"This book is unique in providing systematic comparisons of the three Abrahamic faiths in terms of key theological and ethical concepts, particularly as they relate to peace and violence."

—Rev. Dr. David Smock, Senior Vice President, U.S. Institute of Peace

"This is a book that many of us have been waiting a long time for. We are tired of seeing faith twisted to be a barrier of division or continually portrayed as a bomb of destruction. We know in our stories and in our scriptures, in our minds and our hearts, that religion can be a bridge of cooperation. This book shows us how. If our faiths are to be one of the solutions to conflict rather than part of the source, the practices of Just Peacemaking will need to spread far and wide."

—Eboo Patel, Founder and President, Interfaith Youth Core

"This collection of essays is rich in hermeneutical insight and historical example that give life to the 'Just Peace' norms within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Speaking at just the right time, the voices of these scholars and activists make clear religion's critical contributions to peace. They challenge us all to tend these teachings so they bear the fruits of shalom."

—Rachel S. Mikva, Rabbi Herman Schaalman Chair in Jewish Studies, Chicago Theological Seminary

This book is a timely resource for understanding how the Abrahamic traditions can be resources for building just and sustainable political, economic, and social systems through non-violent means. It is based on the conviction that the religious traditions engaged here have more to contribute to the world than specific judgments on decisions to go to war or the way wars are fought. As its title indicates, the basic shift is from "Just War" ideas to "Just Peacemaking." Just Peace, however, is not an ideal, but a set of ten historically tested methods that when used tend to produce peace and reduce conflict. It is an emerging new paradigm beyond Just War and Pacifism.

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INTERFAITH JUST PEACEMAKING | EDITED BY SUSAN BROOKS THISTLETHWAITE

INTERFAITH JUST PEACEMAKING

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on the New Paradigm of Peace and War

EDITED BY
SUSAN BROOKS THISTLETHWAITE

PREFACES BY BRYAN HEHIR, JAMAL BADAWI, AND REUVEN KIMELMAN

- The story depicts a classic example of the "tyranny of the majority" wherein the conflict was not really resolved.
- Despite the rightness of both positions (for different reasons), or perhaps because of them, the conflict between Rabbi Eliezer and the rabbis was never resolved and the lack of resolution was extremely bitter. Terrible damage resulted.
- What might have been better ways to resolve the conflict between Rabbi Eliezer and the majority?

These examples provide both positive and negative paradigms for conflict resolution. It is not uncommon for Jewish tradition to teach ethics through models of human failure. Even the greatest biblical heroes are flawed, for example, and in fact there is not a single biblical protagonist who is without failing or blemish. The four examples cited here contain aspects that are ambiguous and perhaps even confusing. All would invite discussion about the issues as they are laid out for the reader or student. In the case of the "Oven of Akhnai," for example, the story conveys the possibility that a person may actually know the absolute truth and would therefore naturally insist that everyone must go along with it. God even confirms the truth claim of the person through the issuance of a divine voice. The answer to the question of the fitness of the oven, however, is ultimately decided according to a group of rabbis persuading one another on the basis of evidence and logic. This would appear to convey the lesson that group consultation is the proper strategy for conflict resolution even if the decision is not technically "correct." Yet the final result is tragic. The tragedy may have been caused by the resultant tyranny of the majority in its decision to expel the person holding the minority opinion, perhaps because he would not give in to majority rule but insisted uncompromisingly that only his position was correct (and it actually was!). Or perhaps the tragedy was caused by the autocratic behavior of the leader and the fact that the community of rabbis went along with him.

The complexity of this as well as other stories allows for—indeed encourages—discussion. The question nevertheless arises as to how one would cite Jewish tradition to support cooperative conflict resolution in a general setting that extends beyond the community of Jews. Because Jews were isolated from the larger community in which they lived—often against their will but sometimes also willfully—Jewish religious ethical tradition tended to develop in relation to problem solving within the Jewish community and less significantly in relation to the community at large. While such writings certainly exist (often organized around the Talmudic notion "for the sake of peace"—*mipney darkei shalom*), much work still needs to be devoted to developing this field of study.

