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The Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

From Iran, Catalonia, and Michigan to IMTD:
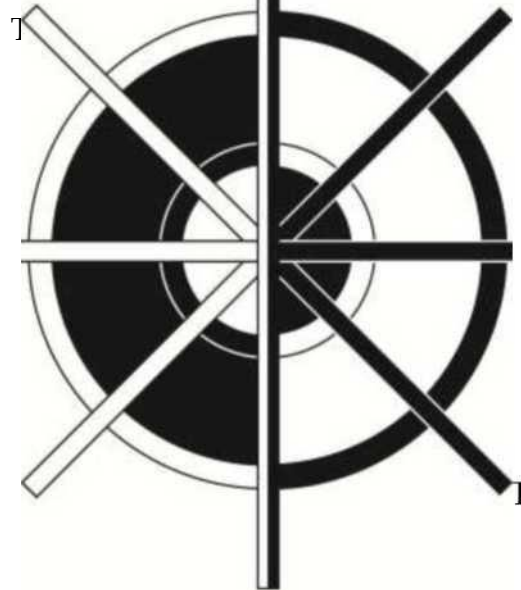
An Introspective Journey through the Field of Conflict Resolution

Occasional Paper 6

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Track 7:
Religion

Track 8:
Activism

Track 2: Professional
Business Resolution

Track 3:
Business

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Media and public opinion

The mission of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy is to promote a systems approach to peacebuilding and to facilitate the transformation of deep-rooted social conflict

Preface

We would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of our perspectives and those who helped this work come to fruition. Special thanks are extended to Professors Simona Sharoni and Abdul Aziz Said for broadening our perspective of the field; to Ambassador McDonald and Dr. Diamond for starting such a unique and forward-looking organization as IMTD and for giving us the opportunity to serve and work at the Institute; to the rest of the IMTD staff, Jamie, Patrick, and Cynthia, for giving us such an in-depth look at the projects you work on and for making us such an integral part of the organization.

Introduction

Conflict resolution is not a thing, it is not just a process, it is not something you simply "do." The field of peace and conflict resolution is an organic, dynamic entity which is necessarily shaped by the personality, background, socialization, and personal experiences of the individuals who study, theorize, and practice in the field. As such, it is value-laden and undeniably and unabashedly purports certain beliefs and changes within the current systems directing various aspects of our lives and of society at large. It is about change, with a specific goal in mind: to create a world and a set of processes which allow conflicts to be addressed nonviolently, to establish a stable, peaceful, unified and just world. Each of these words is heavily loaded, and our various perspectives on the meanings of these words will be made clearer throughout this paper. This is the journey on which we will take you.

In the fall of 1994, a diverse group of three (Benjamin Kasoff of Michigan, Sergi Farre of Catalonia, Spain, and Shahram Ahmadzadegan of Iran) met to begin a graduate program in conflict resolution at American University's School of

International Service.

Through our course of studies, we became friends, and in the fall of 1995, we coincidentally found ourselves interning together at the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD) as program assistants.

This paper is a consequence of our interaction in school and our collaboration at IMTD. In the process of describing and analyzing IMTD's organization and approach to conflict resolution, we incorporate the dissimilar experiences which brought us to Washington, D.C. We attempt to provide an introspective analysis of conflict resolution theory and practice by looking out at the field of conflict resolution from within. We will demonstrate how our conceptions of "peace" and "conflict" have been colored by our personal experiences, our graduate studies at American University, and our work at IMTD. Additionally, in synthesizing our diverse personal experiences, we hope to enrich the field of inquiry with a much needed student perspective.

We begin this paper by describing our respective "life paths." We explain what inspired each of us to pursue a graduate degree in the field of conflict resolution and an internship at IMTD. We also talk about the different experiences in our lives which gave meaning to the concept of conflict and animated a shared vision of peace.

