How Two Oral Traditions Teach For Peace:

Commonalities In How Oral Inuit And Oral Islamic Traditions Teach For Peace

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Abstract

This thesis conducted an empirical study to assess how oral Inuit and oral Islamic traditions teach for peace. The initial thesis was premised on two categories: *I argue that within oral Inuit and oral Islamic knowledges are principles of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The first principle of peacemaking within both these traditions is self-temperance, or starting peace with oneself.* This empirical study consisted of 5 interviews; 3 of these interview respondents identified as Muslim, while 2 interview respondents identified as Inuit. The interview results were presented through the lens of the Inuit Qaujimajatugangit ("IQ") framework and findings, and discussion was presented after the data analysis. During the empirical research, the following findings were uncovered: all participants proposed a synonym for peace; that peace fosters and facilitates other virtues; that modelling is necessary to teach peace; that peace education requires strategic problem solving; and that learning from other traditions can augment our own peacemaking sbilities and help us better understand how religion influences our understanding of peace. Some of the lessons identified for school settings include the following: peace starts in the mind; the powerless can create and feel peace; peace requires acceptance of and promotion of diversity and plurality; peace should be taught through stories and oral traditions; and that, storytelling has to go hand in hand with modelling.

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Chapter 1: A Repeated Vision That Led Me To The Field Of Education – An Introduction And Personal History

This chapter starts with a self-location and a brief review of how I became interested in the field of education and how I am connected to the Indigenous communities of Canada. I then present a Venn diagram that identifies the intersection investigated through this thesis, while explaining each of the three domains named in the diagram. This is followed by an introduction of the two categories contained within the literature review. I conclude the chapter by stating the intended goal of my research.

My Background

Kovach (2010) states in her seminal work, "Knowing why we carry out research – our motive – has the potential to take us places that involve both the head and the heart" (p. 120). Thus, Kovach encourages each of us to know the intention behind our research. Creswell and Creswell (2018) echo this point when they state that, "Researchers recognize their own backgrounds shape their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their personal, cultural and historical experiences" (p. 8). Wilson (2004) states in his abstract, "Through relationality and relational accountability, Indigenous scholars enter into a process of developing relationships with ideas, in order to increase understanding or achieve enlightenment." Smith (2021) suggests that "research … [is] … a significant site of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West and the interests and ways of resisting of the Other" (p. 31). In this context, the "Other" is defined as someone who is distinct from the West; this distinction can be due to ontology amongst other distinguishing factors. It is because of these pre-existing binaries between the West and the other that it is essential to explain to the reader, as well as the researched

population, what my intentions are behind this research, what motivates me to study this topic, and how I hoped to honour the interests and ways of the other. Thus, an attempt will be made through this section to establish relationality with the research focus and project. I share below a small story of my relationship to the topic. Through the rest of this thesis, I hoped to remain mindful of the idea that "We are all speaking from our hearts, knowing that our actions today enact timeless and relational storyworlds of our ancestors of tomorrow" (Archibald et al., 2019, p. 13).

The Vision That Led Me To Education

Kovach (2010) writes in her epilogue about a repeated sign she saw in the form of a necklace (p. 182). My journey to the field of education is similar. While completing my first degree in Peace and Conflict Studies, I arrived at my overarching research and career objective, which is a *focus on action-oriented field research, with special interest in the exploration of different cultures' understanding of peace and how these traditions can be used as leverage in peace-building activities*. After dedicating myself to the study on how to build peace for over a decade, a chronic health diagnosis did not allow me to continue working in the field of international development. I was desperate for a fulfilling career, but I was limited by my health diagnosis. I spent many years, specifically from 2016 to 2018, praying intensely to the Creator or Allah, both of whom I see as one deity with a diversity of names. I would beg for a sign that things were going to get better, that I was going to be able to find another vocation that would speak to my "head and heart" (Kovach, 2010, p. 120), finding knowledge that fulfills my emotional and cognitive needs. Often, in the midst of intense prayer, I would see visions while in the state between nodding off to sleep yet still being conscious of what my mind was projecting. During these few years, I repeatedly saw the sister of an acquaintance. When I started seeing her

in my visions, I interpreted that there was a connection that the Creator was trying to convey through her vocational path. Kovach (2010) writes that "The dream in and of itself has informed me, but the knowledge process is just more than me having that dream… It includes the process of doing whatever I have to do for that dream to become reality" (p. 70).

Similarly, Cormier (2016) wrote,

I question the value or meaning of experiences, signs and symbols. I accomplish this by asking myself, why was I given this experience? What is it that I am meant to learn from this action, sign, or symbol? How do I interpret its meaning? (p. 145)

A similar suggestion came from an Elder who said that "Knowledge is a gift from the Creator that belongs to all people. You are simply a transmitter of ideas. You (individuals) don't own ideas, they belong to people. People make them a reality" (as cited in Cormier, 2016, p. 124). Thus, after spending some time deciding what lesson I am supposed to harvest from this repeated vision, I decided to apply for a Bachelor of Education degree, hoping that this was the interpretation.

After completion of this degree, I was offered a full-time teaching position at a public school in the Inuit village of Kangirsuk, Quebec; around the same time, I was given an opportunity to pursue the Master of Education program at Lakehead University. I saw the fact that doors to academia were finally opening as a gift and a miracle from the Creator. I wanted to examine how best I could "pay it forward", as the term goes colloquially, and I realized that the greatest contribution I can make is one that enables me to research on the topics of, and the intersection between, peace and peace education. After much thought, I came back to my original research objective – looking at how traditions and cultures can be leveraged for peacekeeping and peacemaking. I also decided that I wanted to produce work which would

combine my prior training from the field of peace studies with the training in the education field I was receiving through my B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees. If I were to present my research focus visually, this is what it would look like (see Figure 1):

Figure 1

My Research Focus
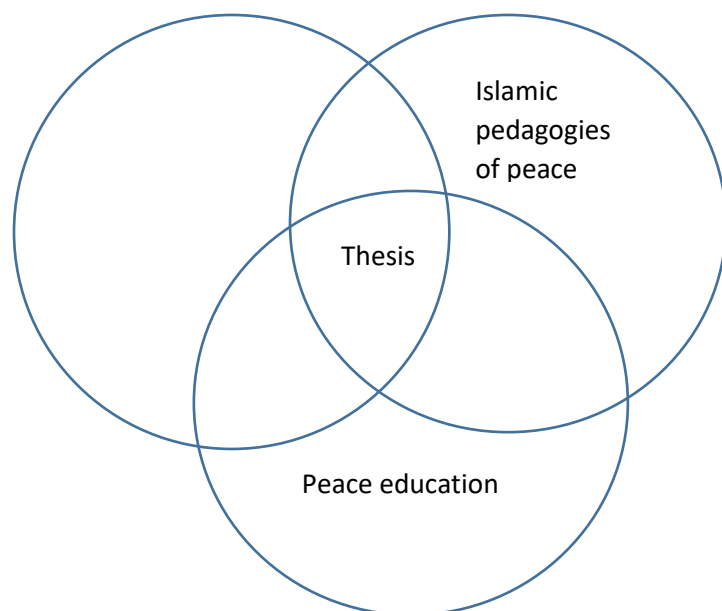
Consequently, after looking at the areas of knowledge I had (i.e. Islamic pedagogies of peace), and the areas of knowledge I was curious about (i.e. Indigenous pedagogies for peace), I thought I could achieve my objectives if I chose to investigate the common space between Indigenous pedagogies of peace, Islamic pedagogies of peace, and peace education.

Definition Of Education And Peace Education

Education

Various and diverse definitions of education exist. For example, if we were to examine the introduction in a Philosophy of Education textbook used for a Master's in Adult Education degree program, the editor, Curren (2007) writes that "'education' refers in its primary sense to more—or—less systemic practices of supervising and guiding the activities of persons in ways

intended to promote valuable forms of learning and development" (p. 3). He suggests that education is a "form of governance" (p. 3) and that educators "endeavor to cultivate the intellectual and moral virtues essential to good judgement, to nurture capabilities that would provide the basis of lives worth living and to enable each student to understand the circumstances before her" (p. 4). Curren (2007) goes on to suggest that education promotes "prudent and effective self-determination" (p. 4). This quotation is provided as an example of a definition of education.

However, for our purposes, I wish to adopt a spiritual perspective on, and definition of, education. In her chapter on Islamic peace education, Asna Husin (2010) writes that

> Education has always been the cornerstone of Islamic civilization, for religious and nonreligious occupations. But theologically, education is connected to understanding the presence of Divine in all things, through the Qur'anic messages of vertical God – human relations (*habl min allah*) and horizontal human – to – human connections (*habl min al-nas*). (p. 151)

I define education as inclusive of all forms of learning; for instance, formal schooling, peer learning, and professional settings. I synthesize the thoughts presented by the two philosophers mentioned above, and I define education as *any experience or process through which a person reassesses and expands their cognitive frames, with the end goal being to govern oneself in a way to maximize service to creation and worship of the Creator*. I believe that education is the key to true positive transformation of the individual as well as at the collective or societal level.

Peace Education

Now that I have presented a definition of education and specifically, education from an Islamic perspective, I will present a definition of peace education. Within the 1975 UNESCO Statement of Purposes for Worldwide Educational Policy, peace education is defined as:

> An international dimension at all levels of education: understanding and respect for all peoples, their cultures, values, and ways of life; furthermore awareness of the interdependence between peoples and nations' abilities to communicate across cultures; and last, but not least, to enable the individual to acquire a critical understanding of problems at the national and international level (Deutsch UNESCO Kommission, 1975, p. 8) (Harris, 2004, p. 10).

The assumption made in this paper is that peace is foremost taught culturally, first within our families and then, local communities. Speaking about peace education, Harris (2004) suggests that peace education has five main postulates and that there are five different types of peace education (Harris, 2004, p. 6). These five types of peace education, namely international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education, all "have in common the attempt to explain different forms of violence and provide information about alternatives to violence" (Harris, 2004, p. 6). Harris (2004) suggests that "Because the concept 'peace' implies a withdrawal from the world into a space of peace and quiet, peace education is not attractive to social activists who want to confront structural inequalities" (p. 8). I disagree with this suggestion that the concept of peace implies a reserved stoicism, and instead, suggest that research such as what I have undertaken for my thesis is needed so that we can interrogate and understand what images, stories and synonyms the word "peace" and "peace education" brings up in Inuit and Islamic cultures.

Harris and Morrison write that peace educators "hope that through education people can develop certain thoughts and dispositions that will lead to peaceful behavior. Key aspects of this disposition include kindness, critical thinking and cooperation" (as cited in Harris, 2004). Saloman (2006) echoes this as he writes, "when we speak of really making a difference, we mean changes that can be widely applied outside the temporal and spatial confines of a peace education program, being worthwhile, lasting, and somewhat generalizable" (p. 40). Thus, if I had to define my goal as a researcher, it would be to investigate ways in which Inuit and Islamic knowledge keepers and educators enable people to develop dispositions and thoughts which then lead to lasting, worthwhile, peaceful behaviour daily, within and outside of peace education programs.

While Harris (2004) teaches us about liberal peace, and cites Kant (p. 11), reminding us about the categorization of negative and positive peace (Harris, 2004, p. 12), I hoped to enter my research without a fully formed definition of peace. I hoped the research participants whom I interviewed would define peace and peace education for me, and thus, all I need to bring to the table is active, compassionate listening. Thus, at the outset, I establish that I did not want to define peace or peace education for the research participants. I wanted the research participants to refer to whatever they think of, when they think of the terms "peace" and "peace education", through response to my interview prompts using their existing and pre-established understandings or assumptions.

However, for the sake of establishing definitions, Fisk's categorizations are presented below as cited by Harris (2013) from p. 188-189.

Fisk's (2000) peace education categories—education for peace, education about peace, and peace through education—are helpful for understanding the myriad of

understandings and approaches to peace education. Education for peace refers to the goal

of the education. Including peace, non-violence, social justice and non-violent conflict

resolution, including critical analysis, in the curriculum is education about peace. Peace

through education focuses on the pedagogy and cultural practice of education, in effect

implementing problem-posing and humanist pedagogy in the classroom. Fisk's peace

through education reflects Harris and Morrison's (2003) description of peace education

as a process that "involves empowering people with the skills, attitudes and knowledge to

create a safe world and build a sustainable environment. The philosophy teaches

nonviolence, love, compassion and reverence for all life" (p. 9).

Moving forward, it is suggested that each tradition, Inuit and Islamic, has a pedagogy of peace

through which they perform education for peace, education about peace, and peace through

education.

Indigenous Pedagogies For Peace

Battiste (2013) tells us that very few provinces and territories have articulated standards

for teaching Indigenous knowledge (p. 169). Thus, through this research project, I hoped to

firstly learn and maybe help others articulate standards for teaching Indigenous knowledges on

the topic of peace education. Madden (2019) speaks about the importance of understanding

"Indigenous approaches for establishing and maintaining respectful relationships without looking

at reconciliation or peacekeeping only from a colonial perspective" (p. 287). The author further

states,

Most Indigenous nations do not have a word for reconciliation in their own languages.

However, spiritual ceremonies, peacemaking practices, and stories have been used since

time immemorial to establish and maintain good relations, restore harmony, heal conflict

and harm, and practice justice. (Madden, 2019, p. 293)

This research aimed to study these ceremonies, practices, and stories that Inuit have used

to restore harmony and heal from conflict for millennia. This research also hoped to promote the

right to narrate, where this right "allows learners to place themselves within collective histories"

(Erikson, 2018, p. 30). This thesis can also be perceived as a small effort to fight epistemicide,

where epistemicide is defined as an attempt to "sever Indigenous peoples from traditional

education and traditional knowledges" (Laing & Wilson, 2019, p. 133). Echoing this point about

the presence of knowledge and education systems, Wilson (2019) states,

We have had our own education systems and our own ways of teaching and learning that

we developed and used over tens of thousands of years. It was only a few hundred years

ago that non-Indigenous people arrived in our territories, bringing and ultimately

imposing their own ways of teaching and learning on Indigenous people. (p. 137)

For the purposes of this thesis, the specific Indigenous peace pedagogy relied upon are the 8 IQ

principles, as proposed by the Inuit in various parts of Canada. The data presentation chapter of

this thesis presents further information on what these 8 IQ principles are and why they are

important to the Inuit worldview.

Islamic Pedagogies Of Peace

As someone who actively identifies as Muslim, I find a lot of my motivation through the

Quran. I would like to share with readers a relevant excerpt of the Quran. Since the Quran can

seem obtuse to the untrained reader, Quranic excerpts are supported or explained through a

correlating exegesis, or explanation of that excerpt. In Arabic, we refer to this exegesis as

"tafseer". Through this quote, I share with you my motivations for studying peacemaking from an Islamic lens.

The critical consideration behind this verse and its explanation is that we were made different so that we could get to know each other; thus, conversation or dialogue can be considered a religious imperative so that we can actualize the wisdom due to which God made us in different appearances, temperaments, and choices. I come to this conclusion through a reading of the verse that occurs in the chapter called al-Hujurat, meaning the Private Apartments.

Chapter 49, verse 13 states,

O humankind! Truly We create you from a male and a female, and We made you peoples and tribes that you may come to know one another. Surely the most noble of you before God are the most reverent of you. Truly God is Knowing, Aware. (*The Study Quran*, 2015)

To support interpretation, I will quote a portion from *The Study Quran,* the most recent attempt at providing an exhaustive English language exegesis for the Quran:

That people have been divided into diverse peoples and tribes that they may come to know one another indicates the manner in which differences in tribe, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, and religion can be sources through which human beings gain a deeper appreciation for the reality of the human condition…The outward diversity that divides human beings is thus one of the greatest tests that human beings confront in the life of this world. (Dagli, 2015, p. 1262)

In fact, this focus on the existence of diversity as something manifested due to divine wisdom is echoed in chapter 5, verse 48,

And had God willed, He would have made you one community, but, [He willed

otherwise], that He might try you in that which he has given you. So compete with one

another in good deeds. Unto God shall be your return all together, and He will inform

you of that wherein you differ (*The Study Quran*, 2015).

The exegesis states,

This late Madinan verse thus signals a revamping of the moral order to one in which true

worth is no longer determined by lineage, nationality, and grandiose displays of valour

and generosity, but by the depth of faith and piety. In this vein, the Prophet is reported to

have said, Today, all the people, be they white, black, Qurayshi, Arab or non-Arab, are

seen to be descendants of Adam. (Dagli, 2015, p. 1262)

The above citation makes clear to me that Islamically, the normative belief is that God, Allah or

the Creator, had embedded wisdom in creating different tribes of humans and species; it is a

widely held Islamic belief that if the Creator desired for all of us to be of the same race, that the

Creator could have chosen to do just that. However, the wisdom behind the diversity within our

races, cultures, traditions, languages, and species is to add richness and diversity to the human

and non-human experience. The other commonly propagated Islamic belief is that attributing

superiority to any group of people is considered arrogance, the supreme sin, and that one must

never use the diversity within creation to fall into the habit of tribalism.

Overview Of Literature Review

I argue that both Islamic and some Inuit knowledges have principles of peacekeeping and

peacemaking. The first principle of peacemaking within both these traditions is self-temperance,

and starting peace with oneself. The literature review describes the observed similarities between

oral Inuit and oral Islamic traditions. I have categorized these observations into two broad

themes: (a) the importance of leveraging Indigenous and Islamic cultures and traditions for peacekeeping and peacemaking, and (b) the importance of self-temperance as a step towards advancing peace with our surroundings.

