

Cultural Pathways and Peacebuilding

Notes

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1. Ethnic Conflicts on the increase

- Globalization brings people together, but doesn't provide interpretation, doesn't mediate
- Global security demands that cross-cultural dissonance is reduced
- Sets of ethnic values, habits, perspectives and expectations ("pathways") in conflict.
- A Globalizing world needs vehicles for interpreting, mediating and bridging cultural differences.

2. Problem is worsened by the fact that pathways are "implicit" or tacit.

- People are not reflectively aware of them.
- They are lived; not thought about.
- They are not acknowledged or understood.
- Mediation and bridging starts with acknowledgement and understanding.

3. A major source of conflict arises from miscommunication between Chiefly vs. Non-Chiefly groups.

In WAF there are four discernable themes:

Chiefly Groups	vs.	Non-Chiefly Groups
Hit-Man		Run-Man
Big-Man		Small-Man
God-Man		Earth-Shrine-Man
Land-Man		Earth-Man

Chiefly Groups	Non-Chiefly Groups
HIT-MAN	RUN-MAN
Active, pro-active, Assertive, confident	Less active, not pro-active, less assertive, let things be
Want to "take charge" of the situation	Last thing they want is to "take charge"
Want to be in control; run things	Don't want to impose on the freedom of others
Residence:	Residence:
Live in towns and cities; rub shoulders with people	Live far in the bush, away from people & conflicts
Want to be around people	Dangerous to be around people
Organize & manage people	Respect the freedom of others and they respect yours
Socialization:	Socialization:
Learn to manage power from an early age	Learn to avoid conflicts from early age
All relations are hierarchical	All relations are egalitarian; hierarchies = repugnant
Each rung has its chiefs (more chiefs than Indians)	No chiefs; the very notion of chiefs is abhorrent
Ritual authority is co-mingled with political; but ritual authority is always subordinate to political	Clan elders are ritual advisors; spiritual leadership does lead to political when common good is at stake
Everybody is telling each other what to do	No one tells another what to do
The ancestors of chiefs are our chiefs	The ancestors are our chiefs

Freedom = knowing one's place in the hierarchy	Freedom = highest value
Respect = acting according to hierarchical roles	Pursuit of their ends without being hampered by their neighbours.
Hierarchies exist in animal kingdom: higher and lower	Extends equally to man, animals, nature
	Reason for war: "our animals must be free to roam"
	Only works when few people; far apart
Proverb: If you do not kick back you are weak!	Proverb: If you do not kick back your leg is weak!
If you don't retaliate you are made to eat faeces! HIT	Live and let live; move on; stay out of trouble; RUN
If your opponent runs you pursue	If your opponent runs good for him and for you.
Quarrels are settled at chief's court	Quarrels are not settled; grow until explode
Parties in conflict are held apart	Vendetta: quarrels are inherited and passed on
Ancestors reinforce peaceful life.	Ancestors reinforce vendetta
No fear of vendetta	Fear vendetta and avoid it at all costs
Experience non-chiefly groups as "over-reacting" irrational behaviour; especially when they suddenly turn and fight.	Experience chiefly groups are too pushy, aggressive, irrational behaviour; especially when they pursue.
Experience non-chiefly groups as "disrespectful of authority"	Experience chiefly peoples as disrespectful of laws of freedom = law of nature.
Think they are defending their "Nam" (rule)	Don't give 2 cents for anybody's "rule"
Conquest and victory are important features in conflict	No conquest (cuz no rule); no victory (merely want to be left alone); only retaliation and punishment
BIG-MAN	SMALL-MAN
Big chief >chief>little chief>littlest chief> non-chiefs	All equal; no chiefs; no big men; no orders; no ladder
Big-man system needs small men	No hierarchy; no need for big-man or small-man
Give and take orders	No orders given or carried out
All chiefly peoples see all non-chiefly peoples as being on the lowest rung of their hierarchy	No hierarchy; no relationship; Spirit world supreme
God is final "big man" and highest power	Ancestors and Earth Spirit are highest powers
Authority is from God	Authority is from Earth Spirit through ancestors
GOD-MAN	EARTH-MAN
Chiefly peoples "know" God (via Islamic influence)	Non-chiefly peoples can't "know God"
"Pray" (influenced by Religions of the book)	Make sacrifices to ancestors and Earth Shrine
Use relationship with God to control Earth Spirits	Can't control Earth Spirits
No fear of Earth Spirits	Fear Earth Spirits
Islam and chieftaincy go together	Resistant to Islam; only "know" what ancestors said
Control over Spirits of the Earth =	No ultimate control over Earth Spirits & others
Control over those who depend on these spirits	Depend on these spirits
Control over the land	Depend on the Earth/Land
Hierarchy is implicit in concept of High God	No notion of hierarchy or how God is related to creation
The "Nam" originates in God; his authority	No idea about God or Nam; Beyond them
Long contact with Islam (9 th C Mali Empire)	Antipathetic toward Muslim/Raiders
Chieftaincy = God's "sky stone" = sovereignty	Earth Stone = sovereignty
God <i>reveals</i> true relationships in nature (hierarchies)	No revelation of God
Makes Traders & Raiders possible	Impossible to cross territorial barriers

LAND-MAN	EARTH-MAN
Land-Man = master of a secular world	Earth-man is part of a larger, all pervasive sacred reality
Man has dominion; takes charge, controls, manipulates	Reality has dominion over man; man follows rules
Controls nature, shapes own destiny, change	Man appeals to and tries to control powers of the spirit world through ancestors (attempts are a "lie")
Nature defers to higher "order" of creation	No one can "own" the Earth or control it
	Earth "owned" by the Spirits (esp. Earth Spirits)
Modern interp: Land ownership is possible	Land ownership is impossible.

Main issues:

- Conflicting pathways lead to conflicts
- Pathways are implicit, tacit, unreflected on.
- This prevents insight and understanding
- They need to be exposed, reflected on, addressed and changed.

Culture-Drama is a new vehicle for carrying this process along.

Uses methods of psycho-drama but applies them to cultural pathways; not individual neuroses.

- Uses reverse roles to expose underlying expectations and presuppositions of each group.
- Then discusses and clarifies their discoveries
- The groups come to accept their pathways and the fact that they conflict with those of other groups.
- Come to envision a model "peace culture" blending the two constructively.
- Depend on the other group to mentor, direct and guide the changing process.
- Begin in drama format, workshops etc.
- Extend the new pathways to the real world through re-socialization processes.

Importance of the enactments using reverse roles and "shadowing"

- Enables participants to discover each others pathways
- The stereotypes of both sides are also laid bare
- Participants begin to acknowledge and accept their own pathways
- Participants are empowered to freely reveal and demonstrate their real responses
- The mutual help continues to build trust and a new foundation for relationship
- This trust becomes the glue of the new relationship toward a "peace culture" pathway
- This brings about the acceptance by each group of their own pathways
- And the realization that elements must change for there to be a common culture of peace.
- Through the humble stance of dependency (readiness to learn from the other) each is led to engage with the process of change toward a mutually fulfilling pathway.
- This manifests itself through the urge to begin to cooperate in building something new together, something that grows out of the new "peace culture" pathway.