Second, the field of conflict resolution is analyzed critically, mapping bodies of theory, authors, and practitioners along a continuum. The two extremes of the continuum, "from the mind" and "from the heart," represent mutually exclusive approaches to ending conflict. By introducing the metaphor *The Arc of Peace,* the authors attempt show how the dichotomy is more apparent than real. They explain how the differences between approaches emanating "from the mind" and "from the heart" can be transcended, ultimately concluding that peace is best

served by the combined work of "the mind" and "the heart."

Third, the work of IMTD and its underlying theory and principles are analyzed through our participation in several IMTD projects and through constant dialogue with the Institute's staff. Again, this perspective is unique in that it benefits from objective insiders' looks at the organization. Several issues discussed include: reproducibility, consistency, accountability, credibility, lack of funding, and impact assessment. These issue areas may be useful in evaluating other similarly-operating, like-minded organizations.

Finally, we return to our respective life paths and assess the meaningfulness and applicability of conflict resolution theory and practice to three conflicts of our own. Benjamin will inquire into the ongoing identity crisis for the Jewish community; Sergi will examine the conflict between Catalan and Spanish nationalists in Spain; and Shahram will explore Iran's national case of discrimination against the Baha'is.

THREE PATHS

FROM MICHIGAN... by Benjamin Kasoff

I am a second generation Jewish-American, and I have spent the greater part of my life, approximately fifteen years, growing up in Michigan, just outside the city of Detroit. Typical of Midwesterners, I always felt the distance between my community and the national government in Washington, D.C. Consequently, it was difficult for me to fully appreciate international affairs and the various efforts at forging peace and ending conflict.

My sense of peace and conflict was thus colored by the refracted view I received from television and books; on only a few occasions was I exposed to anything firsthand. There are three primary tracks of my life, however, in which my desire to study international politics and conflict resolution manifested itself. The first track highlights my identity as a Jew growing up in the Diaspora, the second focuses on my educational background at the University of Michigan, and the final track emphasizes my job experience working in the inner city of Detroit.

I was born into a practicing Jewish family. We were Conservative in the religious sense of the term: somewhere in the middle of the secular Reformists and the fundamentalist Orthodoxy. I was taken to Synagogue regularly, our family observed the Sabbath and other holidays, as well as the laws of *Kashrut,* and I attended Hebrew School several times each week. As such, my home life fostered a strong Jewish identity.

An episode which reinforced this was a family trip to Israel in the summer of 1977. I was only six years old at the time. I had heard so many stories about Israel in Hebrew School, at home from my parents, and at our Synagogue, but there was no way for me to conceptualize such a place of great historical import—especially at such a young age. I came away with little understanding of

the precarious nature of Israel's existence, not to mention its degree of importance to Jews residing both within its borders and across the rest of the globe. Ultimately though, the experience of spending a month in Israel at such an impressionable age helped me to develop connections with others of my faith outside my immediate community. Everywhere in Israel there were Jewish soldiers with weapons. Everywhere there were scars from past battles waged by the Jewish people in the name of peace.

Over time, I became enamored with Israel. I continued my Jewish education at Hebrew School after many of my friends had chosen to drop out. As part of the curriculum, I began to study the Middle East conflict in its contemporary context. I felt close to the issues; I identified with the Zionists' right to establish and maintain a Jewish state, and I felt a common bond of culture and a shared sense of history. It was reassuring to know that there was a place where all people of my religious identity could go to escape persecution and anti-Semitism and practice their Judaism freely.

My opportunity to return to Israel came several years later, at the age of fifteen when I traversed the country with a group of other teenage Jewish-Americans. This trip reinforced my love for the land and the people who resided there. At the time, however, I failed to appreciate the connection between the organizer of the trip, the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), and the ideological position it supported. In any event, my knowledge of international war and security issues began to grow. We traveled to military battle sites, saw bomb shelters, visited the emotive Holocaust Museum and Jewish Diaspora Museum, and caught glimpses of the military infrastructure and forces that buttressed the state. The ZOA educational exercises colored my view of the regional conflict in such a powerful way, that I felt it unnecessary to hear an Arab

or Palestinian perspective directly.

I finally had a transformative experience in college, some years later. I took a semester of my junior year, at age twenty-one, to study at Tel Aviv University, Israel.

