation reservations. The site's mission is "to fully exploit the emerged driving force of the Internet technology" for the logistical support of the Umra pilgrimage [14].

Qatar

The Emirate of Qatar has launched a thirty month e-government effort designed to e-enable all government. The starting point is a pilot program addressing the renewal of the resident permits. The project was implemented within two months, opening the way for similar initiatives in other operations, such as passports and other permits. The Qatari vision goes beyond the Web replication of the G2C and the G2B operations aiming at "e-knowledge" delivery [15]. The Qatari government already has a large database with *a single view of the individual*. This is an individual's file that contains all aspects of the G2C relationship. The objective is to extend access to such files to all government agencies, and to have all government agencies make relevant data contributions to that master database. The vision includes the use of additional front-end delivery channels, beyond the Internet, such as kiosks and SMS via mobile phones. While there is budget and determination to realize numerous e-government projects, "There is a curve involved ... (and) more experience ... (to be gained before) ... rolling these systems out." [16].

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates, especially the Emirate of Dubai, stand as the undisputed leader in e-government, where the "the crown prince has launched his own website <http://www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae>, as a platform for Internet technology and digital medium for facilitating contact between the leader and his people". In Dubai, among the numerous initiatives, one of the most ingenious ones is the use of the Internet for the completion of tourist visa applications, where the application when printed displays a computer readable two-dimensional bar code that represents the entered information. As a result, the associated staff was reduced to half, while the application processing time decreased from days to hours. "In the high

season this can run at over 3,000 visas per day" [17]. In Dubai, a program has been implemented where citizens can subscribe with the police department and receive "up-to-the-minute traffic reports" and other information via SMS (Short Message Services). Another high tech service is the department's WAP site. Here, citizens can scroll through it, viewed on their cell phone, and find information needed on the road, such as the nearest police station. The department also has on its website a link to the stolen cars database, kiosks located in shopping malls where motorists may find out if they have any outstanding speeding tickets entered by the radar cameras [18]. Dubai has also introduced an e-wallet called *m-Dirham*, after the name of the country's currency. In this scheme the citizen deposits money in a third party financial institution from where transfers can be electronically made to pay permit fees, fines and the like [19]. In an effort to integrate the woman in the mainstream of employment, several IT training programs are being implemented in the Arabian Gulf, including one in Dubai in cooperation with UNESCO, addressed to women. Indeed, "technology presents immense opportunities for women to make productive use of their talents without breaking the conventions of society." [20] The above is only a sample of the long list of currently operational e-government projects undertaken by the Dubai police department. It is apparent that the Dubai e-government initiative is one of the most citizen-centric regional efforts serving as an example not only in the GCC region but worldwide.

Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is currently implementing a *holistic* approach to the e-concepts moving towards an *e-Oman* foundation, which consists of e-government, e-commerce, e-learning and other e-services. After having realized the breadth and the depth of the needed technological and change-managerial skills, the Omani government formed an ad hoc taskforce, which has sought the services of international consulting houses to lead them through the maze of e-government design. In an effort to learn from the mistakes of

others, rather than from their own, the taskforce is studying e-government implementation applied elsewhere, places like the UK, Dubai, and Virginia. The taskforce wants to “remove the stupid rules and regulations and put the whole process on the Internet,” and to serve as the e-Oman “godfather” [21]. Addressing the issue of cyber illiteracy and digital divide, Oman has initiated numerous programs on computer and Internet literacy, especially for the Omani women, hoping to at least partially bridge the gap.

Conclusion

In researching e-government in the GCC, the following major issues were identified. **Change Management:** How the old bureaucracies will give place to the e-technocracies, and how the old rules and regulations that provided importance and job security to the mandarins of the ministries will be declared irrelevant in today’s globalization. **Cadre Creation:** The realization of

any e-government requires a hard core of *techie*s to design and develop the e-government and an army of IT savvy civil service to use the e-government machinery. Where will the former come from and how will the latter acquire that IT savvy. **The Publics’ Cyber Literacy:** When a government builds a superhighway, soon after its completion the motorists flood it; it is because they have a car and know how to drive. On the other hand, when a government builds its e-government superhighway will the citizens use it? In closing, in the Arabian Gulf, the e-government vision is slowly, but surely and steadily, becoming a reality creating a trilateral *win-win-win* situation for all – the government, the businesses and the citizen. Giving credit where it belongs, it must be stated that the Dubai e-government is the asymptote model all others try to reach. However, how can an asymptote be reached when it continuously attains higher and higher levels?

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