Muslim Reflection

Zainab Alwani

As Muslims, we regard the Qur'an as the last divine Speech revealed by God. It came with a message that is universal and to an audience that comprises all of humanity. Islam yields a set of peace-building values that, if constantly and systematically applied, can transcend all levels of conflicts. These values include justice (*'adl*), beneficence (*ihsān*), and wisdom (*hikmah*), which constitute core principles in peacemaking strategies and conflict resolution.

The Qur'an and Its Preventive Approach toward Conflict Resolution

Qur'anic guidelines construct a preventive model for conflict resolution by providing a framework for healthy interpersonal relationships. Divine laws foster values, establish clear boundaries, and identify priorities in relationships. Divine laws guide human action and encompass every facet of human life including *'ibāda* (the code of worship), *sulūk* (a system of ethics), spirituality, and *mu'āmalāt* (human interactions). Muslims believe that the function of divine laws is not hardship, but rather mercy and ease.[15] The objective of divine law is to preserve one's worldly and cosmic (afterlife) welfare by establishing peace, happiness, justice, equity, and piety on earth through the good behavior and actions of people.

In regard to the field of conflict resolution, Islam presents (a) a preventive model, (b) a nonviolent and ethical model toward enemies, (c) a prophetic model of preempting conflicts, and (d) general principles and practical methods for building the nonviolence moral model.

A Preventive Model

The preventive model is embedded in different verses starting with: "O mankind! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him [*atqâkum*—a derivative of *taqwa*[16]]. Behold, God is all-knowing, all-aware."[17]

This verse outlines the Islamic philosophy of human relations on all levels. First, it acknowledges the equality of all human beings, as we all originate from the same source and are created in the same fashion; second, it establishes human diversity as a product of divine wisdom ("so that you might come to know one another"), as reflected in this verse; third, by establishing that "coming to know one another" is one of God's objectives for diversifying his

creation, human beings are then ordained with responsibility to learn about the other;[18] and finally, the Qur'an creates a new standard for measuring the merit of human beings. Rather than looking to people's financial status, race, religion, or gender, God establishes that "God-consciousness" (*taqwa*) is the true indicator of nobility and human merit.

A Nonviolent and Ethical Model toward Enemies: Concepts and Attitude

Islam encourages an attitude toward one's enemies of forgiveness and empathy, not retribution. Through strategies like dialog, kind words, and the return of evil with goodness, the Qur'an argues that one can transform an enemy into a friend, even a close friend: "The idea is to eliminate enmity and not the enemy."[19]

"Good and evil are not alike. Requite evil with what is best. Then truly he between whom and you there was enmity, will become your dearest friend"(Qur'an 41:34).

There is a clearly articulated preference in Islam for nonviolence over violence and for forgiveness (*'afu*) over retribution.[20] The Qur'an aims to regulate the commonplace, retributive responses of people to conflict and violence. Forgiveness is consistently held out as the preferred option for humanity in responding to clear injustice or crime. "The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoever forgives and thereby brings about a reestablishment of harmony, his reward is with God; and God loves not the wrongdoers" (Qur'an 42:40).

Neither naïve pardon nor a mechanical retribution is urged; what is sought is the reformation of the guilty party, which is accomplished through the example of moral goodness and sincere forgiveness. As Islam emphasizes individuals' free will to act and believe, it also underscores the human potential for both good and evil. No individual is expected to be a perfect angel. The Qur'an acknowledges that every human being will commit a sin or make mistakes in his or her lifetime. "And those who, having done something to be ashamed of, or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring Allah to mind, and ask for forgiveness for their sins—and who can forgive sins except Allah?—and are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in *the wrong* they have done" (Qur'an 3:135).