As the months passed living in the center of the country I loved so much, I grew disenchanted. I thought the state, crafted as it was like a military garrison, was unnecessary and inappropriate. Given the state of affairs of indigenous Palestinians, the lifestyles of the "oppressed" Jewish Israelis, and the glib, self-righteous attitude so common among the populace, the bonds which tied to me to Israel that were once so strong, began to weaken. I questioned the need for supporting a state which seemed as intolerant, chauvinistic, xenophobic, and indignant as anti-Semites. Israeli descriptions of foreigners and immigrants were discriminatory and even hateful: American Jews were "spoiled" and "ignorant" of the spirit and nature of Israel; Russian and Ethiopian Jews were unappreciated, talked down to, ostracized, thrust in the middle of ideological disputes, and cast slurs; and Arabs and Palestinians were looked upon as "shiftless," "dirty," "violent," "irrational," "uneducated," and incapable of peace. The source of the conflict in which the Israelis were embroiled seemed to be rooted in the very existence of *their* state (the state with which I renounced any association). A rift thus formed between me and the community in which I had so much faith and with which I identified. I went home after nearly half a year, disconcerted about the prospects for peace in the region as long as Israel existed in its then-present form. I knew after this experience that I did not ever want to live there under those conditions; I instead wanted to disassociate myself from Israel.

The second track of my life in which my desire to study international politics and conflict resolution manifested itself occurred at the university level. In

my second year at the University of Michigan, I took an upper level Political Science course called the Arab-Israel Conflict. In order to help his students gain a working knowledge of the conflict's relevant issues, the Professor developed a simulated, interactive Arab-Israel conflict on computer. Each student took on a role, representing the various groupings and sub-groupings of the conflict. I played the part of a Palestinian Arab: the Mayor of

Bethlehem, Elias Freij. This exercise enabled me to appreciate the multi-faceted nature of the conflict and its variegated perspectives.

Another course I took at the University of Michigan was called "New Paradigms in International Security." The class focused on Feminist critiques of traditional paradigms in international security. For the first time, I read Thomas Kuhn and like-minded revolutionary thinkers who wrote about "thinking." Some time later, I realized the potential of this new approach to thinking about things. I began to re-evaluate epistemological issues which I took for granted as being unfalsifiable.

The result of taking this class was that I gained a broader understanding of political science. I no longer think of conflict as merely "war," and, similarly, I now look at peace as something more than "an absence of war"; new elements thus appear relevant to the concepts peace and conflict. The traditional approach to understanding and explaining international relations, as taught by the other icons at the University of Michigan, seemed wholly inadequate and antediluvian.

The final track of my life which influenced my desire to study international politics and conflict resolution occurred after graduation, when I spent a year working in the inner city of Detroit. There, I managed a corps of workers which was poverty-stricken and nearly all African-American. For the most part, they also had a litany of related social and economic ills: many had felony records;

some were illiterate; a good number were alcohol- and/or drug-addicted, and all were living hand-to-mouth, week- to-week. They were subjected to a daily barrage of violence, crime, and various forms of abuse. By finding them temporary general labor positions, I was able to fill many of their short-term basic needs. I also befriended many of them and served as an outlet for their troubles.

The experience in Detroit enabled me to gain firsthand knowledge of a new kind of conflict—the kind which my employees (friends) experienced incessantly. While I could not really understand what it was like to be hungry, desperate, illiterate, or poor, I did come to know the many tribulations of the working class poor in a way few others outside of the ghetto ever did. I thus expanded my world view and simultaneously helped them attain a temporary, if half-stitched peace. Providing several hundred of Detroit's working class poor with honest employment and genuine friendship was an exercise in what I later came to know as domestic conflict resolution.

It was through these three tracks of my life that I developed the desire to study international politics and conflict resolution. My understanding of conflict and my visions of peace were thus colored by the various experiences related to my Jewish identity, the theoretical training I received at the University of Michigan, and my practical experience in Detroit. After these experiences, I decided to leave Michigan to study political life and international relations in Washington, D.C. My heightened interest in international politics and conflict resolution inspired me to obtain a graduate degree at the School of International Service at American University, where I could explore sources of conflict and routes to peace.