A note needs to be made about the significant amount of text from the Quran which is employed within the Discussion and Analysis chapter of this thesis, even though they are not employed or canvassed within the Literature Review chapter. Traditionally, the Discussion and Analysis chapter attempts to triangulate between the literature review and the data obtained during the research process. However, given that this research paper examines oral traditions, Quranic verses are often used in lieu of traditional academic literature. This is because Quranic verses have been transmitted through generations through oral tradition. In fact, this practice of preserving and transmitting the core Islamic sources of knowledge (Quran and Hadith) primarily through oral narration and through oral tradition is seminal in maintaining and understanding the Islamic tradition. Thus, the usage of Quranic verses to engage in a process of triangulation is intentional. Lumbard (2024) speaks about the obstacle faced within academia in the process of incorporating orally transmitted Islamic knowledge when he writes,

> Throughout the Muslim world, the imposition of foreign educational systems and teaching methodologies often leads to a hermeneutical impasse. An epistemologically westernized elite shapes societal institutions according to the norms of the international neoliberal 'order.' Yet local communities, even in the wealthiest of countries that derive material benefits from the neoliberal international order, live in tension with myriad systems that are at odds with their values and traditions. (p. 2)

Thus, the usage of Quranic texts within the Discussion and Analysis chapter is supposed to achieve the very goal of resisting cognitive imperialism by contesting what literature can be

quoted within academic writings, and consequently, what content can be used to validate research findings. While some may argue that the defining feature of academic literature is that it is peer-reviewed, and that Quranic text does not meet this requirement of veracity, the inclusion of Arabic text prior to each Quranic verse is meant to address this need for veracity. Through the inclusion of Arabic source text, the content of any Quranic verse can be verified and translated independently, as the Quran exists within the public domain.

Goal Of Research

I have been told by some Indigenous Elders that the medicine wheel teachings suggest that there are four races of man: white, black, red, and yellow, and this is why the medicine wheel consists of four colors. This concept brings our attention to a commonality between certain Indigenous traditions and the Islamic worldview in how we are to understand the existence of different skin colours, languages and cultures. Kalin (2013) attempts to answer how and why, in spite of this inherent respect for difference, religion becomes a source of violence. He writes:

> The only valid criticism the secularist can raise against religion is that religions have not developed effective ways of protecting themselves from such manipulations and abuses... Religions are vulnerable when they fail to find ways of preventing the use of force in their names. This becomes especially acute when they fall short of inculcating a consciousness of peace and non-violence in the minds and hearts of their followers. (pp. 217-218)

Thus, I assert we should all work toward this goal of "inculcating a consciousness of peace and non-violence" (Kalin, 2013, p. 218) within the minds and hearts of the followers of a religious or spiritual belief system.

This research project examines the similarities and differences between Islamic belief systems and Inuit spirituality. As someone who practices the metaphysical branch of Islam called Sufism, I have seen many commonalities between Sufi beliefs and some of the beliefs contained within Inuit spirituality. I will examine this intersection, focusing on the commonalities between how Inuit and Islamic traditions teach for peace. Through this thesis, I hoped to look at ways in which Muslim immigrants to Turtle Island can co-exist with Indigenous peoples in a non-hegemonic manner and serve as allies. In this context, hegemony is defined as "The imposition of dominant group ideology onto everyone in society" (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017, p. 73).

The goal of this research is to derive lessons about traditional mechanisms of peacemaking, and later share these lessons with school boards such as Kativik llisarniliriniq (KI) and private, Muslim schools in Canada. To achieve this goal, the primary research question I will investigate is: *What are the commonalities in how oral Inuit tradition and oral Islamic tradition teach for peace?* The four secondary research questions I explored with knowledge keepers of each of the two traditions under examination are: *What is peace? How do you maintain peace culturally? What are some stories you can tell us about peace? How can we teach and practice peace within the public and private school systems, in spite of the deeply embedded cultural colonialism present within these systems?*

My Relationship To Indigenous Communities In Canada

Archibald (2008) writes that "Identifying one in relation to place and family is part of knowing how one fits within the collective or larger cultural group, which is part of the holistic Indigenous framework" (p. 88). Thus, I share that I suspect I am an Indigenous person of the Indian subcontinent in South Asian.

Nevertheless, Wilson's reference to Indigenist versus Indigenous (Wilson, 2007, pp. 193-194) gives me a way to enter the conversations on Indigenous research approaches, while I do not identify as an Indigenous person of Canada. In explaining what an Indigenist paradigm is, I quote Wilson (2007),

I use Indigenist to name or label the paradigm that I am talking about rather than Indigenous. It is my belief that an Indigenist paradigm can be used by anyone who chooses to follow its tenets. It cannot and should not be claimed to belong only to people with "Aboriginal" heritage. To use an analogy, one does not need to be female to be a feminist. Researchers do not have to be Indigenous to use an Indigenist paradigm, just as researchers do not have to be "white" to use a Western paradigm. Nor do Indigenous researchers have to use an Indigenist paradigm. It is the use of an Indigenist paradigm that creates Indigenous knowledge. This knowledge cannot be advanced from a mainstream paradigm. That would simply be mainstream knowledge about Indigenous peoples or topics. It is the philosophy behind our search for knowledge that makes this new knowledge a part of us, part of who and what we are. And it is then the choice to follow this paradigm, philosophy, or world view that makes research Indigenist, not the ethnic or racial identity of the researcher.

Wilson's statement stood in contrast with Tuhiwai-Smith's (2012) statement that for Indigenous methodology, "Its members position themselves quite clearly as Indigenous researchers who are informed academically by critical and often feminist approaches to research, and who are grounded politically in specific indigenous contexts and histories, struggles and ideals" (p. 35). In the later chapter, I defend my decision to adopt an Indigenist paradigm without

possession of Indigenous ancestry in Canada and also further speak to the relationship between Indigenist and indigenous methodologies.

Conclusion

One of the well-known Hadith, or sayings of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), purports that knowledge is the lost property of a believer; traditional teachers have suggested that this refers to all knowledge, and thus, seeking knowledge from others becomes incumbent on anyone seeking to increase in their faith. Thus, one goal of this research was to learn from the Inuit peacemaking traditions. By learning about teachings that survived tens of thousands of years, I was able to relate these teachings to my own Islamic tradition. In addition, through this thesis, I have endeavoured to distance myself from the roles of a colonizer-ally or a colonizer-perpetrator and to work toward embodying the role of a decolonizing teacher (Higgins, 2015, p. 253).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In the introduction chapter of this thesis, I spoke to my current understanding of education and its role in personal development. After establishing basic definitions and motivations, I presented the thesis of this research project, which is as follows: *I argue that within oral Inuit and oral Islamic knowledges are principles of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The first principle of peacemaking within both these traditions is self-temperance, or starting peace with oneself.* The literature review chapter provides an overview of the literature relevant literature as it relates to the two thesis statements stated above.

The literature review was conducted through the following two strategies: first, readings were suggested by my thesis supervisor during a directed reading course that I completed on the topic of Indigenous peacebuilding and conflict resolution. The latter two subsections of this chapter review the relevant literature from that directed reading course. Next, a search of journals found on the Taylor and Francis Online website was completed, and the first subsection of this literature review provides an overview of the keywords used and the results derived through a search of the relevant journal articles. Thus, during the first search strategy, the scope was determined by my thesis supervisor and during the second search strategy, the scope was narrowed by the presence of relevant keywords.

In addition, a significant amount of text from the Quran was employed within the Discussion and Analysis chapter of this thesis. This is because, as discussed above, Quranic verses were often used in lieu of traditional academic literature.

Current Literature Published On The Area Of Peace Education Within Oral Inuit And Oral Islamic Traditions

To understand what literature exists on the need for peace education, especially within school systems, I surveyed the Journal of Peace Education. The first volume published by this journal contained two seminal pieces: Harris (2004) explores peace education theory, and Köylü explores the Islamic approach to peace education. The former author was cited earlier, as I attempted to establish definitions for peace education. The references list in Harris' piece indicates that Harris himself authored a seminal book on peace education, which was published just one year prior to the journal article. The author quotes the preamble from the Constitution of UNESCO, which states that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" (Harris & Morrison, 2013). This preamble speaks to why peace education is needed in schools - because schools are the primary place where minds are nurtured to choose war or peace. Bickmore (2017) and Parker & Bickmore (2020) speak to the use of peacekeeping and peacemaking strategies within the classroom and in education conducted within divided societies.

Running a search for the term "Islam" in the Journal of Peace Education produces 129 results; running a similar search for the term "Muslim" produces 132 results; "Islamic" also produces 132 results. Running a query with the following parameters produces 129 results, "[All: islam] AND [All: muslim] AND [All: islamic] AND [in Journal: Journal of Peace Education]."

Thus, it would be a fair statement to state that approximately 130 articles have been published in the Journal of Peace Education since 2007 which have a focus on either Muslim communities or Islamic worldviews. Most of these publications have a particular geographic focus - for instance, studies look at peace education within Indonesia, Iraqi Kurdistan, Pakistan,

Myanmar, Turkey, Afghanistan, Syria, Kuwait, Iran, Kashmir, Bosnia, and occupied Palestine.

Others aim to study peace education through a certain lens, for instance employing music for

peacebuilding or for violence (Sandoval, 2016). While Koylu might be one of the first

contributors to the journal, his work on Islamically-inspired or Islamically-mandated

peacemaking is overshadowed by the significant number of publications by Abu-Nimer. In fact,

a search for the author Abu-Nimer produces 22 published articles across 6 journals, only one of

which is the Journal of Peace Education.

Similarly, in order to understand what literature exists on the study of Inuit traditions in

how they teach for peace, I searched for the word "Inuit" within the Journal of Peace Education

and the only search result refers to the traditional Inuit song duel that has previously been used to

settle disputes (Evans Pim, 2018). No results are produced if I replace the keyword with "Inuk."

In addition, running a search for "[Keywords: inuit] AND [Keywords: peace]" across all the

journals available on Taylor and Francis Online website produces one result, and this result is

written from a public health lens, rather than a peace education lens. While there is a lack of

literature that examines oral Inuit tradition from a peace education lens, and the reason for this

lacking is the comparatively recent introduction of peace education as a distinct domain of

knowledge, Nunavut Arctic College in Iqaluit, Nunavut produced a series of publications titled

Inuit Perspectives on the 20th Century and *Interviewing Inuit Elders*; such series aim to archive

and record the oral Inuit tradition. Another example of such an attempt to archive and record oral

Inuit stories into written form is the *Arctic Reading Series*, published by (what was then) the

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, between 1968 and 1977.

Despite the significant amount of literature that exists about Muslim or Islamic practice

of peace education, through out a review of the journal articles, I found no search results for the

following query, "[Keywords: inuit] AND [Keywords: islam] AND [Keywords: peace]." The same lack of search results is found if the keyword "islam" is replaced with "Islamic" or "Muslim". Thus, according to my search, I would propose that there is no existing literature examining the commonalities between how oral Islamic and oral Inuit traditions teach for peace.

I now review literature and highlight some commonalities between Muslim culture and various Indigenous beliefs and knowledges. These similarities are presented in two categories: (a) the importance of leveraging Indigenous cultures and traditions for peacekeeping and peacemaking, and (b) the importance of self-temperance as a step toward advancing peace within our surroundings. These similarities are important to acknowledge as they suggest that by examining Inuit oral traditions and comparing them to Islamic oral traditions, in how they teach for peace, we can develop principles for teaching peace in various Canadian school settings.

Importance Of Leveraging Cultures And Traditions For Peacekeeping And Peacemaking

This section introduces the reader to important research on the topic of Indigenous peacemaking. It makes an argument for why culture is integral to identity and how culture and spirituality impacts worldview. I write about the Western paradigm of peace, and alternatives to it; I then write about a possible approach through which Western and traditional Indigenous paradigms of peace can co-exist. I conclude with a reminder that cultures are always dynamic, which prevents the researcher from making overarching, generalized statements about any culture's peacemaking mechanisms. In addition, because of its evolving nature, continued research needs to take place to understand peacemaking mechanisms present within each tradition.

The introductory chapter to *Creating the Third Force: Indigenous Processes of Peacemaking*, edited by Tuso and Flaherty (2016), was a heavy but seminal resource for my

studies. The authors write that the book was born out of a desire to "regain the respect of their [indigenous] cultural practices" (Tuso & Flaherty, 2016, p. 4). The book's production implied a conscious intellectual journey to challenge the concept of Western intellectual superiority and other forms of cognitive imperialism. The authors suggest that this intellectual journey and resistance is especially timely because "many "traditional" societies historically known for their collective activities in keeping peace in their communities have become better known in recent years for acts of violence and destruction" (Tuso & Flaherty, 2016, p. 5). Porter (1997) suggests that by losing their ability to resolve disputes through their own mechanisms, "Indian nations are losing their sovereignty—that is, their ability to self-determine their own future and survive as distinct people" (p. 238). I propose that if a people can rely on their own traditions to successfully co-exist, then they can be in control of how they define peace, the process through which their envisioned form of peace is reached, and the tools that are employed to reach this peace.

Avurch (2008) introduces us to the concept of cultural markers (p. 172) and the use of these markers to form social and group identity. I argue that one of the cultural markers are mechanisms in each tradition which can be leveraged for peacekeeping and peacemaking. By leveraging these mechanisms for the goal of making peace, group and social identity is further strengthened.

Another one of many such cultural markers is spirituality and/or religion. Irani (2016) proposes a dichotomy when he writes that while "religion" is considered a private affair within the Western worldview, "In non-Western societies, however, religion is part and parcel of one's identity, worldview, and sense of socio-political belonging" (p. 73). In further elaborating on this distinction, Irani tells us that in the West, one is expected to give allegiance to the state rather

than to a belief or another form of collective identity. This expectation leads to the current Western paradigm of peace, which MacGinty (2008) refers to as the "liberal peace" or "Western peace" (p. 140). In speaking about the shortcomings within this incomplete paradigm, MacGinty (2008) writes, "This 'liberal peace' or 'Western peace' effectively minimizes the space available for indigenous and traditional approaches to peacemaking" (p. 140).

Speaking about the alternative paradigms of peace, Whiteman (2009) tells us that "indigenous cultures conceptualize justice more broadly, where humans (and their organizations) are not the center but rather one type of actor within a broader web of life" (p. 116). A Western peace paradigm promotes justice as its biggest ideal, and consequently, concepts like "crime" which become "a category of conflict relating to disruptions that break some sort of legal code enforced by a judicial system" (Gohar & Schirch, 2016, pp. 455-456). In contrast, Archibald (2008) tells us that

> The purpose of a justice system in an Aboriginal society is to restore the peace and
> equilibrium within the community, and to reconcile the accused with his or her own
> conscience and with the individual or family who has been wronged. (p. 102)

This statement perfectly captures why I believe this research on traditional peacekeeping forms is important, as it suggests that "balance and harmony" (Archibald, 2008, p. 10) are the goals of Indigenous peacemaking , rather than mere punishment of the offender or the meting out of perceived concepts of justice. For the purposes of this paper, the definitions and scope of justice will not be explored as it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the concept of justice in detail. It is also important to note that not all authors who speak about Indigenous culture, worldview, and perspectives are Indigenous themselves.

I also propose a form of synthesis between traditional Indigenous and Western peace paradigms. Gohar and Schirch (2016) write that "Rather than seeking to extend the state and enforce its legitimacy, it makes more sense to try to harmonize state criminal justice systems with tribal, traditional systems such as the jirga" (p. 465). This idea that peacekeeping traditions need not promote state legitimacy as a core function has a seminal role in informing the lens through which I wish to explain traditional peacekeeping methods—that these methods are valid, even if they are at odds with the nation-state status quo. In fact, circling back to the concept of social identity and the benefits of strengthening group identity, Irani (2016) suggests that traditional mechanisms like "Sulh can be utilized not only as an approach to controlling and reducing conflict but also as a means of building and maintaining that sense of solidarity and participation that is essential to genuine democratic politics" (p. 66). Thus, by strengthening traditional mechanisms of peacekeeping and peacemaking, we can strengthen democracy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

While I use the phrase "traditions for peacemaking and peacekeeping", Menkhaus (2016) reminds us of the connection between innovation versus tradition, and adaptability versus sustainability suggesting, no culture or tradition is stagnant. Thus, as I study traditional ways that peace is taught, I want to remember and acknowledge that all traditions are always in a state of flux and that what we see today is not only a representation of historical teachings and practices, but also an adaptation to the circumstances of the present. For this reason, one of the research questions for this thesis is an examination of how peacekeeping and peacemaking traditions within Islamic and/or Inuit communities have evolved over time.

I conclude with the suggestion that "peace can be plural rather than singular" (MacGinty, 2008, p. 159) and that my literature review indicates that traditional forms of peacekeeping and

peacemaking are worthy topics of reflection, conversation, and research as they help us discover plural meanings and manifestations of peace.

The Importance Of Self-Temperance As A Step Toward Advancing Peace Within Our Surroundings

Through a review of literature on the topic of conflict resolution mechanisms, and Indigenous peacemaking practices from around the world, this section argues that Indigenous traditions promote self-temperance as the first step toward peacemaking and peacekeeping. I achieved this by first writing about the natural presence of conflict, and, consequently, the natural presence of conflict management mechanisms within all cultures. I looked at a few case studies of Indigenous peacemaking and especially examined the role of culturally appropriate peacemakers. I wrote about how Indigenous cultures recognize someone as a peacemaker only after they exert themselves to root out the oppression within themselves. Lastly, I presented a summary of a resource that connects the concept of oppression to self-temperance and then concluded with a statement about the importance of self-temperance and self-transformation in promoting peace within and outside of the education system.