The Qur'anic approach, therefore, is not to expect perfection from others or ourselves, but to expect and encourage sincere repentance. There are four important conditions to repentance in Islam, which are relevant to our subject of conflict resolution: The first is to acknowledge that one has done wrong. Repentance is first contingent upon a person's ability to reflect inwards and confess his/her sin to him/herself.

The second important condition of repentance that one hopes is sincere and acceptable to God is that one never intends to return to that act of sin or

evil. When one repents, one must sincerely intend to never commit that act of sin again.

The third condition of repentance is that one must begin to transform his or her lifestyle. This is not a superficial type of change, but one that emanates from internal reflection, character building, and self-discipline. While the *intention* to change (the second condition mentioned above) is a positive step toward change, it is not enough. One must begin to take concrete actions internally and externally to change one's thought process and behavior.

A fourth condition is to rectify the wrong that was done, whether by restoring the rights of the person wronged, paying reparations or compensation for harm inflicted, or negotiating an agreeable settlement with the wronged party.

The Qur'an explains, as part of the process of *sulh* (reconciliation), that it is important to fulfill all the contracts, settlements, and agreements that were signed by the parties. *Sulh* is a Qur'anic concept that may be translated as *reconciliation*. It derives from the root *sa la ha*, from which are also derived words for righteousness, goodness, making amends, compensation, restitution, reform, and setting things right. The word *islāh*, from the same root, is also used for peace, reconciliation, and reform. "O People who Believe! Fulfill your words" (agreements; Qur'an 5:1). "And fulfill the promise; indeed the promise will be asked about" (Qur'an 17:34).

The process that Islam outlines for sincere repentance and reconciliation is useful and practical for our topic of conflict resolution. It acknowledges that human beings will inevitably commit mistakes, which creates an atmosphere and environment whereby people find it easier to admit their mistakes. The Qur'anic process for repentance also emphasizes that intention and internal reflection are key to behavioral reform. Reform must first emanate from within. Reform does not stop there, however, as the Qur'an demands behavioral change by (1) not going back to the sin, and (2) rectifying the wrong that was done through restoration and good works.

The Prophetic Model for Preempting and Resolving Conflicts

The implementation of the *sulh* process was developed by the Prophet. As a messenger of God, he illustrated through his actions how to implement the divine teachings. He was known for his mediation and arbitration competency when he prevented bloodshed in Mecca during the rebuilding of the Kaaba (600 CE) even before he received the revelation and became a Prophet.[21] When he migrated to Medina, he attempted to transform the tribal system into a civil society that provides inner protection for both the individual and the community. In emergency situations, such as war and the absence of government, the community should be able to govern itself and resolve any conflict peacefully and properly.

ple to Rowan Hall and tomorrow we consider Kierkegaard and Derrida.

The Mandarin Mandala: Knowledge and Knowledge Contexts

The performances of the day have now concluded by the Fodder. As it was, weather of Cod, the Mandarin Mandala the session took to indigenous the Quinn Theatre. He was joined by his indigenous and appropriate compatriots which he brought planetarium in Lakota Quinn Hall at the Lodge (900 CE). Even Dakota, he attempted to analyzing the rather comic fuss a long-accepted Dan Brown Mandala, he attempted to analyzing the rather comic fuss a long-accepted Dan Brown wrote novel Inferno for both the indigenous and the contemporary to consider the Mandala and the relationship between the spaces of knowledge of contemporary society by Dante and Kierkegaard and Derrida.

Mandala and tomorrow we consider Kierkegaard and Derrida.

In order to understand the practicality of the prophetic model, today, for example, in Western cultural contexts, successful conflict resolution usually involves fostering communication among disputants, undertaking problem-solving strategies, and drafting agreements that meet their underlying needs. In these situations, conflict resolvers often talk about finding the win-win solution, or mutually satisfying scenario, for everyone involved.[22] That model was applied by the Prophet Muhammad in at least two different situations:

> First, when he entered *Madinah,* he drafted the Constitution of Medina; the historical authenticity of this document has been proven and attested to by historians. This document regulates relations between all the significant families, tribes and religious minorities living at the time in Yathrib (the pre-modern name for Medina). It guaranteed the security of all its residents regardless of their religious orientation. It guaranteed equal political, cultural and religious rights for non-Muslims living in Yathrib. By specifying the rights and responsibilities of Yathrib's diverse tribal and religious groups, the Medina Constitution attempted to prevent disputes before they occurred. Further, the Constitution established peaceful methods of conflict resolution "among diverse groups living as one people but without assimilating into one religion, language, or culture."[23]

Welch in *Encyclopedia of Islam* states, "The constitution reveals his [Muhammad's] great diplomatic skills, for it allows the ideal that he cherished of an *ummah* (community) based clearly on a religious outlook to sink temporarily into the background and is shaped essentially by practical considerations."[24]

Another example of the Prophet's skills in arbitration is the drafting of the Treaty of Hudaibiya (600 CE), which prevented imminent bloodshed between the Meccans and the Muslims of Medina. By signing this treaty, despite the unreasonable concessions it imposed upon Muslims[25] and despite his companions' opposition to it, the Prophet demonstrated his unequivocal position to choose peace over war. In this case, the Prophet defused the situation by signing the *Hudaibiya* treaty by unilaterally accepting all of the enemy's conditions. This policy of conciliation proved productive as the atmosphere was more relaxed for dialog and is described in the Qur'an as a "manifest victory" (Qur'an 48:29).

A Modern Model

Islamic sources and culture-based Muslim responses can make a significant contribution to move conflict resolution toward a global heritage, shaping and implementing peace-building strategies. Today, in the United States, the American Muslim community usually faces different challenges at the family and community levels. The role of the imams as religious leaders of the American Muslim community is crucial. They often find themselves synthesizing

secular, Western, Islamic, and cultural techniques in dealing with disputes in their communities.

One specific example that may prove to be a successful model for other American Muslim communities is the model of conflict resolution established at the All-Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) in northern Virginia. The imam of ADAMS, Imam Muhammad Magid, and a professional family counselor, Salma Abugideiri, work hand in hand to resolve conflicts among members by utilizing techniques derived from both Western and non-Western models. Many cases require professional counseling, a Western-based technique. Abugideiri, a professionally trained Muslim counselor, was invited to deal with a couple or a family based on approaches and techniques from the secular, Western model. With other parties who may be involved in the same case, such as in-laws or other relatives (especially in the case of immigrant families), the imam will use mediation or arbitration techniques, which derive from customary Muslim techniques, as well as Qur'anic processes of conflict resolution. Therefore, in a single case of conflict resolution, the imam creates a synthesis between customary and cultural practices of *sulh* as well as professional strategies of conflict resolution.

Islamic principles and values provide a relevant and constructive framework—among others—for promoting Just Peacemaking in a way that fulfills the modern needs of conflict resolution. This framework opens great opportunities for the community of peacemakers to address current global challenges in the field.

Conclusion

Cooperative conflict resolution is a shared endeavor, one that demands trust, patience, and forgiveness on the part of all involved. Honest self-criticism, facilitated dialog, conflict analysis, and problem-solving sessions can go a long way to help adversaries recognize humanity in the face of the other. To truly engage in this work involves a high level of risk taking and cultural and spiritual awareness, but such efforts can serve to expand and strengthen one's own sense of purpose. It is clear that interpersonal relationship development and cooperation across lines of difference are key to nurturing peace in areas of conflict.

Whereas, in the past, religious division has been a significant source of conflict in the world, a shift has emerged. Faith communities and religious leaders are now taking up the task of establishing relationships across lines of difference to promote reconciliation and peace. Our religious differences must not be minimized in this process, for our faith commitments are deep resources that can provide support and guidance for the work of conflict resolution and Just Peacemaking.