FROM BARCELONA... by Sergi Farre

I was born in Barcelona, Spain on January 5th, 1970, of a French mother, Monique, and a Catalan father, Josep. Monique died when I was five, but soon after I was blessed with the arrival of a new mum, Nuria.

The first five years of my life coincided with the last five years of Francisco Franco's dictatorship. My household at the time included the following characters: Dani, my sadistic, tormenting brother to whom I would always go back for more; my two sisters, long-nails Elena and my contemporary, Cristina; Memme, my beloved Angela Channing-like grandmother; my hardworking father (whom we would only see at the dinner table, as he devoted most of his life to his mistress, the Coca-Cola Company, Inc.); my mother (always living between the hospital and home); and last, but not least, Carmen, the wonder nanny-cook-housekeeper from the South who must have felt like she was working in a circus.

We all co-existed in a four-bedroom, top-floor apartment, in the *Eixample* district of Barcelona. Needless to say, in such a household, conflict was a way of life, and I must confess I loved every minute of it. At the time, conflict and excitement were almost synonymous in my mind.

As I became an adolescent, and the size of my household was gradually cut in half, I started shifting to a macro, external perspective of conflict. Spain was barely coming out of its transitional period to democracy, and youths throughout the country took to politics as a hungry baby to her mother's breasts. I was no exception. Everything was made into a political issue worth demonstrating for. I often joined demonstrations whose agendas were hardly clear to me. As long as I saw a communist or a Catalan nationalist flag or banner being waved, there I was.

As the usual radicals would get ready to burn or stone the one existing McDonald's in Barcelona, and as the police would start surrounding the crowd, however, that was my cue to find my way to the nearest cafe, wherein my

high-school wanna-be-Marxist friends and I would comment on President Reagan's latest demonstration of "Yankee imperialism" in some developing country. In those days, conflict, politics, and ideology seemed to be inseparable.

Later on, living in Jamaica, my understanding of conflict took a socioeconomic turn. Ghetto poverty, social intolerance, and the structural violence of hard core corporate capitalism became the principal agents of my internal and external conflicts.

It was not, however, until I started the Master's program at American University's School of International Service in conflict resolution that I started thinking of conflict as a legitimate concept in and of itself, let alone a field of study. In fact, the story I have been telling you so far has been crafted with the epistemological tools I have acquired through the study of conflict resolution during the past year and a half. In other words, it is not possible for me to tell my "story of conflict" from any perspective other than that which I have acquired through the study of the field of conflict resolution.

Thus, my understanding and personal philosophy of conflict stems from a mixed heritage of often opposing influences. Unlike my two colleagues in this project, I was raised in an agnostic environment and do not have any religious affiliation which might help reconcile the different influences. On the one hand, during most of my existence, conflict has been a permanent fixture in my perception of the world, a natural phenomenon which could be occasionally mitigated or avoided, but never resolved or transformed.

On the other hand, as a result of my experience with the field of conflict resolution, not only have I realized and witnessed the possibility of resolving conflict— but also of transforming it. From a static conception of conflict, I have come to learn about its truly dynamic nature. A dear friend of mine compared my

experience with the field of conflict resolution with that of "a non-believer who is brought into the light of the true religion and converted."

I have often asked myself, "Am I being indoctrinated?" To the extent that one uses "indoctrination" to be synonymous with "transformative learning," then yes, I have been indoctrinated. Indeed, most of my dear friends and I were educated by Marxist professors who wanted to make sure that by the time we graduated from high- school, we would all be "critical thinkers." For the most part, and to my personal enrichment, they succeeded in their attempt.

Ever since, I have considered myself a critical thinker. Everything, from making conceptual adoptions to my most intimate feelings and emotions, is, to a different degree, subject to the scrutiny of this critical thinking. The field of conflict resolution has been no exception. Many aspects of the field, mainly its dynamism and transformative power, have passed the scrutiny to even become integral parts of my self-crafted spirituality.