On speaking about the natural presence of conflict, Simmel (1995), in his article, introduces us to the concept of "sociating" and dissociating factors (p. 14). This concept of dissociating factors has clear connections to a field of study within Islamic theology, which looks at the "diseases of the heart" such as hate, envy, and desire. He makes the argument that "society… in order to attain a determinate shape, needs some quantitative ratio of harmony and disharmony of association and competition, of favorable and unfavorable tendencies" (Simmel, 1955, p. 15). For instance, the author states, "The negative and dualistic elements play an entirely positive role… despite the destruction they may work on particular relations" (p. 17). Simmel,

much like Coser (1964), speaks about the role of conflict in setting up us-versus-them binaries, as "the calculating intellect often lacks a paradigm for this unity" (Simmel, 1955, p. 21). The author gives two examples—antagonistic games and legal conflict, both of which can serve to provide healthy and regulated avenues for antagonism and hostility. Simmel identifies the natural presence of conflict along with a theory that conflict management mechanisms naturally occur in cultures.

Speaking to this point, Coser (1964) discusses the situation where "conflict behavior against the original object is blocked" (p. 40), suggesting that as a society, we need "safety-valve institutions" and that the need for these increases with the "rigidity of the social structure" (Coser, 1964, p. 45). This concept of safety-valve institutions suggests that those involved in conflict are required to be mindful enough to recognize when they have access to and can use the safety-valve institution to de-escalate the conflict.

Writing about peacemaking traditions in Indigenous communities, in her case study, Kyoon-Achan (2016), compares Indigenous peacemaking traditions from two diverse regions. The author explains the symbolic and literal importance of inukshuks, stating

> Individuals or communities seeking paths to peace (personal or collective), value the experiences of people who have lived longer than them. The more complex (positive and negative), the more useful those experiences were recalled for analysis and teaching… The general thesis and basic argument being that much like an inukshuk, the best person to point out a path leading in any direction is someone who has herself previously walked that path with success. (p. 199)

In describing a peacemaker, Pinto (2000), quoting Yazzie (1996), suggests "A peacemaker is a person who thinks well, speaks well, shows a strong reverence for the basic teachings of life, and

has respect for himself or herself and others in personal conduct" (p. 278). Repeatedly, through each case study in the aforementioned resource edited by Tuso and Flaherty (2016), we are exposed to the idea that peace building starts on the inside, as a self-practice and that the community only endorses or recognizes someone as a peacemaker after they have proven themselves as trustworthy and with integrity through their daily interactions.

One of my favorite Islamic scholars summarizes the suggestion that to examine the presence of peacemaking abilities within us, we must first examine the violent tendencies that we possess. Hamza Yusuf (2014) speaks about this in his introduction to the traditional supplication, Dua Nasiri, which is translated as *Prayer of the Oppressed.* He makes the argument that we were created to live in a world of harmony and mutual understanding, occurring as each person is meant to fulfill another's needs. However, when we fail to use our power to fulfill another's needs, this manifests as oppression. Thus, it is essential to recognize the violence and tyranny that we are capable of. The Islamic response to being oppressed is the concept of *sabr*, which is patience when translated from Arabic; s*abr* does not imply dissatisfaction, resignation or fatalism. Yusuf also describes the value of "religious quietude" (2014, p. 17), echoing the value of words as prayer, and reminds us that the avenue of prayer is never removed from us. Lastly, the author reminds us that the Prophet was often a victim of violence; yet, he preferred powerlessness and peacemaking to power, lest this power lead him to become an oppressor. I summarize this resource to provide an overview of how one Islamic philosopher connects the idea of self-temperance and internal peacemaking to external peacemaking.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Khan (2009), who writes: "Violence always begins in the mind; it needs to be uprooted therefore from the mind" (p. viii). This section speaks to the importance of self-temperance within Indigenous traditions to promote the agenda of peace.

Thus, I hoped to first and foremost transform myself through this research and follow this self-transformation with a transformation of the individuals, institutions, and systems that I have influence over. Cormier (2016) also captures the essence of this approach to fighting the various forms of violence that exist within the academy when he writes,

> While I find the violence embedded in the structures of the academy unchanged, I believe we can be accountable for our own promotion of internal peace while conducting PACS [Peace and Conflict Studies] research which in turn, will have a ripple effect on the violent structures that support formal research. (p. 159)

Conclusion

In his seminal work, *Nonviolence and Peace Building in Islam*, Abu-Nimer quotes Syed Sikandar Mehdni,

> Islam and the Muslim world still remains, to a considerable extent, rather neglected areas of peace studies and peace research. Being very largely a colonized world engaged for years… the Muslim world remained busy for quite some time waging peace and striving to create a decolonized, just and peaceful society rather than producing sufficient peace literature explaining Islam's position on the issues concerned. (Mehdni, 1994, as cited in Abu-Nimer, 2003)

Abu-Nimer goes on to promulgate that "Shifting emphasis from war to peace in the study of Islamic religion and culture can contribute to furthering the understanding among Westerners and Easterners, Muslims and non-Muslims, believers and non-believers" (2003, p. 181). Abu-Nimer details six guiding principles in this work (p. 182) that aims to shift emphasis from war to peace. The second part of his call is to "contribute to furthering the understanding" (p. 181) between various groups. It is this desire to promote understanding between Islamic and

Indigenous traditions that propels me to conduct research on similarities between Islamic and Inuit peace-building approaches and schemas.

Chapter 3: Choosing a Research Methodology that Respects Oral Traditions

In this chapter, I first identify my worldview. Then, I present a rationale for grounding myself in Indigenous epistemologies and speak about the distinction between Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies. I also speak about how I defend my decision to adopt an Indigenist paradigm without possession of Indigenous ancestry in Canada. I follow this with identifying the specific methodology I employ and an explanation of why I chose Storywork methodology (Archibald, 2008) and how I hoped to practice it. I follow this with a section on identification and selection of research participants, and conclude with a statement about the importance of making space for traditional knowledges, especially as they speak to the topic of peacemaking, within academe and our lives in general. I remind readers that my primary research question is, *what are the commonalities in how oral Inuit traditions and oral Islamic traditions teach for peace?*

Philosophical Worldviews

My research adopts a constructivist worldview, where this worldview is defined in the following words:

> human beings construct meanings... [because] we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture… The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. [Consequently] the process of qualitative research is largely inductive (Creswell, 2018, p. 8).

As someone who is being trained in critical theory, a transformative worldview is also incorporated as "research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and [a] political change agenda" (p. 9).

A qualitative approach is adopted. Creswell & Creswell (2018) state the suitability of qualitative research in certain circumstances,

> A concept or phenomenon needs to be explored and understood because little research has been done on it or because it involves an under-studied sample… [or]… the researcher does not know the important variables to examine … [or] a subject has never been addressed with a certain sample or group. (p. 19)

A study examining the commonalities between oral Islamic traditions and oral Inuit traditions in how they teach for peace meets all these criteria.

Relationships and Self-Location At The Core Of Indigenous Epistemologies

As Leroy Little Bear states: "the function of Aboriginal values is to maintain the relationships that hold Creation together" (as cited in Johnson, 2016, p. 49). This idea that the absolute goal of societal values is harmonious coexistence[1] between creation is what motivates me to learn further about the peace education mechanisms and practices present within oral Inuit and oral Islamic traditions. This underlying value is also why Indigenist methodologies are needed, because methodologies are "based on beliefs and assumptions about reality, they are intrinsically tied to value" (cited in Johnson, 2016, p. 49).

Kovach (2010) writes that "Within Indigenous research, self-location means cultural identification" (p. 110) and that "This form of reflexivity allows the researcher-self to participate as co-constructor of knowledge in specific and defined ways" (p. 111). This idea that knowledge is co-constructed through our worldviews and is not an objective reality speaks to me as I try to understand how people experience the same phenomenon in different ways. Aveling (2013)

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[1] In this context, harmonious coexistence is defined as "experiencing the self as interdependent coincided with increased happiness through feeling greater harmony with others" (Ellwood, 2021).

echoes this point, writing that "the production of Indigenous knowledge means constructing conditions that allow for Indigenous self-sufficiency" (p. 204). This, together with the idea that the Western paradigm suggests that the dominant culture is the centre of all legitimate knowledge (Aveling, 2013, p. 205), requires one to remain constantly vigilant about accepting a Western paradigm as the neutral and objective way of arriving at knowledge. McIntosh similarly captures this very sentiment:

> My schooling followed the pattern … whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us". (p. 1)

Thus, I intend to pay special attention to Indigenous epistemologies and adopt methods and methodologies that are respectful of Indigenous communities and Indigenous knowledges. Specifically, I will adopt Storywork, where "Storywork is also an Indigenous research methodology" (Archibald, 2008, p. 374). For instance, while conducting research through Storywork and open-ended interviews, it is suggested that Indigenous knowledges can come from "a multitude of sources, including traditional teachings, empirical observations, and revelations… that revelations comprise various sources, including dreams, visions, cellular memory and intuition" (Kovach, 2010, p. 57).

In order to understand the value of expanding our definition of acceptable knowledges, Smith (2012) writes that Said's notion of 'positional superiority' explains that "knowledge and culture were as much part of imperialism as raw materials and military strength" (p. 117). The following statement also argues for being inclusive of a variety of knowledges during the enactment of this research project.

Indigenous people need to retain control over the focus of research done in their

communities but have come to realize that beyond the topic chosen for study, the

research methodology needs to incorporate the cosmology, worldview, epistemology, and

ethical beliefs of Indigenous people into the research process. (Wilson, 2004, p. 19)

Johnson (2016) writes that "There is a spiritual dimension that is incorporated in

Indigenous studies, and for a scholar to experience this embodiment requires them to change the

very essence of how they view and perceive the world" (p. 58). She continues, writing that

"methodologies are based on Indigenous knowledge that is derived from the spirit, heart, mind

and body; where intuitive knowledge, and metaphysical and unconscious realms are possible

channels to knowing" (Johnson, 2016, p. 49). Thus, through the act of respecting Indigenous

epistemologies, I aimed to adopt the expansive definition of what is considered knowledge and

how we can arrive at knowledge. In order to do so, I accepted oral transmission and oral

narrations from the interview participants and canvassed orally transmitted Quranic and Hadith

scripture.

Difference Between Indigenous And Decolonizing Methodologies

In discussing the distinction between Indigenous methodologies and decolonizing

methodologies, Johnson (2016) states that Indigenous methodologies are different from

decolonizing methodologies because,

> While both bring forward the experiences of colonialism, one aims to produce a
>
> resurgence of traditional knowledges through worldview and intellectual traditions, and
>
> one aims to deconstruct and decolonize our minds from suppression and assumed
>
> inferiority. (p. 56)

I find this distinction extremely important because, as Kovach similarly suggests, "While a decolonizing perspective remains necessary and can be included as a theoretical positioning within research, it is not the epistemological center of an Indigenous methodological approach to research" (Kovach, 2010, p. 42).

Can Muslim Cultures Be Considered Indigenous?

Drawson et al. (2017), while speaking about Indigenous cultures, included "Muslim culture" (p. 10) in their list of culture-specific methods that were used in their study. They summarize this method in the following words, "Halaqah was created by Prophet Muhammad for the purpose of educating early adopters of Islam and, although there is considerable variation in modern practices, [it] ultimately refers to group-based narrative generation" (p. 12). Indigenous scholars have included Muslim culture as an Indigenous culture; in addition, the definition of the Indigenist paradigm provided by Wilson (2007) states that I need not be Indigenous in order to ground myself in an Indigenist research paradigm. What this means for my process is that I will be able to honour and give credit to oral traditions. The first part of my desired research topic is to honour oral traditions, and I believe my research is useful because "Indigenous knowledges comprise a specific way of knowing based upon oral tradition of sharing knowledge" (Kovach, 2010, p. 40); the second part of my research is to find commonalities between two traditions— oral Inuit tradition and Islamic tradition, especially in how they teach and promote peace. This second piece is how I hoped to not only utilize the concept of relationality in my process, but rather, base my entire research on how my tradition relates to the tradition of the peoples who have accepted me as a guest in their community of Kangirsuk.

Storywork Methodology

In defending the decision to adopt Storywork, I quote the author of the seminal work on this Indigenous methodology. Jo-ann Archibald (2008) writes that Storywork

Exemplifies what research should do: enable people to sit together and talk meaningfully about how their Indigenous knowledge could be effectively used for education and for living a good life and to think about possibilities for overcoming problems experienced in their communities. (p. 81)

Since the overarching goal of this thesis is to learn how to spread peace, the use of stories to speak about overcoming problems that we experience as a society and as individual communities is especially fitting. Smith (2012) hints at the importance of Storywork methodology when she connects facts to the concept of story—she writes that assuming facts merely add up to create an unbiased story is a false and incorrect idea (p. 76). Thus, with the practice of Storywork methodology, I hoped to step away from the collection of "facts" about peace and rather ask the research participants to share their stories of what peace looks like, and what stories students are taught to learn peace.

Storywork methodology is dependent on the following principles: respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy (Archibald, 2008, p. xi). In speaking about these principles, Archibald writes,

The four Rs of *respect, responsibility, reverence,* and *reciprocity* are traditional values and teachings demonstrated toward the story, toward and by the storyteller and the listener, and practiced in the storywork context. The other three principles of *wholism, interrelatedness,* and *synergy* shape the quality of the learning process. Indigenous wholism comprises the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual domains of human

development. Wholism also addresses the relationships among the self, family,

community, wider world, and the environment. Effective storywork grows out of the

actions of interrelatedness and synergy formed by the storyteller, the story, the listener,

and the context in which the story is used. A transformative learning experience occurs

by working with Indigenous stories and these seven principles. (Archibald, 2008, p. 374,

emphasis in original)

Storywork strongly aligns with my worldview about the Divine nature of knowledges because it

sees oration as a prayer, and in how oral tradition represents "accumulated thoughts and values

of people" (Archibald, 2008, p. 26). Simultaneously, Storywork aligns with my constructivist

worldview as it allows each listener to take from the story their own unique meaning; for

instance, a hunter's meaning will be different from a basket maker's meaning, yet "there's

something the same" (Archibald, 2008, p. 97).

Storywork For Data Collection

The process of data collection involved a prompt where research participants were asked

about oral stories that remind them of the concept of peace. Immense effort was paid to listen in

the appropriate manner, as this is the key to appropriate meaning-making. On the ethics of

listening, Archibald (2008) writes about the process of listening that "Listening requires the

concomitant involvement of the auditory and visual senses, the emotions, the mind, and patience.

The act of story listening occurs in relation to using our other senses" (p. 76).

Kovach (2010) states,

Highly structured interviews are not congruent with accessing knowledges that imbue

both the fluidity and regulation of the storyteller's role within oral tradition, or that

respond to the relational nature of Indigenous research. Methods that are congruent with

tribal epistemology include approaches such as the conversational method that involves

an open-ended structure. (p. 123)

Keeping this contention in mind, a flexible, open-ended interviewing format was adopted

throughout the research project to accompany the Storywork prompt to gain further knowledge

or redirect the research participant with follow-up prompts; the open-ended interview also helped

us to practice "research as conversation" (Archibald, 2008, p. 47). In this context, research as

conversation is "characterized as an open-ended interview with opportunity for both sides to

engage in talk rather than only one party doing most of the talking" (Archibald, 2008, p. 47).

Through the accompaniment of Storywork methodology with flexible, semi-structured

interviews, the intention was for the research participants to lead the inquiry process. It was also

recognized that the researcher has significant privilege while conducting a study, and it was

hoped that through a flexible interviewing format, the research participants would claim soft

power by responding to open prompts on their own terms. In addition, through this data

collection and meaning-making methodology, I hoped to transform my role from a "research

expert" to one of "research and cultural learners" (Archibald, 2008, p. 38).

Storywork For Analysis

Cormier (2016) writes that

One must trust that we are being provided the experiences and knowledge necessary to

find the possibility for peace. This demonstration of faith requires the relinquishing of

power over the process to research partners—those we are trying to help find peace.

Ultimately, it is our relationship with the knowledge that is of critical importance.

Sources will vary, however the source is not as important as the final result, the

usefulness of that knowledge, and the meaning that knowledge holds for those who create

it (Cormier, 2016, p. 125).

I hoped to enter my research with this humility and awareness, with focus on the central role of meaning-making. In explaining the meaning-making process, Archibald (2008) states that "the power of Storywork [and its ability] to make meaning derives from a synergy between the story, the context in which the story is used, the way that the story is told, and how one listens to the story" (p. 84). Similarly, Gravett (2019) writes that

> The value of qualitative research [is] in moving away from the prioritization of the search
>
> for truth and validity, in relation to methodological questions. As such … our
>
> interpretation of the data is just one interpretation and that meanings may be multiple,
>
> complex, and unstable. (p. 4)
>
> Archibald (2008) also states that "Making meaning from a particular story can happen at

various phases of human development; the meaning may change over time" (p. 112). Thus, it is acknowledged that this thesis is simply starting a conversation about what a certain story means to me, to the research participant or to the reader; it is as likely that I or you will return to this thesis a few years later and find that the meaning and purpose of the story that was shared through the Storywork research process has transformed over time. On the topic of listening for values, Staddon et. al. (2021) write that,

> Listening happens as part of a web of relationships between people and nature, with
>
> stronger and weaker connections, and some exclusions … Listening well requires us to
>
> consider issues such as who is listening to whom (including humans and non-humans),
>
> where are they listening from, who is speaking for others and on what basis, and who is
>
> excluded or not being heard. (p. 36)

Archibald (2008) also reminds herself and her readers about the virtue of patience, when she writes that

I have learned from experience … that an answer may not be evident when a question is first asked. But I have come to understand that when I am ready for and worthy of the answer, it is given. Patience, patience, patience. (p. 46)

Thus, it was hoped that through the process of participating in the Storywork methodology analysis, the virtue of patience and self-temperance will be inculcated in me, as the researcher and in you, as the reader. What this also means is that the data analysis process took longer.