Notes

1. "You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger."
2. "Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26).
3. "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others," says v. 4 in this passage.
4. I will leave aside discussion of how Christians have fallen short of these teachings by wielding the sword against other communities, contributing to ghastly levels of death and destruction—especially to indigenous communities around the world, but also to those of other religions (the Holocaust being a prime example). Instead, I will point to what I consider positive and constructive examples of collaborative conflict-resolution practices by Christian communities.
5. R. J. Fisher, "Reflections on the Practice of Interactive Conflict Resolution Thirty Years Out. Twelfth Annual Lynch Lecture," Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (Fairfax, VA: George Mason University, 1999).
6. Ibid., 3.
7. Ibid.
8. See David Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2001), 11.
9. U.S. Institute of Peace, "Certificate Course in Interfaith Conflict Resolution," http://www.usip.org/education-training/courses/certificate-course-in-interfaith-conflict-resolution (accessed June 10, 2010).
10. Cynthia Sampson and John Paul Lederach, eds., *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 77–103.
11. See Mark Rogers, Tom Bamat, and Julie Ideh, eds., *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders* (Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services, 2008), 99–132.
12. There is some question whether or not the next verb, *veyirdū*, is in the same jussive mood.
13. Mishnah *Hilkhot De`ot* 6.
14. For example, the founder of Hassidism (the Baal Shem Tov) is said to have taught the following regarding Leviticus 19:17b: *Reprove your kinsman but incur no guilt because of him* (the Hebrew of the Torah verse is, literally, *but do not lift up sin over him*): "First rebuke yourself, and only afterwards, your kinsman, for it will become clear that you have a part in his transgression. *Do not lift up sin over him*—do not load the sin only upon him." A. H. Greenberg, *The Eloquence of Torah* (*`iturey torah*) 6 vols. (Tel Aviv: Yavneh, 1977), 4:112.
15. The Qur'an describes the main characteristics of the divine law in 7:157: "Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own scriptures in the Law and the Gospel, for He commands them what is Just and forbids them what is evil; He allows them as lawful what is good and pure and prohibits them from what is bad and impure, He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them."

16. *Taqwa* is at the heart of traits cultivated by the good deeds that serve to build up the moral character of both the individual and the community.
17. Qur'an 49:13, Muhammad Asad's translation, Muhammad Asad, and Ahmed Moustafa, *The Message of the Quran: The Full Account of the Revealed Arabic Text Accompanied by Parallel Transliteration* (Bitton, England: Book Foundation, 2003).
18. Irani is a modern example of the first Western scholars whose work was a very effective method in the field of conflict resolution. George Irani, "Islamic Mediation Techniques for Middle East Conflicts," *Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal* 3, no. 2 (1999).
19. Zeenat Shaukat Ali, "Non-Violence and Peace-Building in Islam: The Concept of Non-Violence in Islam," *World Council of Churches Current Dialogue* 48 (2006), http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/cd48-08.html.
20. Marc Gopin shows some concerns regarding the Abrahamic faith's perspective on forgiveness, especially on the issue of jeopardizing justice: "In particular, forgiveness as a means of peacemaking, depending on how it is realized, brings into sharp relief the perennial challenge of balancing peace and justice in the pursuit of conflict resolution. Often, at least on the surface, it appears that forgiveness is at odds with the demands of justice, at least as justice is perceived by either side of a conflict." In the case of Islam, justice is highly emphasized and forgiveness is more on the part of the victim as a psychological remedy, and of course it will positively influence the community and then the society. Read and contemplate Qur'an 42:36–43. See Marc Gopin, "Forgiveness as an Element of Conflict Resolution in Religious Cultures: Walking the Tightrope of Reconciliation and Justice," in *Reconciliation, Coexistence, and Justice in Interethnic Conflicts: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001), 87–99.
21. Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).
22. See Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1981).
23. Hisham M. Ramadan, *Understanding Islamic Law: From Classical to Contemporary* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).
24. Ford Welch, "Muhammad," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. P. J. Bearman et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 1993).
25. It denied them the right to perform the pilgrimage for that year; it also demanded that the Muslims return any pagans who convert to Islam back to Mecca, while the Meccans were not obliged to allow Muslims to leave to Medina.