Through my daily experience with conflict, however, the mixed heritage I pointed to earlier becomes evident. While through the field of conflict resolution, I have intellectualized and even "spiritualized" the dynamic, transformative nature of conflict, this acquired awareness has not prevented me from continuing to deal with conflict in such negative and ineffective ways as coercion, false-compromise, or outright avoidance. Whereas, before my experience with conflict resolution I acted in similar ways with my personal internal and external conflicts, the difference today is this new awareness in me which acts as a permanent reminder that there is a better way by which I could approach a situation of negative conflict. Furthermore, the acquisition of a new type of awareness inevitably leads to the pursuit of more. Such is the dynamic nature of transformative learning. Thus my life path, which, for the purpose of this paper, stops at the Institute for

Multi-Track Diplomacy, can only take me to increased levels of awareness regarding peace, conflict, and their dynamic and transformative nature.

FROM TEHRAN... by Shahram Ahmadzadegan

Conflict, war, and peace were not issues I was brought up to worry about. I was brought up to focus on unity, consultation, and peace. Of course, I was made aware of the fact that conflict, prejudice, and enmity existed and that they were "bad" values or practices, but my parents always taught me to focus on building unity and fostering peace. The reason for this, I later discovered, was because the rest of the world focused on conflict and war, the extent of their destructive power, and their tendency to obstruct the progression and advancement of humanity. Everyone seemed critical of them, but no one talked about how we could build unity and foster peace, which was the focus of my parents as members of the Baha'i Faith.

My world view is rooted in my belief in the Baha'i Faith. This Faith has been the major impetus behind my perspective on peace and conflict resolution. The main goal of the Baha'i Faith is to establish world peace, and, in the simplest terms, the three basic principles around which it revolves are the oneness of humanity, the oneness of God, and the oneness of religion. These tenets view the entire human race as one organic whole and equal in reality. So the Baha'i Faith asserts that prejudices of all kinds should be eliminated, and the equality of all races, ethnicities, and nationalities should be established. The principle of the equality of men and women is also treated as a necessary requisite for world peace.

The principle of the oneness of religion states that all the world religions are true divine Faiths of God and that each one was revealed and brought teachings that were appropriate for humanity's stage of development at that time.

This means that no one religion is superior or more valid than another; rather, they are all divine in origin, and the only difference can be compared to the difference between one school grade and another. Fourth grade is not better than fifth grade, and the fourth-grade teacher is not superior to the fifth-grade teacher. Each grade teaches different skills and tools that are appropriate for the students in that grade. Having said that, the fourth grade teacher does not necessarily have less knowledge than the fifth grade teacher, but he or she chooses not to teach certain tools to the class because the students are not ready for them. Christ, for example, would not talk about world peace to the people of his time, simply because the people were not even aware that the world extended beyond their immediate surroundings, so this teaching was irrelevant.

At humanity's present stage in social evolution, we have developed the technology and communications necessary to achieve world peace, therefore, the teachings brought by Baha'u'llah, the Founder of the Baha'i Faith, talk about world peace. The spiritual teachings of the diverse religions of the world however, have remained constant. All teach love, generosity, humility, etc. It is the social teachings among them that have changed.

Since the Baha'i Faith also upholds the importance of the principle of the "independent investigation of the truth," I had to choose for myself, at the age of fifteen, whether I felt the Baha'i Faith was the truth and was what I truly believed in. This meant I had to internalize what my parents had taught me, analyze it, and, of course, gauge my heart's reaction to it. My perception of peace and conflict resolution is colored by the lenses of both practical necessity and spiritual motivation.

The Baha'i approach to peace and conflict resolution is that first, diversity is a strength—not a weakness — thus the goal must be unity in diversity. Conflict, in its simplest definition as a disagreement, is not perceived as inherently

negative. Conflict is seen as a process that can lead to the spark of truth. However, it is acknowledged that humans have not learned how to handle conflict, thus the outcome is negative, be it discord, hatred, suspicion, tension, or its ultimate manifestation, war. On the other hand, these negative manifestations of conflict are also viewed as a result of the lack of some "spiritual" principles. In other words, if the principles of the oneness of humanity and the nobility of the human being were accepted by all, clearly, we would not allow ourselves to kill another human being, or deprive another from certain basic rights, because we would believe all humans to be equal.