Archibald (2008) speaks about the difficulty of transforming oral stories to "another language and another form of representation so that the power of integrity of the stories remains" (p. 25). In speaking about this, the author writes that "The oral tradition of the stories shaped and created a framework in which to place and use literacy" (Archibald, 2008, p. 25). However, to address these challenges inherent in transforming oral traditions into written representations, the author also states that "The mystery, magic, and truth/respect/trust relationship between the speaker/storyteller and listener/reader may be brought to life on the printed page if the principles of the oral tradition are used" (Archibald, 2008, p. 20). Thus, during the data analysis, a conscious, ever-present attempt was made to understand and acknowledge the framework within which the Storywork data were generated.

Pros and Cons of the Storywork Methodology

Archibald (2008) states that one of the benefits of Storywork is that "These stories created good memories of feeling loved by the Elders and started an appreciation of the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical teachings that were embedded in the stories" (p.

4). In addition, empowerment of the listener takes place when the listener of an oral tradition is encouraged to make meaning and gain understanding of the stories being told (Archibald, 2008, p. 56). Another one of the benefits of employing Storywork in the data collection process is that it enables us to honour spirituality, which is at the core of Indigenous epistemologies. For instance, Archibald (2008) states that "Place-name stories show that the names not only have meanings but are also associated with practices and values, such as the spiritual connection with a particular mountain" (p. 73).

In her seminal work on Storywork, Archibald (2008) states: "Bringing heart and mind together for story listening [is] necessary if one was to make meaning from a story" (p. 76). How do we quantify and assess whether we are bringing "heart and mind together" as we listen to a story? Since the practice of listening and meaning making can be so subjective, varied, and dependent on the listener, this serves as a con of employing the Storywork method if I were attempting to produce a generalized statement about an entire community. Another con in employing the Storywork methodology for data collection and analysis is that there might be hesitation within the academe regarding its rigour; however, Archibald (2008) in her seminal work dislodges this critique as she states she wanted her doctoral work to "demonstrate that Indigenous knowledge systems could be investigated from an Indigenous perspective with rigour acceptable to the academy" (p. 5).

Interview Questions

Kovach (2010) states that, "A first matter for consideration in using story as a knowledge-gathering method is ensuring that the research question is open enough for the task" (p. 123). Thus, much time was spent reviewing and editing the research question presented to the research participants. As stated in the introduction, the primary question I investigated was: *What*

are the commonalities in how oral Inuit tradition and oral Islamic tradition teach for peace? The four secondary research questions as stated below in italics were explored using the interview questions noted below.

1) What is peace? In order to interrogate this overarching question, the following questions were asked: *What does the word "peace" mean to you? What does "peace" mean according to your spirituality or culture?*

2) How do you maintain peace culturally? In order to interrogate this overarching question, the following questions were asked: *Can you make or bring peace to your community? If yes, how does an individual bring peace to their community? Can you think of a situation where there was a disagreement or an argument within the community? What was done to return to peace? Who took these actions to return the community or family to peace? Thinking about how your community makes peace, have traditions of making or bringing peace changed between the past and the present? What are some of these differences between how things were done in the past and how things are done in the present?*

3) What are some stories you can tell us about peace? In order to interrogate this overarching question, the following questions were asked: *What cultural or traditional stories have you heard that talk about keeping or making peace? How can we use stories and oral traditions to ensure that the community stays peaceful? How can we teach young children and youth to be peaceful? What are some stories we can tell to teach peace to young children and youth? Is there something else you want to share about how stories can be used in the peace process?*

4) How can we teach and practice peace within the public and private school systems, in spite of the deeply embedded cultural colonialism present within these systems? In order to interrogate this overarching question, the following questions were asked: *How can we teach and*

practice peace within our Inuit/Islamic school systems? If there were recommendations you could make to increase "peace" in Kangirsuk/Muslim communities, what would these recommendations be?

It is important to note that the research intentionally stepped away from theoretical discussions on the definitions of peace, justice and conflict, and allowed the participants to define these terms in whatever way they chose; the participants were allowed to imagine how "peace", "conflict" and "justice" manifest. Thus, the exclusion of a definition of peace, justice and conflict within the literature review, within the research questions, and within the results sections is an intentional omission.

Research Participants

An attempt was made to reach a goal of three research participants from the Muslim community and three research participants from the Inuit community; three Muslim and two Inuit participants were interviewed by the conclusion of the research stage. I hoped to embody relationality and relational accountability (Wilson, 2004, p.1) as I had spent two years establishing relationships with Inuit staff of the school board, some of whom were prospective research participants.

I recognized that requesting participation from co-workers could present a few ethical dilemmas. I intended to communicate to the research participants that giving or refusing participation in the study would in no way impact the work relationship I had been fortunate enough to establish with them through work. Lastly, I ensured that none of my students' guardians or parents were recruited as research participants to ensure that there was no conflict of interest and that my primary responsibility as an educator to my students was not negatively impacted by the act of conducting this research. Research participants were given complete

rights and independence on whether to participate or not—the choice to participate or not was completely up to the research participant, and the research participant was assured that they would not face any negative consequences or reactions if they refused participation. Research participants were reminded at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of data collection that their participation is strictly voluntary and that they were able to opt out of the knowledge sharing process at any time. If the speaker refused inclusion, then that relevant piece of data was not to be included in the research results.

I also acknowledge that the simple act of requesting participation in a research process can cause a power imbalance and change the relationship dynamic. To allow the prospective participants to save face, an invitation to participate in the research process was made via virtual means, such as email or instant message. I observed that if a person wants to refuse a request, it is easier for them to ignore the email or instant message; this is because refusing and saying no to an in-person request can cause the prospective research participants discomfort and embarrassment. Thus, a virtual request decreased the negative impact of a request on personal relationships. In addition, the suggested interview questions were shared with all the prospective research participants within the initial contact and initial request sent via email or instant message. This way, the prospective research participants were well-informed on the extent of detail the research intended to delve into, and whether the participants felt a desire to engage in research on the topic of peace education and other cultural avenues of peacemaking.

Inuit Participants

Cormier (2016) writes about his research process that, "If I had not spent advanced time in the community before choosing my research focus, the opportunity to build trust and make the personal connections necessary for mutual learning would not have occurred" (p. 135). As I was

a teacher with the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq (Kativik School Board), I had been fortunate to establish relations with the Inuit population in Kangirsuk (QC). Through my time there, I came to learn of key Elders and knowledge keepers, and I hoped to recruit these individuals as my research participants. While I invited five potential Inuit participants, only two Inuit research participants responded positively to the invitation.

As I left the village of Kangirsuk at the end of May 2022, I hoped that all interviews with Inuit research participants would conclude by May 2022. However, the actual research journey was very different from what I had envisioned. Due to the end of the school year, I left the community of Kangirsuk in May 2022, while my research application to the ethics board was not approved until the end of June 2022. Due to this delay in receiving ethics approval, I had already left the community of Kangirsuk and was only able to conduct phone or written interviews. This delay in ethics approval was partially due to the COVID pandemic. In fact, the ethics approval specifically asked researchers to consider situations where face-to-face interviews could not be conducted. The COVID pandemic also caused a delay as my research was designed to be conducted during the 2021 – 2022 years, which coincides with the COVID pandemic years.

I experienced significant hesitation among the Inuit research participants when I requested to record the phone interviews. This is even though I had built a relationship with this community by living and working in the village of Kangirsuk for two years. I can only imagine that the historical, extractive nature of research in Indigenous communities is what caused such significant hesitation. In addition, I recognize that the two years I spent building relationships with the Inuit community are only a fraction of the over three decades I have spent building community with other Muslims. Thus, through this recognition, I hoped to explain the obstacles I faced in recruiting Inuit participants.

As a result, I proposed that those participants who were willing to participate could respond to my prompts through written communication. I had submitted all my research prompts to each of the two Inuit interview participants through Facebook Messenger, as this is the mode of communication they preferred, and each of the two interview participants responded to the prompts according to their convenience. I did not perform extensive follow-up questioning as I did not want to have my bias colour their responses. While six people had committed to participating in the research, only two participants sent in their responses; I attribute the low attrition rate to the fact that English is a second or third language for most of the Inuit residents of Kangirsuk, and thus, they may have been hesitant to respond in writing. In addition, because English was the second or third language for both Inuit participants, the written responses presented in the following chapters include heavy editing in order to improve the grammar and flow of their responses. Both Inuit research participants who participated are female knowledge keepers, grandmothers, Elders and teaching staff at the Sautjuit School in Kangirsuk, Quebec. Since the objective of this research was to interview three Inuit and three Muslim participants, I concluded that getting two responses was sufficient. I aimed for three respondents from each of the two communities, as I was advised by my academic advisors that this was a manageable number for a graduate degree thesis. While I would have ideally liked more responses from Inuit respondents, as I had left the community already, I was unable to recruit additional participants. By structuring the results around the 8 IQ principles, I hope to have added to the richness of the responses provided by the Inuit participants. Further details about these 8 IQ principles are presented in Chapter 4 of this thesis. In addition, to compensate for the lack of a third Inuit research participant, I reviewed oral stories that were collected by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1968 and 1977) and published in an Arctic Reading Series to

further inform my analysis of how oral stories were, and are, used to teach peace. None of this content is used for analysis within the thesis; rather, the content from these oral stories was only used to inform the questions that were posed to the Inuit participants and to situate myself in the context of Inuit cultures.

Muslim Participants

The Muslim research participants I hoped to recruit included the imam at the biggest mosque in my hometown of Mississauga, who is also an Elder of our tradition. I also intended to interview two female Muslim academics who speak and write extensively on the intersection of religion and politics. These participants were chosen due to my past relationship with them, which I had cultivated over the past decade. Unfortunately, due to the high community need that imams face, I was unable to recruit the imam I had desired to interview. In addition, one of the female Muslim academics suggested that she was not qualified to speak on this topic. Thus, the Muslim participants consisted of three female interviewees: two were graduate students at the time of research, both of whom were also conducting research on commonalities between Indigenous and Muslim communities, and one was a teacher at an Islamic school. Two of the interviews took place over Zoom, and each of these interviews was about one hour long. The third interview took place asynchronously due to scheduling difficulties that prevented us from accommodating a synchronous interview. In this case, I emailed my interview questions to this interviewee, and she responded to my prompts through a written email response.

Since the Muslim research participants were in various cities within Ontario, I offered to meet the research participants at their offices or any other location of preference to them. Alternatively, if the participants preferred to conduct a Zoom interview, I offered that alternative. The interviews were to be conducted during the month of June 2022, as I was scheduled to return

to Ontario at that time. However, beyond that timeframe, there were no constraints on my availability. Thus, the research participants were to be given full flexibility on when to schedule the interviews. Since most of them worked full-time, and since this interview could be considered part of their community outreach activities, I expected most interviews to take place during work hours on weekdays. The research participants were reminded that interviews and conversations were recorded, and the recording devices were made visible to them throughout the interview. The Muslim research participants were also given a copy of the suggested questions for the conversation so that they could understand the scope of the research and make an informed decision on whether to participate or not.

I had greater success in recruiting Muslim participants, and this speaks to the importance of community relationships that exist prior to the time that a research project takes place. I was able to interview a South-Asian female, an Arab female, and an Afro-Caribbean female, all of whom had been born in Muslim households, all of whom identify as Muslim and all of whom were raised with stories from the Islamic oral tradition. I take special pride in knowing that all my research participants were females, albeit with a wide age range. I take pride in knowing that my analysis can be proposed as the female lens on how oral traditions teach for peace, which was not my original plan. I recognize that peace, peacebuilding, conflict and justice are all gendered; however, the intention of the thesis was not to produce a gendered analysis of commonalities between peacemaking and peacekeeping traditions across Inuit and Islamic cultures. Thus, the omission of questions and analysis that aim to produce a gendered analysis is intentional. All interviews took place in English. Similar to the responses received from the Inuit participants, for the sake of increasing the readability, the responses of Muslim participants have been edited as well.

Data Analysis

      As stated earlier, a qualitative method of research was adopted for this study. Butina (2015) tells us that "Results [from a qualitative study] include a wealth of detailed information about a small number of people; therefore, leading to an increase in the depth of understanding of these select individuals" (p. 190).

      There are five traditional approaches to qualitative research: "case studies, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, and phenomenology" (Butina, 2015, p. 190). My research was influenced by narrative inquiry. In explaining this approach, Butina (2015) tells us that

      Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research in which the stories themselves become

      the raw data... The narrative approach involves inquiry directed at narratives of human

      experience or inquiry that produces data in narrative form. Examples of inquiries that

      yield narrative data include interviews that solicit stories or oral histories, or written

      autobiographies and biographies. (p. 190)

      Because narrative inquiry includes and underscores the importance of oral stories, it seems especially appropriate to use this method since I had adopted the Storywork methodology. Butina (2015) echoes this compatibility between narrative approach and Storywork methodology when she writes that "Defining features of the narrative approach include the collection of narrative (stories) from individuals or small groups" (p. 190).

      In order to conduct qualitative data analysis, Butina (2015) suggested that I immerse myself in data, consolidate this data by focusing on sections that provide responses to my questions, compare these data sections to establish patterns or themes, and then infer meaning from these patterns and themes. These meanings are thus the findings and conclusions of my research (p. 190). Butina (2015) also tells us that "Initial analysis begins during the first

interview or observation while the researcher identifies emerging insights or hunches" (p. 192). In fact, I would suggest that I had an intuitive feel for emerging insights during the literature review section of my research, and the research process and resulting analysis either confirmed or denied these intuitions.

Butina (2015) tells us that there are four approaches to narrative analysis: narrative thematic analysis, structural analysis, dialogic/performance analysis and visual narrative analysis (p. 193). Riessman (2005) goes into further detail to explain each of these four approaches. In her explanation, Riessman (2005) tells us that within thematic analysis, "Emphasis is on the content of a text, 'what' is said more than 'how' it is said, the 'told' rather than the 'telling'" (p. 2). This is what distinguishes thematic analysis from structural analysis. Since I conducted text-based interviews with Inuit participants for whom English is a second or third language, it only made sense not to emphasize or analyze excessively the use of language. Speaking to this point, Riessman (2005) writes that

> A (unacknowledged) philosophy of language underpins the approach: language is a direct
> and unambiguous route to meaning... A typology can be constructed to elaborate a
> developing theory. Because interest lies in the content of speech, analysts interpret what
> is said by focusing on the meaning that any competent user of the language would find in
> a story. Language is viewed as a resource, not a topic of investigation (p. 3).

Following Butina's (2015) example, I followed five stages during my narrative thematic analysis process: (a) I transcribed the interviews; during this process, I wrote down any initial patterns observed within the margins, (b) I produced a second version of the transcription, and in this version, I removed any casual conversation or irrelevant sections, (c) I coded the interviews by "identifying recurring words, ideas, or patterns generated from the data" (Butina, 2015, p.

194). At this stage, due to the small number of transcripts, I manually developed a master code list and I tried to see how codes developed in earlier transcriptions could be applied to transcriptions being analysed later on, (d) I tried to see how the codes and data fit with the two categories or themes I identified during the literature review section of my thesis, and (e) the last stage was data interpretation, which I had been performing simultaneously throughout the first four stages. Thus, my analysis combined a prescribed data analysis process with an iterative process.

Ethical Considerations

Some ethical considerations were stated in earlier sections. Beyond those, one issue that remains unaddressed is the concept of "data sovereignty", which was repeatedly emphasized within OCAP ™; while I have not attended this training, I have read about principles of ownership, control, access and possession. I can confess that, as a person who has moved geographically repeatedly during my professional and personal life, I have not often been able to return the data to the communities that I learned from and did research with. That's something I wish to improve going forward. Thus, throughout the research process, I hoped to honour this concept of data sovereignty and to practice "member checking" (Lavallee, 2009, p. 34). According to Butina (2015), Creswell recommends that we conduct at least two strategies of member-checking. For my research, I hoped to start off by exploring my biases, worldviews and philosophies which motivate this research. In addition, I conducted member-checking by sharing my literature review themes with my research participants before the interview. One last strategy of data verification and validation that I utilized is the advice I received from my thesis supervisor and committee member as they reviewed the initial drafts of my Results and Analysis chapters.

One ethical consideration to take into mind at this point is my location—as mentioned earlier, I left the community of Kangirsuk in May 2022. While I am still in contact with the research participants, I am unable to meet with them in person. Thus, I had to ensure that I used the appropriate technology to communicate my research findings. Once my final draft of the thesis is complete, I will complete an audio recording of the results and conclusion chapters and share this audio recording with my research participants through Facebook Messenger. One of my Inuit contacts is technically literate, and I will ask her to help the other Inuit research participant access the files that I share with them through Facebook Messenger.

Another prospective criticism is the question of how the researcher can propose or suggest large themes around cultural peacemaking after merely four to six interviews. The response to this criticism is that this research is supposed to be an exploratory introduction to the study of finding peacemaking commonalities within various oral traditions. Thus, rather than seeing this thesis as a definitive statement, I hoped it would be seen as the start of a conversation on finding commonalities between various oral traditions.

This research was approved by the Lakehead Research Ethics Board. A copy of the approval letter can be found in Appendix A.

Conclusion

Blackstock (2010) wrote, "Indigenous peoples believe that the most important things about humanity are already known and thus the highest standard is the wisdom held by the Elders who have studied ancestral knowledge for a lifetime (Auger, 2001)" (p. 67). According to my theological training, the Islamic worldview says the same, where the Divine knowledges in the form of Quranic scripture and Hadith sayings are all that is needed; we simply must practice meaning-making in order to adapt these scriptures and sayings and apply them to our current

situation. Thus, the reason this research resonates with me as a researcher is because I believe it is my divine trust to continue to reclaim and share *ilm* (Arabic word for knowledge) from my religious and cultural background. This knowledge parallels the theories about re-imagining, co-creation and recreation (Dei, 2000, p. 113) of how Indigenous and other non-Western knowledges can find place within the academy. Archibald (2008) quotes an Elder, George Clutesi,

> We, as a nation, possess many admirable qualities. We still have enough patience. We still listen before we utter. There are yet among us admirable teachers endowed with empathy and compassion…Among other qualities, your people as a whole possess a voice that soothes and calms the whole being. (Clutesi, 1990, as cited in Archibald, 2008)

Through the practice of Storywork and follow-up interviews, I hoped to make space for Islamic and Inuit pedagogies for peace within the academe, so that we can recognize and learn from the qualities, some of which are stated in the above quote. I also hoped to promote a relationship of learning between the two communities. Eventually, all this will help us promote our relationship as brothers and sisters in humanity.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation – Comparing Muslim Participant Responses to the 8 IQ Principles

As was stated in the research methodology chapter, due to time and location constraints, I did not get the amount and quality of data I was seeking from Inuit participants. As a result, I had to find alternative ways to organize findings so I could draw connections between oral Inuit teachings and oral Islamic traditions. After much reflection, I decided it would be best to review the interview results from the Muslim participants from the perspective of the eight agreed upon Inuit Qaujimajatugangit (hereon referred to as "IQ") principles (Karetak et al., 2017). It was through such an organization I believed I could maintain authenticity of the reported data results, and how I could continue to honour the trust offered to me by the research participants through their participation in the research study.

Inuit Qaujimajatugangit is the name of a knowledge system that the Government of Nunavut outlines used to teach their students Inuit societal values and principles (Karetak et al., 2017). While I worked in Nunavik, and not Nunavut, and while there are significant geographical variations in dialect and knowledges, there is a commonality in what these values are called, how their application can be demonstrated and how they are taught to young people and to outsiders. Thus, I used sources from both Nunavik and Nunavut to understand the eight IQ principles. A seminal book on IQ introduces us to IQ in the following words:

> Inuit Qaujimajatugangit (IQ), [is] often referred to as Inuit traditional knowledge. The problem with the word "traditional" is that it implies something from the past, of limited value to living in a modern world. Nothing could be further from the truth. IQ is about a set of values and practices, the relevance and importance of these, and ways of being and looking at things that are timeless. (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 19)

IQ, as it is claimed to be divinely inspired, claims to have a timeless view towards how to interact with the world and its inhabitants. In fact, the authors go on to state that the IQ worldview

> Introduces the reader to a worldview, or a way of looking at human beings in relation to other forms of life—and to each other—that contrasts sharply with Western European ideas about what makes for a rewarding, meaningful and appropriate way to live on the planet. (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 19)

In fact, in highlighting the importance of IQ, the authors of another seminal book argue that it is through these eight IQ principles that someone becomes a human:

> Inuit Qaujimajatugangit is a worldview shared, with differences in detail, by Inuit across the circumpolar world. It links the past and future by teaching important lessons about how to live a good life. IQ helps define Inuit by offering a set of laws, beliefs and values that serve as guides and expectations. IQ spells out processes for introducing, applying and supporting these laws and beliefs across generations. Key among these processes is inunnguiniq, the making of a human being. (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 19–20)

The eight IQ principles are as follows:

1. Inuuqatigiitsiarniq — Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.

2. Tunnganarniq — Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming and inclusive.

3. Pijitsirniq — Serving and providing for family and/or community.

4. Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq — Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice and effort.

5. Aajiiqatigiinniq — Decision making through discussion and consensus.

6.   Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq — Respect and care for the land, animals and the

environment.

7.   Piliriqatigiinniq / Ikajuqtigiinniq — Working together for a common cause.

8.   Qanuqtuurniq — Being innovative and resourceful. (Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, 2022)

Speaking about the language, culture, hunting, and traditional clothing, the authors give us

insight into the philosophies and the maxims that inform the eight IQ principles by telling us that

IQ is an ethical framework which aims to provide a detailed plan for having a good life. While

the Western or European culture and science tends to isolate, dissect and study aspects of life, IQ

aims to connect all such aspects of life in a coherent way (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 22).

For the data presentation section, I attempt to draw parallels between interview results

from the Muslim and Inuit participants with the IQ principles stated above. I would like to

acknowledge three complications in advancing IQ principles during contemporary times: first,

oral Inuit tradition of passing knowledge between generations has been harmed by the

colonisation processes. Second, much like other Indigenous knowledge, IQ principles are

contextual and dynamic. Limiting IQ principles to a static, written mode of expression

significantly alters how IQ principles are understood. Lastly, Inuit knowledges, much like other

Indigenous knowledges, have an epistemology that is varied from Western ways of knowing

(Ferrazzia et al., 2020, p. 2). Thus, recognizing the sensitivity of the situation, I intended to enter

this activity with humility. A similar challenge exists with how Islamic principles around

peacekeeping and peacemaking are understood – that these principles are not static being

misunderstood or misapplied if taken out of context.

In the following sections, I will highlight how some of the Muslim participants seem to

echo the theme of the IQ under discussion. As stated in earlier chapters, there was a lack of

parity in how much data I was able to collect from the Muslim participants, as compared to the Inuit participants. Consequently, while ideally, I would be able to produce quotes from each of the two groups for each of the 8 IQ principles, this is not possible given the research results I received.

IQ # 1 Inuuqatigiitsiarniq: Respecting Others, Relationships And Caring For People

A Muslim participant spoke about the relationship between peace, respect and justice. The participant said that everything in life, such as the consumption of resources, use of energy, and expenditure of wealth, are all supposed to be acts of worship to God, and the end goal of all acts is to establish peace. Thus, the participant suggested that living mindfully of God should lead to peace within one's community. The verse cited by the participant in their answer is as follows:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا ﴿۝﴾ ١٣٥ فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓا۟ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

Qur'an 4:135: O believers! Stand firm for justice as witnesses for Allah even if it is against yourselves, your parents, or close relatives. Be they rich or poor, Allah is best to ensure their interests. So do not let your desires cause you to deviate [from justice]. If you distort the testimony or refuse to give it, then ˹know that˺ Allah is certainly All-Aware of what you do.

In illustrating an example of how respect was conveyed, an Inuit participant said,

They [the community] used to have one leader who would make peace with families and others. [For] example, if you talk back to an older person, that is punishable, and they are not allowed to mention their elders name.

A Muslim participant spoke about how her religious worldview determines how she sees her relationships with others.

> I think what has happened over the generations in the Muslim community is a really deep-set impact of a secular Western paradigm on how we see relationships. This diminishes the spiritual, higher level of establishing relationships that are premised as a means of worship. Islam sees relationships with others as a means of worship, a means of deeper servitude and connecting to Allah. In that way, those relationships are maintained and upheld through this value system. In a secular Western frame of mind, relationships are based on rights/obligations, which diminishes the higher purpose and spiritual way of honouring relationships.

The idea that maintaining or serving relationships is an act of service is a salient teaching in traditional Islamic circles. In fact, there are sayings of the Prophet Muhammad which suggest that merely meeting another person with happiness and a pleasant countenance is an act of charity and an act of worship.

IQ # 2 Tunnganarniq: Fostering Good Spirits By Being Open, Welcoming And Inclusive

> One Muslim participant said,
>
> Peace to me is that … those people around them feel at ease because there's no imminent threat from fellow human beings.

This sense of feeling security and safety around others was also elaborated upon while discussing IQ # 1. The same participant later said that peace requires not only the receiving of characteristics such as safety, security and peace, but also giving them out. The participant spoke about the interconnected nature of the world and of people. They further elaborated that since peace is a mutual, shared experience that is dependent on everyone's contribution, if we fail to

make others feel safe and secure, we too will be affected by the discomfort the other human being feels. Thus, this participant talked about the value of interconnectedness to speak about the value of inclusivity and having a welcoming attitude.

Speaking about the importance of fostering good spirits through the traditional Muslim greeting, one Muslim participant talked about the significance of peace in Islam, especially mentioning that Muslims are commanded to greet others with "salaam". Salam means peace, and thus, this greeting indicates to the other person that you are not a threat and have no intention of causing harm. They also spoke that while unintentional harm can take place, Muslims are never allowed to scheme and plan to intentionally harm another person. Thus, the mere greeting of peace within Islam captures within it the importance of trust, safety and non-violence.

IQ # 3 Pijitsirniq: Serving And Providing For Family And/Or Community

A Muslim participant spoke about the role of building peace within a family by reflecting on the institution of marriage and the role of peace within marriage.

I noticed a lot of talks about marriage and a relationship with someone, [and the teaching] was [that] marriage is one of those most intimate relationships. He [God] keeps referring to peace and the idea that live in peace with your partner or let them go in peace.

The participant's quote highlights the author's realization that the Quran, while discussing marriage and family, emphasizes living in peace with one's partner or parting peacefully, rather than focusing on love, happiness, or joy. The participant suggests this is because peace is foundational, and it is only after the presence of peace that interactions can exhibit other attributes such as love and happiness. Thus, due to the preventative nature of Islam, there is a focus on identifying and addressing central issues like peace before a lack of peace gives rise to other problems. In fact, the participant articulated this realization in the following words,

So, one of the most important lessons I took away from doing those classes ... is that ...

we pursue all other things that cannot grow, that cannot foster, if there is no peace.

An Inuit participant similarly spoke about the importance of serving one's family or community,

My mother talk[ed] about [how]… everyone is supposed to work hard to survive; if her

parents told her to get water, she should go right away – no hesitation, no word – just

[get] up. All of them collect wood for [the] stove and [during] winter, they must work

together to survive. That's how they survive and have peace.

IQ # 4 Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq: Development Of Skills Through Observation, Mentoring, Practice And Effort

In talking about the role of Elders in the development of peacemaking skills, an Inuit

participant shared,

Peace in culture before the priest came to the North, Elders gathered to talk to people or

newlyweds and were met by elders. [They were taught] how to love each other or how to

raise their children, some people who argue regularly or beat up their wives, or

sometimes men have three wives, so peacekeepers [would] talk about the problem in an

igloo or tent, [these] people are Elders. They make peace for [or bring peace to] people

who have problems. Peace, today, in the community is hard because we [do not] follow

rules. But, before we have our own committees and the guy who is [the] eldest man or [is

a] strong, good hunter is the leader; [this leader] makes decisions where to go hunt or

[where to] move when [it] is winter and summer. He's the one who takes care of the

village [and] his own land. Each family has [such a] … leader.

Having observed the Elders in action at school, I would infer that peacekeepers are those people

who intervene in situations when there is explicit conflict, and that this is what the participant

means when they say that Elders make peace for people who have problems. In addition, when Elders talk about how to love each other and raise their children with love, then this is evidence that the Elders keep and maintain peace through preventative action. Thus, the idea that a peacekeeper only responds to explicit conflicts is at odds with our understanding of peace—a peacekeeper must respond to situations of both positive and negative peace where negative peace is the absence of war and positive peace is the absence of structural and systemic injustice. Surely, a peacemaker is essential in times of explicit conflict; however, they must be there to advocate for positive peace even if there is only negative peace and no explicit conflict.

Speaking about the role of teaching through practice and modelling, a Muslim participant, when responding to the prompt "How can we teach young children and youth to be peaceful?" emphasized that teaching peace to children requires modelling peaceful behaviour and fostering an environment of respect and open dialogue. She stressed that peace cannot be taught through force or violence. Instead, educators can model peaceful behaviour through some of these non-exhaustive actions: by listening to children, by acknowledging their perspectives, and by creating spaces for respectful conversations—in fact, the participant suggested that questioning even religious texts such as the Quran must be welcomed. By encouraging children to seek answers and accept mistakes, educators promote understanding and acceptance.

IQ # 5 Aajiiqatigiinniq: Decision–Making Through Discussion And Consensus

In responding to an interview prompt, an Inuit participant offered the following reflection:

I've been asking that question since I became a teacher. Why Inuit people can't live in one community in the beginning like 4000 years ago or 2000 years ago, I discovered that [the reason] why Kangirsuk started to be community only in [the] late 50s is because

governments force them, because Inuit … never agreed [with] each other how they live,

how they survive, why people have their own camp side. [For] example my parents grew

up upriver [and they] want[ed] to be with one leader, it's because they will never have

agreement [on] how to live. They have their own language, their own way…For return to

peace, they forgive each other and start to become a big family again … Community

leaders are always meeting to have peace in the community and everyone goes to church,

I mean everyone. When I was growing up, no one was allowed to stay home on Sunday

for church time, they controlled everyone who was not listening… Even before the police

came, community council leaders are the ones who make peace. And people who have

their own family leader, [and] leaders make sure [there are] no argument between leaders.

The participant implicitly referred to the discussion that took place within communities and

between leaders to arrive at a peaceful solution to community conflict.

In the same vein, a Muslim participant recounted the story about the Treaty of

Hudaybiyyah. The Treaty of Al-Ḥudaybiyah, made in 628 A.D., was a compromise between

Prophet Muhammad and leaders of Makkah; through this treaty, Muslims achieved political and

religious recognition for Muslims in Medina. In exchange, Prophet Muhammad had to

compromise and return to Medina with 1,400 followers, all of whom were expecting to perform

the sacred pilgrimage to Kaaba. While the Muslims were disappointed by being turned away, the

treaty introduced a 10-year truce and allowed Muslims to have a certain conflict-free period

during which they could, firstly, embody and, secondly, propagate their religious beliefs in safety

and security. This treaty is one of the milestones during the Prophet Muhammad's life that

established the use of negotiation and compromises for building alliances and promoting peace.

The participant summarized the importance of this treaty and its consequences for Islamic legacy in the following words,

> While this [returning without pilgrimage] was difficult, the Prophet led the community to learn and understand peacemaking through example, and through agreements and peacemaking measures, which were held as extremely high values.

Thus, this Treaty has had large implications for, and influence on, how Muslim communities and especially leaders make decisions and what kind of compromises are made during negotiations.

Another participant spoke about the role of discussion in preventing oppression. They referred to a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, which suggests that the way to help an oppressor is to stop them from their oppression. The above saying of the Prophet Muhammad, otherwise referred to as "Hadith", emphasizes the Islamic teaching that one is called upon to help those who are wronged and to stop and correct those who are doing wrong, regardless of their racial, religious, political, or any other identity. The question-and-answer format of the Hadith also illustrates the importance of open communication and listening, which was modelled by Prophet Muhammad.

On speaking about the role of moral imagination and using discussion to think about peace and to distinguish it from power, a Muslim participant said the following words: "Peace is not the focus, power is." The participant touched upon the issue of power struggles[2] overshadowing and taking priority over the pursuit of peace within Muslim communities. The participant spoke about her experience where those in leadership positions within mosques, Islamic schools, and community organizations often prioritized maintaining their power, leading

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[2] Like earlier notes within this thesis, a discussion of how power is defined is outside the scope of this thesis. The question of how participants define power was not examined during the research process; thus, it is inappropriate to comment on how the research participants defined power while referring to this word.

to underlying friction and conflict, rather than prioritizing the maintenance of peace. The participant talked about anecdotal incidents when conflicts arose, and leaders further reinforced their attempts to secure power rather than seeking peaceful resolutions, all the while ignoring input from the youth or those with more peaceful dispositions. Thus, the participant reflected and concludedto increase peace, there needs to be a shift in focus towards valuing and prioritizing peace.

Within Islamic philosophy, and especially within the areas of tazkiyyah and tasawwuf, great emphasis and immense literature exist on how people can recognize their motivations so that through such self-reflection, they can learn to emphasize peace over power. Since the traditional Islamic study of nafs—or one's ego—is so deep and nuanced, it is beyond the context of this paper to explain why people choose to prioritize power over peace, or how to disincentivize this practice.

IQ # 6 Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq: Respect And Care For The Land, Animals And The Environment

In speaking about the individual's relationship with land, animals and environment, a Muslim participant highlighted the Islamic tradition's emphasis on peace and that peace was to be spread not only among humans but also among non-human creation, such as animals and nature. The participant recounted a story where Prophet Muhammad intervened to restore peace:

> A group of companions were travelling with the Prophet, and had made a stop, and when they started to continue the travel, there was a bird soaring overhead and the Prophet noticed the bird was upset, and asked the companions who had caused the bird to be upset, and upon finding out that a companion had taken an egg from the bird's nest, he asked the companion to return that egg.

This story or Hadith demonstrates the concept of restitution and the wide lens through which Islam views peace, extending to all living beings.

IQ # 7 Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq: Working Together For A Common Cause

On being asked if one individual can bring peace, a Muslim participant concluded that while individuals can be catalysts for change, the responsibility for achieving peace should not solely rest on them: "We always hear the saying, be the change you want to see so you can start initiating but I don't think it's fair to place all the responsibility on individuals."

In order to come to this conclusion, the same Muslim participant spoke about the varying and nuanced understandings of peace within communities and how best to achieve it. The participant emphasized the importance of reflecting on societal dynamics and standing up for marginalized voices within a community, even if such actions are not initially well-received. The participant qualified her suggestion that individuals can initiate change by advocating for peace within their communities by acknowledging the broader systems and structures that prevent achievement of peace. This response by the participant very well captures that systemic and cultural violence can prevent the achievement of positive peace, especially for those who are marginalized. In addition, according to this participant, collaboration is dependent on agreeing on a vision of what peace means and feels like. Thus, the participant emphasized that collaboration cannot be an individual endeavour. The participant mentioned initiatives at the University of Toronto focused on decolonizing education, participatory research, and Indigenous worldviews as examples of collective efforts aimed at fostering peace within communities. In doing so, the participant emphasized the need for unity, solidarity, and coordinated efforts to create positive change. In fact, there is proof for encouraging cooperation within the Islamic guiding texts. For instance, upon sending a companion to Yemen, the Prophet Muhammad told

him to make things easy, to not make things difficult, to give glad tidings and most importantly, to cooperate with each other and not to become divided.

IQ # 8 Qanuqtuurniq: Being Innovative And Resourceful

In speaking about an innovative way to resolve conflict, an Inuit participant said,

I witnessed two small communities disagree—Aupaluk became [a] village only in mid 70s because the Aupaluk people used to live here in Kangirsuk….Kangirsuk leaders stopped ordering alcohol in late 70s. Aupaluk people…[disagreed and]…they moved to Aupaluk. [Thus] that's the only example [of innovation]—[that] people moved far away because they wanted [to] lead their own people. About seven families moved to Aupaluk from here, and they never came back. [Nevertheless] Inuit are like a big family, all Nunavik people are like one big family, but they live where they want to build community.

Speaking about the need for innovation within the peacemaking community and how one would not choose to repeat the same strategy if one were faced with economic loss, a Muslim participant highlighted the society's tendency to repeat ineffective strategies in the pursuit of peace, despite continual evidence showing the failure of their peace efforts. She criticized the lack of innovation and openness to new approaches, comparing it with the emphasis on innovation in other fields like technology. She continued to critique global peacemaking efforts, noting the reliance on repeated strategies that lead to conflict instead of peace.

The issue is that we keep telling ourselves that to get to peace, that we need to take this particular road, some of us see that that road did not result in peace, that particular action or using that particular plan did not result in peace and yet somehow we go back to that again because we're not being innovative enough or opening our minds.

In fact, the participant shared an excellent analogy and said,

> If this were, for example, a company, you were running and you follow these patterns
> that every time your company failed and didn't make a profit, you would be quick to say
> "Oh well, I better figure out what's going on here, I better change something, I better
> bring in innovators, bring people who have other thought processes about how we can
> resolve this because money's involved." But, when it comes to the issue of peace, for
> whatever reason, we just keep using our same go-to methods and ultimately find
> ourselves in the same predicament every time.

> Another Muslim participant underscored the importance of being resourceful by learning

from others,

> First Nations culture … have elements of that, and that's how they have managed to
> survive through so many difficult situations because of the fact that they take it upon
> themselves or they see that as a part of the child's education is to teach them these types
> of things because we're always going to run into conflict in our life.

The participant spoke to the importance of teaching conflict resolution skills as an essential

component of education, especially when we compare the usefulness of such conflict resolution

skills to the usefulness of a mathematical formula. The participant suggested that students are far

more likely to encounter conflicts throughout their lives, thus emphasizing the need to reassess

educational priorities and values.

> In conclusion, this chapter attempted to find the commonalities in how oral Inuit and

Islamic traditions teach and maintain peace culturally. The primary and secondary questions

explored the definitions of peace, what tools exist in the culture or religion to maintain peace,

storytelling about peace, and teaching peace in schools despite cultural colonialism. While the

first question was not explicitly answered by any of the research participants, significant data was collected on the latter two topics. The research was limited by data constraints from Inuit participants; thus, a way to address this constraint was to draw parallels between Muslim interview responses and Inuit Qaujimajatugangit (IQ) principles. IQ is a system of Inuit traditional knowledge and includes values guiding interactions with the world. A short summary of the data analysis completed through the lens of the Inuit Qaujimajatugangit (IQ) principles is as follows:

- Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (Respecting Others, Relationships, and Caring for People): While the Muslim participants linked peace with living mindfully of God and establishing community peace, the Inuit participants discussed respect for Elders and the role of a community leader in maintaining peace.

- Tunnganarniq (Fostering Good Spirits by Being Open, Welcoming, and Inclusive): The Muslim participants emphasized safety, security, and mutual peace through greetings and interactions.

- Pijitsirniq (Serving and Providing for Family and/or Community): While the Muslim participants highlighted peace within family and marriage, Inuit participants talked about the importance of collective effort and hard work to ensure survival and peace.

- Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq (Development of Skills Through Observation, Mentoring, Practice, and Effort): While the Inuit participants described Elders' role in peace education and community decision-making, the Muslim participants emphasized the importance of modelling peaceful behaviour and fostering respectful conversations.

- Aajiiqatigiinniq (Decision-making through Discussion and Consensus): While the Inuit participants reflected on how community decisions were made, the Muslim participants recounted the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah as an example of negotiation and peacemaking.

- Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq (Respect and Care for the Land, Animals, and the Environment): The Muslim participants shared a story about Prophet Muhammad, emphasizing peace with animals.

- Piliriqatigiinniq / Ikajuqtigiinniq (Working Together for a Common Cause): The Muslim participants discussed the collective responsibility of achieving peace and the importance of collaboration.

- Qanuqtuurniq (Being Innovative and Resourceful): The Inuit participants shared a story of community relocation and how this was a tool used to resolve conflict and build new communities.

Thus, this chapter highlighted the parallels between Inuit and Islamic traditions in promoting peace.

Chapter 5: Findings, Discussion and Analysis

Cormier (2010) writes that according to his experience, living peacefully (which includes being in balance and harmony) is an integral component of the worldviews attributed to Aboriginal peoples in Canada and to many other Indigenous peoples around the world (p. 25). Reflecting on this point, while reading a paper by Frideres (2008), I came across the following quote which perfectly encapsulates my experience of having lived in three separate Indigenous communities for a variety of durations: "Canadians have often commented on the individualistic nature of Aboriginal culture and the fundamental respect and freedom they accorded one another in their daily life" (p. 320). It is this observation which led to a desire to understand the traditions within Inuit knowledge and education systems that encourage harmonious coexistence between peoples. In the following sub-section, I will share highlights of findings that struck me during this research project:

Discussion of Highlights Of My Findings

Some of the findings discovered during the analysis are as follows: that all participants proposed a synonym for peace; that peace fosters and facilitates other virtues; that modelling is necessary to teach peace; that peace education requires strategic problem-solving, much like any other goal; and, that learning from other traditions can augment our own peacemaking abilities and help us better understand how religion influences our understanding of peace.

All Participants Proposed A Synonym For Peace

During my data analysis, what stood out for me most intensely was that all research participants proposed a synonym for their understanding of peace. For example, Inuit participants spoke of peace as the practice of forgiveness or belief in Jesus Christ. On the other hand, Muslim participants spoke of peace as the attempt to find balance, being safe from harm

done by another, a long period of patience or as a state of complete release and calmness. The fact that an Inuit participant spoke about belief in Jesus Christ as a motivational factor for maintaining peace is very interesting. While organized religion did not exist before colonialism, a significant amount of time and forced habituation (such as through residential schools) has elapsed since the introduction of Christianity to Indigenous communities, and many Inuit combine Christian beliefs with traditional Indigenous beliefs. In fact, this very sentiment was conveyed by one of the Inuit participants when they said,

> First of all, I find peace in Jesus Christ because he gives perfect peace even though I
>
> don't always feel it, I have found that he gives perfect peace.

While one could say that this statement can be an example of cognitive imperialism, as it illustrates how the Indigenous oral tradition has been replaced by indoctrination of a foreign religion. However, I argue that this is a wonderful example of how Inuit spirituality has been successfully synthesized with Christian beliefs.

Like the Inuit participant, a Muslim participant used the Quranic scripture to talk about synonyms of peace. The participant defined peace as achieving balance in all aspects of life, such as between how much one takes and gives. The participant emphasized that this balance is not only limited to personal relationships, but rather, it should extend to community interactions and even to one's relationship with the environment. The participant touched upon the academic definitions of negative peace and positive peace when she stated that peace is not merely the absence of violence but a state of mutual respect, appreciation, and recognition for all. The speaker emphasizes that maintaining balance aligns with the Quranic teaching in verse 55:7, which warns against disturbing the natural balance. Thus, according to this participant, peace is fundamentally about maintaining equilibrium and harmony in all areas of life. I would suggest

that the participant was implicitly referring to the concepts of holism and interconnectedness when she spoke about equilibrium.

٧ – ۞وَٱلسَّمَآءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ ٱلْمِيزَان

Translation: As for the sky, He raised it ˹high˺, and set the balance ˹of justice˺ (Quran 55:7)

٨ – ۞أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْمِيزَان

Translation: So that you do not defraud the scales. (Quran 55:8)

Another participant echoed this emphasis on balance and justice when they said,

> Peace is a sense of being, a state of complete release, and calmness that is achieved by submitting to the worship of and will of Allah. Peace is when there are no feelings of anything weighing me down, pushing me, or an imbalance between internal/external realities.

Peace Fosters And Facilitates Other Virtues

There were many lessons that I gleaned about how oral traditions can help mainstream peace education within Islamic and Inuit school systems. One lesson I learnt through the interviews was that peace is what enables or facilitates the presence of other positive virtues.

> So, if you pay attention, it [Quran] doesn't say love, live, enjoy, live in happiness; it doesn't use any of those other words. [Rather] it uses that fundamental word of peace in terms of that being the foundation, and so, I came to the conclusion with the idea that peace is what allows all of those other great positive things to happen right, so if you don't have peace, you can't have love, you can't have happiness, you can't have joy, you can't have self fulfillment, all these other things that ultimately we're trying to achieve. I feel that that's what Islam teaches us, and the nature of Islam and the fact that it's a very

preventative religion, so it tries to find a way for us to fix something or identify what's important before we have a problem rather than fix the problem afterwards.

I would like to draw special attention to the comment about how peaceful states are preventative action and preventative factors that mitigate the potential for violent conflict. The participant goes on to state that,

> There are other examples and scenarios where Allah continuously talks about peace and its importance, so sometimes we overlook that as humans and we pursue all other things that cannot grow, that cannot foster, if there is no peace, so I think that for me is what my religion teaches me about the importance of just how foundational peace is to us.

Khan (2015) echoes this statement in the following quote when he writes,

> The greatest strength of peace is that it allows nature to work. If you want to achieve your goal through war, then you yourself shall have to fight. Peace on the other hand works on its own. If you stop war, peace will prevail. In such a situation, nature starts to have an instant effect. The only condition is that when nature is at work, one must not interfere. Peace works only in an environment of non-interference. When there is interference, the process of nature comes to a halt. Just as after the seed is sown, the tree starts to grow on its own, this is also the greatest strength of peace. Those who understand this inherent power of peace are never confronted by failure. (p. 20)

I use this quote to help myself and others ponder over the value and importance of recognizing the natural state of peace within which we are all created. If something is natural, it will grow organically if the circumstances are present for it to take root. Many of the world's Indigenous traditions promote this philosophy and worldview, and by recognizing this value, we can better recognize and promote peacemaking traditions.

Modelling Is Necessary To Teach Peace

Another major lesson that came out of the interviews was the suggestion that, despite its intangible nature, children need to know how peace "feels". While children cannot be taught how to create peace at every moment in their own lives, children need to experience peace in their families and their schools. They will only be able to create peace if they are able to witness what it looks and feels like amongst their role models in their families and at their schools. A Muslim research participant who worked as an educator in a Muslim school reflected on her experiences,

I was a teacher for many years, and we constantly taught the children not to conflict with each other, not to fight and that conflicts don't have to be violent, and there are other ways of dealing with conflict. The problem is that when they look around them, the example is completely contradictory, so if our examples contradict what we're teaching them, ultimately, we know their kids children follow example, so the reality is that would be where we will start if we're talking about peace to children and telling them not to take revenge on somebody because someone did wrong to them or not to plot and plan, [or] how you're going to destroy somebody because they did something that you don't like. Then we have to show that. Because if our society is plotting and planning how to attack other people, how to get into conflicts with people, how to take revenge … how is that showing children and youth that conflict is not the answer? It's a complete contradiction to what we teach them when they're really young. When we teach them going to … the playground we say don't fight with others, share, sharing is caring, all these types of concepts that we teach but they're gone by the time they probably reach middle school because when they come into realization and they start to see what's happening around them, they know that this is not how it operates this is not what really

happens in the real world. So, for me, teaching peace to young people is ultimately going to come down to the choices that we make as a society and our own manner in which we handle conflict. If we handle it in a particular way, they're going to believe that that's the right way to do it

In fact, one of the respondents critiqued how stories of war are told, particularly in media and education, suggesting that they should instead focus on the lessons learned around lost lives and the value of human life. Through the glorification of war, the dominant societal narrative reinforces the myth that future generations must be ready to fight, rather than placing an emphasis on preventing conflicts. The participant said,

When you pay attention, where do we put our resources and our mind and our effort, and who do we praise? We praise the people who leave their country and fly somewhere and fight somebody, and then we have whole memorials … about how their lives were so meaningful because they went and fought for our peace. So that story [promotes] … the idea that war begets peace.

Bickmore (2017) echoes this sentiment, and suggests that peace can be modelled in schools through the use of dialogue, joint justice work, and shared governance, and contrasts this from the opposite situation, where "In punitive, inequitable school climates, marginalized students carry different roles than high-status students" (Bickmore, 2017, p. 283)—in fact, this is the exact phenomenon one of the Muslim participants alluded to. Another modelling tool suggested was the use of peace circles (Parker & Bickmore, 2020).

Peace Education Requires Strategic Problem-Solving, Much Like Any Other Goal

Another suggestion made by a Muslim participant was to work with children to create action plans of how these children desire to react when angry or when in conflict. Thus, all these

suggestions tell us that while a child can feel happy or supported, we need to help them discover how a state of peace or conditions of peace led to the feeling of this positive virtue. I especially appreciated the suggestion that we should perform strategic problem-solving, so that our children are better equipped to know what peace would look like if faced with a situation of conflict. A Muslim participant's advice on how to teach peace to children is centred around modelling and allowing children to feel peace.

> It is not possible to teach children every little way to be peaceful, but if they can understand, grasp, connect to and ground themselves in the source and purpose, then they can build their own lives and draw from that understanding and implement it within any realm of their lives. Children need to feel that peace and know what it means to have and live in that peace. We have to build an environment and nurture this deep way of knowing and understanding peace within children.

Learning From Other Traditions Can Augment Our Own Peacemaking Abilities And Help Us Better Understand How Religion Influences Our Understanding Of Peace

Speaking about the importance of studies similar to the one being conducted for this thesis, one Muslim participant, who is also an educator, repeatedly emphasized the importance of cross-cultural studies so that Muslims can learn peacemaking and conflict resolution techniques from other groups, especially those that identify as Indigenous. On a similar note, the Muslim participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of coexistence in the face of diversity. I suspect that this suggestion came up because the Muslim participants were already trying to reconcile their religious identity with their cultural identities. This might be because certain Islamic teachings advise Muslims to forego their cultural practices if they clash with religious laws and practices prescribed through the belief system. In addition, it is important to note that

the Muslim participants interviewed for this research project had diverse ethnic heritages: one was South Asian, another was Arab, and a third was African Canadian.

The Inuit participants, on the other hand, were very comfortable with their religious identities. Since their cultural identity was comparatively more homogenous, as both Inuit participants were from the same village of Kangirsuk, they did not have to reflect on reconciling the two identities. That said, the Inuit participants expressed being more recently and more intensely impacted by colonialism and how disruptive a role these colonial education and governance structures have had on their traditions of rule-making, peacemaking, and other systems essential to the sustenance of culture.

The educator of Afro-Caribbean identity concluded her interview with the following quote: "I hope this really leads to helping us understand what peace really is … looking at the fact that we can gain from other people's cultures [and] not just keep sustaining what we have." A longer quote by a Muslim participant encapsulates most of the findings highlighted:

> We need to have a situation where people sit down and their entire focus is peace and they think of innovative ways and they go through, for example, a part of the study that you're doing, where they go through other people's culture [and ask about what] is other people's ways of resolving conflict because clearly the ways that we're using are not working. So, let's start looking at other cultures and other people's interpretation of conflict and how they resolve conflict and … ultimately, the strategies that they used to get to peace … we may discover [these strategies] are a lot more humane than the strategies we're using.

This quote touches upon the importance of learning about peace from other cultures, which would implicitly introduce us to the synonyms a specific tradition uses for peace; how

they use or reconcile religious beliefs to promote peacemaking; and how the culture "feels" peace. The quote reminds me that strategic problem-solving for peacemaking and peacekeeping is required, just like if we were aiming to reach any other goal or objective. Following the participant's suggestions, it would be easier to model peace, and such modelling will especially help convince students and the public that peace is the foundation through which other virtues can flourish and thrive.

Analysis of how well the research findings fit with my thesis statement

The research questions for this project investigated the cultural definition of peace and one's role in promoting this peace, thus correlating with the two categories of the literature review. I hoped to discover commonalities between Inuit peacemaking traditions and Islamic peacemaking schemas. I also hoped to convince the audience of my relation to, and interest in, researching peacemaking traditions within Indigenous communities as well as to establish relational accountability.

The thesis of this research project was as follows: *I argue that both Islamic and Inuit knowledges have within them principles of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The first principle of peacemaking within both these traditions is self-temperance, or starting peace with oneself.*

I have structured the following sub-section according to the two categories outlined within the thesis statement, as each of these two claims collectively contributes to building the thesis statement of this research project. Through this analysis, I endeavoured to show that the research findings from this research project satisfactorily supported each of the two categories outlined in the thesis statement.

Within Oral Inuit and Islamic Traditions Are Principles Of Peacekeeping And Peacemaking

In speaking about traditional Inuit practices, an Inuit respondent said,

In the past, over 100 years [ago, for] example young people couldn't live like today,

especially as a woman, they couldn't control anything only men and only parents can

agree if you're marrying a man you never met … [In the past] you are allowed 16

children, not less, but some men have two wives because he can provide food. This

changed after the 1950s, 1960s, when residential schools started and priests came to stay

in the community, they … made peace for the community, made laws. And community

leaders are only men who are important leaders… [and they] build their own community

how it should be, [they] made rules... After residential school, [there] is [a] huge

difference between being almost white people and almost Inuk. They are confused

[about] who they are, they lost their language, culture, hunting, traditional clothing

making, everything has change[d], so they started following the government's way.

Speaking about traditional Islamic practices, a Muslim participant emphasized the

importance of character development in children, and how this character development can only

be cultivated through a deeply rooted practice of seeking and practicing peace due to a God-

consciousness. Some of the concepts the participant suggested that children are taught are as

follows: accountability, connection, and living for the sake of Allah, focusing on self-

accountability, and worship. The participant suggested that these concepts are best taught as

everyday scenarios where the children are encouraged to practice problem-solving while

remaining mindful of God. The participant urged that by establishing the practice of peace in a

higher cause, such as worship of the Creator, we are more likely to overcome the obstacle of

human egos and desires.

One Muslim participant spoke about principles of peacemaking within the Islamic

tradition. The most significant of these principles was the greeting of peace, telling us that the

first greeting that we will tell one another in paradise is "Salaam", the greeting of peace. Another

participant said,

> We say salaam to each other all the time. So, peace is constantly coming off our tongues.

The third Muslim participant echoed this emphasis on the greeting of peace and said,

> We as Muslims must strive to establish peace—in the most simplest act of greeting each
>
> other, we elevate the greeting to extending greetings of peace "salamu walaikum".

> Echoing what Quran verse 6:127 says, a Muslim participant talked about the meaning of

the word Islam and the role of peace in the greetings we make to each other and the greetings we

send to the Prophet Mohammad:

> In Islam, the word Islam itself means peace through submission to Allah. True peace can
>
> only be in Jannah [which means] paradise. In this life and in this world, we strive to
>
> practice Islam as a means of establishing peace, and we greet each other with peace, to
>
> build a community on the premise of peace. We send peace and blessings on the Prophet
>
> Muhammad. We say greetings of peace to the angels sitting on our right and left
>
> shoulders in each prayer. The concept of peace, and establishing peace, is a grounding
>
> and very strong element of a Muslim's every moment.

The same participant quoted the following section of the sacred Quranic scripture when speaking

about the high status of peacemaking, and commented that through the verses of the Quran, it

can be inferred that the rank of keeping peace is higher than even one's own rights.

> يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ ٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا ۞
>
> فَٱللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ ۚ وَإِن تَلْوُۥٓا۟ أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا
>
> Translation: O believers! Stand firm for justice as witnesses for Allah even if it is against
>
> yourselves, your parents, or close relatives. Be they rich or poor, Allah is best to ensure

their interests. So do not let your desires cause you to deviate ˹from justice˺. If you distort

the testimony or refuse to give it, then ˹know that˺ Allah is certainly All-Aware of what

you do. (Quran 4:135)

In addition, in a Hadith narrated by Abu Darda, the Prophet said,

"Shall I not inform you of something more excellent in degree than fasting, prayer and

almsgiving (sadaqah)?" The people replied: "Yes, Prophet of Allah!" He said: "It is

putting things right between people, spoiling them is the shaver (destructive)."

Since the Quran and the Hadith are considered orally transmitted Divine knowledge by

adherents of the faith, and since the focus of this research project was an examination of oral

traditions, I thought it would be fitting to share below some of the places where the orally

transmitted Quran and Hadith tradition references the concept of peace:

God introduces himself with various attributes, and one of those attributes is As-Salaam, or The

Peace or The Source of Serenity.

٢٣ ۞هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَـٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُون

Translation: He is Allah—there is no god except Him: the King, the Most Holy, the All-

Perfect, the Source of Serenity, the Watcher ˹of all˺, the Almighty, the Supreme in Might,

1 the Majestic. Glorified is Allah far above what they associate with Him ˹in worship˺!

(Quran 59:23)

God tells us that Heaven is the Abode of Peace,

١٢٧ ۞لَهُمْ دَارُ ٱلسَّلَـٰمِ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُون ﴿۝﴾

Translation: They will have the Home of Peace with their Lord, Who will be their

Guardian because of what they used to do. (Quran 6:127)

And God says that those who are righteous will be given a place in the Abode of Peace,

٢٥ ۞وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

Translation: And Allah invites ˹all˺ to the Home of Peace and guides whomever He wills to the Straight Path. (Quran 10:25)

God calls people in the Quran to the path of peace,

١٦ ۞يَهْدِى بِهِ ٱللَّهُ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضْوَٰنَهُ سُبُلَ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِۦ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

Translation: Through which Allah guides those who seek His pleasure to the ways of peace, brings them out of darkness and into light by His Will, and guides them to the Straight Path. (Quran 5:16)

God commands Muslims to consider those who offer greetings of peace as believers.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُواْ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَٰمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ

٩٤ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ ٱللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

Translation: O believers! When you struggle in the cause of Allah, be sure of who you fight. And do not say to those who offer you ˹greetings of˺ peace, "You are no believer!"—seeking a fleeting worldly gain. Instead, Allah has infinite bounties ˹in store˺. You were initially like them then Allah blessed you ˹with Islam˺. So be sure! Indeed, Allah is All-Aware of what you do. (Quran 4:94)

God commands Muslims, through the Quran, to make peace if the enemy inclines toward peace

٦١ ۞وَإِن جَنَحُواْ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ۞

Translation: If the enemy is inclined towards peace, make peace with them. And put your trust in Allah. Indeed, He ˹alone˺ is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Quran 8:61)

One of the sayings of Prophet Mohammad is as follows,

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَفْشُوا السَّلاَمَ وَأَطْعِمُوا الطَّعَامَ وَصَلُّوا وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ تَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ بِسَلاَمٍ

Translation: 'O you people! Spread the Salam, feed (others), and perform Salat while the people are sleeping; you will enter Paradise with (the greeting of) Salam.'" (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Vol. 4, Book 11, Hadith 2485)

In fact, the practice of peacemaking is tied to the role of eternal salvation, as can be found in the following saying of the Prophet Muhammad,

إِنَّ أَعْرَضَ وَأَشَاحَ ثَلَاثًا، حَتَّى ظَنَنَّا أَنَّهُ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهَا، ثُمَّ قَالَ " اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَلَوْ بِشِقّ تَمْرَةٍ، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَبِكَلِمَةٍ طَيِّبَة

Translation: "Protect yourselves from the Fire, even if with one half of a date and he who hasn't got even this, (should do so) by (saying) a good, pleasant word" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 8, Book 76, Hadith 548)

Prophet Mohammad himself said that the best thing in Islam is to spread peace,

يا أيها الناس أفشوا السلام، وأطعموا الطعام، وصلوا الأرحام وصلوا والناس نيام، تدخلوا الجنة بسلام

Translation: "O people, exchange greetings of peace (i.e., say: As-Salamu 'Alaikum to one another), feed people, strengthen the ties of kinship, and be in prayer when others are asleep, you will enter Jannah in peace." (Riyad as-Salihin 848, Book 5, Hadith 5).

The Prophet said the following about self-temperance and resulting good character,

اِنَّ مِنْ أَكْمَلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِيمَانًا أَحْسَنُهُمْ خُلُقًا وَأَلْطَفُهُمْ بِأَهْلِه

Translation: "Indeed among the believers with the most complete faith is the one who is the best in conduct, and the most kind to his family." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Vol. 5, Book 38, Hadith 2612)

One of the Muslim participants spoke about how the above passages and narratives emphasize the importance of peace. Understanding the importance of peace is strongly tied to an understanding and submission to a higher purpose and a deep connection to God.

An Inuit participant reflected on how peacemaking practices in the Inuit community of Kangirsuk have changed between the past and the present,

> In our community, in the past, elders would meet individuals who were in conflict to counsel them. Also, they would have community meetings about things that are causing trouble within the community then came the radio. So, they would go on [the] radio and talk about the problems. They would tell us to do this or not to do this and tell us to follow the rules they set up for the whole community. Back then, everyone went to church, and they would preach about forgiveness and to have peace between people. Nowadays, we rely on social services, social service workers, and police to have peace, which is very different from how we worked to have peace [in the past]. It's mostly on local radio and social media that we talk about having peace and prevention.

Thus, both Inuit and Islamic traditions emphasize peacekeeping and peacemaking, however each tradition manifests these traditions differently: Inuit practices have traditionally focused on community-led conflict resolution, elder guidance, and later church, and currently, they rely more on innovations such as social services and radio. In Islam, peace is supposed to be deeply embedded in faith, through everyday greetings, worship, and moral conduct. The Quran and Hadith suggest that peace is a divine attribute and a pathway to spiritual fulfillment and community harmony.

The First Principle of Peacemaking Within Both These Traditions Is Self-temperance, Or Starting Peace With Oneself.

In speaking about the core peacemaking value within Inuit tradition, one Inuit participant said peace is to forego revenge, thus emphasizing the cultural importance afforded to self-temperance.

Peacemaking was very important until 2000, after [it became] the law. Today for the young children, peace is not in their route, [because] it's single parents parenting the way they want, they are making rules and peace. Today it is very hard to talk about peace because they won't understand what our generation was…Or [it won't] mean anything to youth and to children. Parents protect and fight back with others; they don't know how to make peace because parents fight back with [each other]. We have to teach the law in our community and the rules if we want peace. We have our own peace at home. Elders are the ones who are trying to use them, but it's not working anymore. Peace is hard to teach today. Some are still using what the elders told them. We have 14 communities in Nunavik. Each of the communities has its way to teach peace; some villages have great communication with elders. Peace is to help others, listen to parents [and] follow the rules. Peace is not to fight back and not to [take] revenge, because today if you [take] revenge, karma will return to you. That's what young people believe, they want karma to solve peace, but that's not the way. They want [to take] revenge so hard … That's why we need rules.

Echoing this importance of foregoing revenge that is found in the oral Inuit tradition, some Quranic verses that speak about the value of forgiveness are: Quran 64:14; Quran 7:199; Quran 24:22; and, Quran 42:40-43. The same Inuit participant shared that,

[One way] to make peace with each other when we are growing up as youth is that we have to say sorry before sundown or before sunset; we have to make peace before sun sets and then [we] will have [a] better future. If we listen [to] our parents [then we can have peace]. If we didn't listen [then] that is my fault, so my parents would say to me

[that] it's my fault because I didn't listen. If we get [into an] accident or fight, it's me who started everything because I was out late.

This is another interesting parallel between oral Inuit and oral Islamic traditions—similar to limiting the period of antagonism within the Inuit tradition, the idea that one can maintain enmity for only three days is also present within the Muslim tradition. Additionally, this concept of taking responsibility and holding oneself accountable was also present in the Muslim tradition. While speaking about this practice, a Muslim participant spoke about and described the practice of *tassawwuf* in the following words, which is the process of spiritual refinement within the Islamic Sufi tradition. The participant emphasized the importance of focusing on the element of peace when telling stories, especially to the youth, and to convey to the children that achieving peace often involves a lot of patience. The participant went on to say that while patience is challenging, it remains essential for bringing peace to oneself and for bringing peace to others. The participant once again emphasized the importance of modelling patience and a peaceful state—it is through such modelling that the children can learn that, realistically, patience is difficult, yet essential, to fostering peace.

A Muslim participant spoke about the role of emotional regulation and reflection when hearing Prophetic stories. The participant emphasized the need for practical strategies and structured plans to help individuals, especially children, manage anger and develop patience. The participant conceded that while teachings from the orally transmitted Hadith tradition provide valuable guidance, these sayings of the Prophet Muhammad often lack concrete steps for application, such as during moments of anger. Thus, she suggests that it is crucial to create detailed plans from a young age, where these plans involve the practice of self-reflection and self-reflexivity during specific instances of anger and determining better responses in potential

similar situations in the future. The participant suggested that the goal is to help children learn and practice self-regulation and peaceful behaviours consistently, as the practice of expecting them to figure it out on their own is ineffective. As an educator, I was happy to hear about the connection the participant drew between self-regulation and peacemaking and peacekeeping.

Two Muslim participants spoke about powerlessness and oppression when talking about self-temperance. For instance, one Muslim participant said,

I consistently say this: When has an oppressor thought of himself as an oppressor? When has someone who is oppressing someone else thought to themselves in the morning and said to themselves, "You know what, I'm really an oppressor today?" No one does that! That's why you're an oppressor, because you do not have an understanding of what you're doing to others and how you're making others feel. You are focused on yourself and how you feel, so therefore you don't concern yourself with others ultimately.

This statement was made about the oppressor. However, speaking about the oppressed, the same participant reflected on the challenges faced by the Afro-Caribbean community in identifying and experiencing peace due to a deep history of oppression, discrimination, and struggle for basic rights. Since the participant identified with this cultural community, she commented that constantly fighting and resisting have made it difficult for the community to find a peaceful state. She emphasized that this struggle has not been due to any fault of their own but rather a necessary response to systemic discrimination they have faced for generations. The participant concluded that it is essential to find peace as a prerequisite for true freedom, and argued that without internal peace, even the removal of external shackles won't lead to genuine liberation.

This participant concluded by suggesting that peacemaking was premised on the practice of patience, thus bringing us full circle back to the beginning of this subsection. The participant

reflected on how peace fundamentally requires patience. Patience prevents continuous or escalating cycles of violence. She highlighted the examples of prophets in the Quran, showing how they often chose patience and acted as examples rather than immediately confronting or punishing those who disbelieved or behaved immorally. The prophets' choice to wait and let God decide their fate sets up for us the role of patience in fostering peace. The participant argued that patience allows for thoughtful decision-making, planning, and communication, and thus, it is through patience that overt confrontation or reactive action is seen as a last resort:

> So, I think what Islam traditionally teaches us about peace, is … that we are patient for quite some time before we take action. So, it's not to say the action is never taken, because that's clearly not the case in our religion, but it's that we lead with patience, we lead with a peaceful disposition and a long period of patience, before we now have to take an action. That gives us the ability to think, it gives us the ability to process, it gives us the ability to plan, innovate and communicate, and use war or conflict as a last resort. … what I've learned from Seerah [i.e. stories from the Prophet Mohammad's life], what I've seen in the stories in the Quran, is that almost all of the prophets had such extensive periods of being patient and waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting, before any action was taken. So, based on that, I'm going to say that patience is a major ingredient to peace.

In fact, the participant concluded with the following strong words,

> If there is no patience involved, you pretty much know that you're not going in the direction of peace, and so that's what I've taken from the stories.

> A Muslim participant extended this argument and talked about the role of belief in peacemaking:

The idea that sometimes some people who are working on peace really don't believe that peace is achievable. If you don't believe it's achievable, ultimately, how are you going to put in place the things that are necessary for us to get there?

Thus, it is important to believe that peace can be achieved, and it is only through such a solid belief that one can find the stamina and courage to remain patient for long periods of time. Such an extended period of patience (known as "sabr" in Islamic theology) is how self-temperance is defined. In addition, it is important to note that patience is not passive – rather, it requires active and significant intention.

This data suggests the Muslim participants concluded that peacemaking starts with self-temperance since patience is a form of self-temperance. A Muslim participant summarized the Islamic worldview very coherently when she wrote,

We bring peace by being aware that as a Muslim, our worship and submitting to the Creator—the most wise, the most merciful, and the One who gives Peace (As-Salam). We recognize that by living this consciousness, we forego our own egos, desires, and whims for a higher cause that will lead to societal peace. By the very act of being God-conscious, an individual lives a life that was prescribed by Allah, that is aimed at creating peace within the individual, within every institution of society (starting with the family) and the wider community.

An Inuit participant also said that peace starts with oneself, but also that it can be found by being with children or by being out on the land:

I have to look for peace within me. There are so many problems and dysfunction in families these days, mostly due to alcohol and drugs. I look for peace in Jesus Christ, which I have found to be true. When we are on land, there is peace and satisfaction. Also,

I find being with children is peaceful. There are resources for help in the province of

Quebec, but we don't have access to them or know how to ask for them. It's mostly not

our style because their culture is very different from our own. Also, due to being a small

town, there aren't many choices to get help.

From participants, I learnt that self-temperance as a form of peacemaking and peacekeeping was

a principle found across many worldviews because our greatest realm of influence is control over

oneself.

Considerations for application in a school setting

Through this subsection, I wish to highlight some of the next steps suggested by the

research participants.

Peace Starts In The Mind

In speaking about the next steps, a Muslim participant spoke about the importance of

starting positive change and peacemaking with one's own mindset when she spoke about the

importance of prioritizing peace and respecting it as much as we do power. The participant said,

People can survive without power at the end of the day. If I don't have power over other

people or a country, I can still find a way to survive, but the lack of peace, however,

ultimately kills us all.

Thus, the participant argued that peace is essential for being the best Muslim, human being,

family member, and community member. The participant spoke about how Islam teaches the

value of peace and especially emphasized how paradise's defining characteristic is tranquillity.

Since Muslims are told that the ultimate goal for their life is to reach paradise, it is very

interesting to note that we can imagine paradise by imagining peace; thus, not only does peace

start in the mind, but Muslims also believe that it is the bridge between our temporal existence in

this worldly realm and within the eternal spiritual realm. Thus, a shift in one's mindset is essential for fostering peace within us and around us, and, as such a mindset shift enables one to understand that the existence of peace manifests in both the material and spiritual realms.

The Powerless Can Create And Feel Peace

While the participant quoted above said that power is not as important as peace, she was also quick to advise those in power. She spoke about her experience of working in Islamic schools, where there is a majority, dominant culture and other non-dominant or minority cultures. The participant suggested that this dynamic within Islamic schools mirrors broader societal dynamics. Her message to the Muslim community was that it is very important to create peaceful environments for all, particularly minorities, when we have the power to control the environment. This was a very interesting quote, because often Muslims will consider themselves as without power, or as marginalized, within the broader society; but these same individuals forget to acknowledge that they do have power in certain situations and that they have to hold themselves accountable on how they are listening to and addressing the concerns of minority groups and whether they are fostering genuine peace and creating a safe space for everyone in the community when they are in power. The participant emphasized the need for educators to reflect justice and fairness, and to listen to the marginalized groups to assess if there is genuine justice, fairness, equity and peace for all. She said:

> The reality is that the teachers are mirroring to the students what is acceptable and when we have a majority of one particular group or race culture of people in a position of power, when you are an educator, you do have an element of power over others, especially impressionable young children, the reality is that when you're put in that situation—if you're not able to reflect justice, if you're not able to reflect fairness … That

becomes an issue… you're not providing a peaceful space for other people; you're only

providing a peaceful space for yourself … So, if you want to judge if you are bringing

peace to others, if you are fair, if you are equitable, you go to those people, you go to the

minority in your community… and you check and you use them as a compass to decipher

if you're on track, and if you're really being peaceful if you're really opening the

opportunity for peace to everyone in your community…. What I think needs to happen

[and which is] fundamental to us reaching a place of peace, [which is] reaching a safe

space for everyone in our community, we have to be prepared to listen to those who don't

tell us what we want to hear, and if we can't do that [then] we're going to continue to have

more of the same.

Peace Requires Acceptance Of And Promotion Of Diversity And Plurality

The last quote already started touching on the topic of diversity, plurality, and power

dynamics. On speaking about the concept of diversity and acceptance, one of the participants

repeatedly emphasized the importance of teaching children acceptance and respect for differing

beliefs and opinions, the importance of open conversations, and the importance of listening and

understanding, especially when there are disagreements. The participant asserted that

encouraging children to inquire, question, and seek answers, while maintaining respect, fosters a

healthy environment for growth. Thus, the participant suggested that embracing diversity as an

opportunity for learning and evolution, rather than a threat, is essential for peaceful coexistence

in diverse societies. The first steps towards embracing diversity are authentic listening and open,

non-judgmental conversations. She suggested how to teach religious texts while respecting

diversity and plurality:

So it's not just teaching the children about the content of the Quran, of the Seerah, of all these stories, but really in the way, you teach them you recognize their opinion, you recognize what they have to say, you respect their questions, you respect their feelings, you teach them how to deal with a disagreement… The Quran does say Arabic script: لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِين [which means "For you is your religion, and for me is my religion" and can be found in Quran 109:6], you have your beliefs, your religion your values, and I have mine and nothing says that we cannot be at peace together so teaching them… that being okay with difference, not being afraid to inquire to question whether it is with adults or with peers, always having respect and that's important because it's difficult.

The same participant emphasized the importance of being secure in the face of diversity: I actually think that someone who is more insecure [is more threatened] … if you're so convinced, why are you feeling threatened? If you're feeling threatened, it's because you feel that there's something shaky, that there's something where you're afraid you might lose grip, and so that's why you're becoming aggressive or defensive as you're listening. If you are 100% certain, you shouldn't become agitated; you should be able to take in whatever different narrative or worldview you're being exposed to, you should be able to respectfully present your own point of view, and you should be able to then continue beyond that.

In addition, the participant repeatedly spoke about the importance of teaching children that conflict is natural and should not feel threatened by differences in beliefs and worldviews. She proposed that it is our own insecurity which drives defensiveness when confronted with opposing perspectives. The participant talked about how embracing diversity is an opportunity for growth and evolution, even if it is outside our current comfort zone. She suggested that

maintaining one's beliefs while engaging positively with differing viewpoints demonstrates the peaceful and tolerant nature of one's belief system.

All the interview responses by Muslim participants could be summarized and attributed to the following verse of the Quran:

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَـٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَٱسْتَبِقُوا۟ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ ۚ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُون ٤٨

Translation: We have revealed to you ˹O Prophet˺ this Book with the truth, as a confirmation of previous Scriptures and a supreme authority on them. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires over the truth that has come to you. To each of you We have ordained a code of law and a way of life. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community, but His Will is to test you with what He has given ˹each of˺ you. So compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you ˹of the truth˺ regarding your differences (Quran 5:48).

To conclude this subsection, I would like to quote a Muslim participant who said,

We need to move away from secular/colonial/western systems of approach to education. We need to welcome multiple worldviews and ways of building peace. Peace is a collective, collaborative, and engaged process—all of these things require active engagement with multiple worldviews. The concept of peace needs to be taught, understood and practiced through multiple worldviews within the school system. By definition, peace cannot be completely achieved in the school until plurality is understood, welcomed, honoured, and lived in the school systems.

Not only did diversity come out as a key principle in promoting peacemaking and peacekeeping within Muslim and Inuit school systems, but the participants also agreed that one of the next steps for peacemaking is to acknowledge that plurality is a strength.

Peace Should Be Taught Through Stories And Oral Traditions

Another action step is to use story as a teaching pedagogy. All the participants emphasized the importance of stories and oral traditions while talking about peace. In speaking about the connection between peace and story, a Muslim participant spoke about story as a teaching methodology:

> All of the stories I have shared above can be told to children. It is important to help children understand the emotions and context, and build up the way peace is exemplified in these stories. Children also connect to animal stories, nature-based stories—these are good stories to share with children.

Adding to the point about stories as a peacemaking tool, a Muslim participant said,

> Stories bring a dimension to the peace process that is the opposite of 'sterile'. Current western/secular systems have created sterile systems and institutions—judicial systems, healthcare, education—they have all become minimized to processes, rules, and protocols. Bringing stories opens the possibility to actually recognize that peace is a lived process and that the human experience, emotion, and state of being are actually accepted, validated and considered—because stories bring all those elements that have purposefully been eliminated—and yet those are elements required to genuinely and authentically build peace.

The participant suggested that stories reintroduce the human experience, emotions, and states of being, which have been minimized in secular, Western systems. By incorporating

stories, the complexities of human existence can be better examined. A Muslim participant continued building on this idea on the role of story and suggested the use of story to imagine a peaceful future. One possible next step suggested was the suggestion to imagine and create new stories of peace, inspired by the stories from the Quran and the prophets' lives.

> I like this idea of creating your own story of peace and through story, through poetry, through the arts, through the creative media. I do it, for example, in my field through design. But a lot of it is also done through creative expression of dance, music, and so this idea of imagining new stories and creating stories that are actually hybrid intersections of the worldviews of different cultures, what would that look like when we bring them together, what stories would come out of that … So, I like using stories in that way to imagine, as opposed to always keeping them in the past.

Storytelling Has To Go Hand In Hand With Modelling

Building on the earlier next step, another Muslim participant talked about the importance of teaching non-violent conflict resolution to children from a young age. This participant mused on the reasons why non-violence and peace as a principle is not consistently applied at a global level among adults. The speaker reflected on their own education, noting that while peace was mentioned in stories, it wasn't established to be the ultimate goal. Participants suggested that the use of story must go hand in hand with role modelling and mentoring, as a Muslim participant suggested in the following quote,

> I was a teacher for many years, and we constantly taught the children not to [get into] conflict with each other, not to fight and that conflicts don't have to be violent, and there are other ways of dealing with conflict. The problem is that when they look around them, the example is completely contradictory; so, if our examples contradict what we're

teaching them, ultimately, we know they're kids. Children follow example, so the reality is that would be where we will start if we're talking about peace to children and telling them not to take revenge on somebody because someone did wrong to them, or not to plot and plan how you're going to destroy somebody because they did something that you don't like. Then we have to show that.

The participant emphasized the importance of ensuring that societal priorities and actions align with, and reflect, the teachings of peace because any effort made to teach youth about non-violence and conflict resolution will be undermined if they observe contradictory behavior in society. This is a reminder that teaching peace to young people is impacted by the choices and actions of society in handling conflicts; can we teach a culture of peace if all our children are surrounded by a culture of violence? The participant's quote that encapsulates this lesson is,

Teaching peace to young people is ultimately going to come down to the choices that we make as a society and our own manner in which we handle conflict. If we handle it in a particular way, they're going to believe that that's the right way to do it.

Conclusion

My initial thesis was premised on two statements: *I argue that within oral Inuit and oral Islamic knowledges are principles of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The first principle of peacemaking within both these traditions is self-temperance, or starting peace with oneself.* This analysis section suggests the empirical research findings fit this thesis. I have also discussed my findings and presented considerations for how this research can be applied within school settings. Some of these considerations are as follows: that peace starts in the mind; that the powerless can create and feel peace; that peace requires acceptance of and promotion of diversity and plurality;

that peace should be taught through stories and oral traditions; and that storytelling has to go

hand in hand with modelling.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

One of the core ideas in Cormier's dissertation is that "we must first build peace within the academy before we can build peace outside and between individuals or groups" (Cormier, 2016, p. 186). Through this thesis, I hoped to lay the basis for comparing approaches to peace education, with the hopes that they will eventually contribute toward the goal of building peace within the education system.

Summary

Within the introductory chapter of this thesis, I explained how I arrived in the field of education and conducted a self-location to allow the reader to understand my motivations for engaging in this research. Next, I provided some introductory definitions and an overview of the two categories to frame my literature review.

My literature review chapter suggested two categories for organization; The importance of finding peacemaking and peacekeeping traditions that are inherent in both Islamic and Inuit traditions. To summarize, I suggested that both Inuit and Islamic oral traditions are not individually unique in suggesting that the first step towards peacemaking is self-temperance.

For my chapter on research methodology, I spoke about Indigenous epistemologies and how these are different from decolonizing methodologies. I spoke about the constructivist, transformative worldview that frames my research and the qualitative approach I employed. Lastly, I spoke about how Inuit and Muslim research participants were recruited and honoured throughout the research process. I concluded this chapter with some reflections on the ethical considerations and conundrums I had to face during the research project.

For my data presentation chapter, I chose to structure all Inuit and Muslim participants' responses around the eight established IQ principles. First, I presented a list of questions used as

prompts for participants. Next, I introduced the reader to Inuit Qaujimajatugangit principles. By drawing parallels between responses received from Muslims and Inuit participants, I illustrated that there were, in fact, commonalities between oral Islamic and oral Inuit traditions, as the eight IQ principles are derived from oral Inuit traditions.

For my next chapter, I completed an analytical discussion and highlighted findings. I analyzed participant responses to see how well they fit within the two categories established within the literature review chapter. In addition, I compiled a set of next steps that the participants had suggested to promote peacemaking. I identified the next steps with the help of the participants. Between chapter 4 and chapter 5 of this thesis, the overarching contribution that I derive from the research results is the importance of allowing adherents of different cultures and religions to define and imagine peace, conflict, justice and power on their own terms. In addition, the biggest takeaway from my the analysis is that both traditions focus on introspection and reformation of the self rather than grandiose actions. This takeaway fits with the thesis, which suggests that self-temperance is the first step toward peacemaking and peacekeeping. This is in fact the significance of this research – in a time of large-scale and top-down initiatives, this research promotes a bottom-up approach to making and feeling peace by the average human being on an average day.

Suggested Areas For Future Research

Archibald (2008) writes that Western educational institutions replaced oral traditions with limited definitions of literacy (Archibald, 2008, p. 15). Battiste (2009) echoes this point, that within public education, "the most serious problem … lies not in its failure to liberate the human potential among Aboriginal peoples but in its quest to limit thought to cognitive imperialistic policies and practices" (p. 194). This quote speaks to the importance of recognizing the

legitimacy of non-Eurocentric knowledge systems, which is one of the intended goals of this thesis. In suggesting a solution to the current situation, Walker (2004) writes, to decolonize conflict resolution, we need to respect and understand Indigenous worldviews and acknowledge that Indigenous approaches to conflict resolution predate Western conflict resolution (Walker, 2004, p. 531). A Muslim participant echoes this sentiment while speaking about the work that lies ahead of us due to cognitive imperialism.

> Our leaders, thinkers, writers, and institutions need to actively work to guide the community to use an Islamic framework of thinking and approaching life, rather than a way of understanding and implementing Islam that is deeply embedded in the colonial frame of mind.

> Another Inuit participant echoed this point in their response,

> What has impacted our way of life is colonialism, since we now try to live like southerners and [abandon] our values. We are trying to mix the two. For sure, this creates confusion as to how to behave. Our elders didn't have the education that southern people have, so education started with us, and that's when we started to mix the two cultures. But we are still strong in our cultural values, so it keeps us going.

> A Muslim participant also spoke about the problem of viewing peace from a Western-centric perspective,

> When disagreements arise and there is a loss of peace, the way the restoration of peace is addressed, even using 'Islamic references', is through this type of rights/obligations/duties perspective, and it makes attaining that true form of peace, as from an Islamic perspective, sometimes more difficult.

The lesson I learnt is that the loss of knowledge, through cognitive imperialism, has had a lethal impact on the peacemaking principles inherent in the Muslim religion and Inuit culture. Academic projects like this thesis can attempt to revitalize the science of peacemaking and peacekeeping. Yet, the projects are premised on the assumption that a legitimate opportunity will be given to non-Western cultures, religions and worldviews to prove that peacemaking is inherent to their practices.

Moving forward, I am led to conclude that the inclusivity inherent to the Indigenist paradigm and the need to decolonize lead me to conclude that much work needs to be done in order to understand Indigenous worldviews and approaches to conflict resolution, peacemaking and peacekeeping. The empirical research I completed has led me to a realization that many commonalities exist across Inuit and Islamic peacekeeping and peacemaking traditions and that such a nexus is worthy of further research.

How This Research Transformed Me

The goal of my research was to look for commonalities between various peace-building traditions and how this relates to my career objective, which has been to *focus on action-oriented, field research, with special interest in the exploration of different cultures' understanding of peace and how these traditions can be used as leverage in peace-building activities.*

I hoped to enter my research as someone who was grounded in Islamic literature and theology, and as someone who is a student of Indigenous knowledges. Through my continued conviction of the former and the detailed study of the latter, I hoped to continue educating myself and transforming myself. Following Wilson, in his seminal dissertation *Research as Ceremony*,

"If research doesn't change you as a person, then you aren't doing it right" (2004, p. 160). I hoped to stay true to this definition of research. Shaykh Hamza Yusuf (2014) says,

> Oppression occurs when we desire that which is not ours. As such, we must first break the cycle within our own hearts: "Surely, God does not change a people until they change what is in themselves" (13:11). The tyrant who lives in the palace is easy to see, the bully on the street corner is in plain sight, but spotting the tyrant within our own souls— the fire concealed in the flint—is far more challenging. It is easy to see ourselves in the shoes of the oppressed and, thus, as the object of empathy. But seeing the tyrant in the mirror, and recognizing in him a reflection of our own state, is an arduous undertaking (p. 17).

Thus, I hoped that this research would make me more peaceful; that I would be able to spot the tyrant within my own soul through continuous reminders of and reflection on the importance of peace. As I reflected on what I heard from the participants, and what I read in the literature, I learnt a lesson that is well-captured in the following wisdom from one of the world's experts on the Muslim tradition, Sayyidi Habib Umar bin Hafiz:

> The things which you wish for Allah to make a reality in the world—make them a reality among yourselves. According to your perseverance and the degree to which you do this, you have a guarantee that Allah will make them a reality in the world.
> We wish that there be harmony in the world—make it a reality among yourselves.
> We wish that there be purity in the world—make it a reality among yourselves.
> We wish that people prefer Allah over everything else—make it a reality among yourselves.
> We wish that there be cooperation in the world—make it a reality among yourselves.
> We wish that there be humility in the world—make it a reality among yourselves.

We wish that the Ummah venerates the religion—spread this trait among yourselves.

We want the Ummah to love prayer, remembrance of Allah and the Qur'an—make this a reality among yourselves.

If you make anything a reality among yourselves, Allah will make it a reality in a far greater way in the world, in the Ummah of His Prophet. This is not by us or by our efforts but His pre-ordained mercy dictates this. For that reason He says (to the Messenger of Allah): You are only responsible for yourself, but encourage the believers (4:84).

This is all you need to do—the rest is not your responsibility—transcendent is the All-Powerful! The attributes that we wish to spread in the Ummah must be extremely firm among you. If they are, Allah will quickly and easily spread them. Take account of your steps and how you move forward—do so with firmness and tranquillity, with ambition and with resolve.

It is Allah's care that will be the cause of rectification (Muwasala, 2013).

Thus, I was reminded that my realm of responsibility is limited to what I can control—to act peacefully in my daily life and in my spheres of power is the first step towards peacemaking, according to both Inuit and Islamic oral traditions. Thus, the lesson I derived from this research project is to start with the first principle of peacemaking, which is self-temperance and self-control.

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Appendix A – REB Approval Letter

Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Research Ethics Board
t: (807) 343-8283
research@lakeheadu.ca

June 24, 2022

Principal Investigator: Dr. Paul Cormier
Student: Ms.Fatima Ahmed
Education
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Rd
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 5E1

Dear Dr. Paul Cormier and Ms. Fatima Ahmed:

Re: Romeo File No: 1469347

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I am pleased to grant ethical approval to your research project titled, "HOW SOME ORAL TRADITIONS TEACH FOR PEACE - Commonalities in how oral Inuit and oral Islamic traditions teach for peace".

Ethics approval is valid until June 24, 2023. Please submit a Request for Renewal to the Office of Research Services via the Romeo Research Portal by May 24, 2023, if your research involving human participants will continue for longer than one year. A Final Report must be submitted promptly upon completion of the project. Access the Romeo Research Portal by logging into myInfo at:

https://erpwp.lakeheadu.ca/

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms must not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kristin Burnett
Chair, Research Ethics Board

/sa