The focus of the Baha'i Faith is on the world as a whole, thus the vision is global in scope. This does not imply that the individual is lost or disappears in this whole, but rather he or she becomes the focus of development. Therefore, my focus in life has always been to work for establishing world peace and encourage more pacific means of dealing with conflicts.

In addition to my religious background, my experiences in life have also shaped my perception of conflict and peace. I was born in Iran and left the country when I was six years old as the Iranian revolution began. Although I remember when we left Iran that there were many people in the streets looting stores and banks and waving bloody shirts in the air, I was too young to recognize the significance of such events. I can't remember much about how I felt or how it affected me, I just remember the scenes.

My family and I moved to the United States, and four or five years later, we moved to a black homeland in South Africa called Bophuthatswana. The most significant memory I had when living in Bophuthatswana, was the contrast between where I lived and the Apartheid government in South Africa. I used to travel to South Africa quite often, and the complete segregation of all services in

the country seemed ludicrous to me. I remember being proud of the fact that I lived in a black homeland where Africans were in control of the government (although the government was in actuality a puppet government set-up by South Africa). In recognition of the different social environments, I became more adamant in my belief that prejudices of all kinds should be eliminated, and I was inspired to share the gift of tolerance, love, and understanding with others.

One year later, we moved to Botswana, the country immediately to the north of South Africa, and we lived there for five years. During this time, as I was a little older, I took part in trips to remote villages in the desert to teach the locals to read and to forward the principles of the equality of men and women and the oneness of humankind. We then moved to Israel, where my parents lived for six years, and I lived for three years. The move to Israel probably had the most influence on my life in comparison to all the other moves my family had made. This is because my parents moved to Israel to work at the Baha'i World Centre, which is the world administrative center of the Baha'i Faith. It is also where the most holy sites in the Baha'i Faith are located. As a result, I received more in-depth exposure to the teachings of the Baha'i Faith, and I attended many classes which were offered on various topics related to the Baha'i Faith. I was surrounded by people from all corners of the globe, living and working together in a close environment, yet all in harmony. The fact that such a diverse group of people could live together and be so happy and united convinced me that world peace is possible, and indeed inevitable.

I then traveled back to the U.S. to continue my education, first in Michigan, then New York, and now Washington, D.C. In all my travels, I have been exposed to many cultures, and I have gained a very global perspective as a result. I have learned that although the cultures of the world have many differences, they are

also very similar on the most basic levels, and unity is indeed possible. Many conflicts and tensions across cultures seem to be a result of misunderstandings and unfamiliarity with each other's cultural backgrounds. With increased education, interaction with, and exposure to, those of the "other side," there is hope indeed for bonds of unity and friendship to be built. I have come to perceive world conflict as being a result of a lack of spirituality. By this, I mean that if such spiritual principles as the oneness of humanity, the equality of women and men, the elimination of prejudices of all kinds, and the essential harmony of science and religion were more widely taught and accepted, then conflict would not manifest itself in a negative and destructive manner. The reason I define these principles as spiritual, is because they all require a transformation of the heart. If one wants to change patterns of identities shaped by conflicts structurally and psychologically, the heart must be transformed in the final analysis. It is about a change in attitudes and beliefs.

This is how I understand the term "conflict transformation." It has become clear to me that as long as humanity shares a common goal and vision—the goal of world peace and the vision of the development of humanity as a whole—cooperation is possible. In every single country I have been to, I have come across groups of people who share this vision. I see our goal, then, as being to spread this vision to others. Many of these groups I have come across have been extremely diverse in race, culture, nationality, and gender and that shared vision has allowed them to maintain unity. If it is possible for them, there is no reason why it should not be possible for the rest of the world.

The final significant event that shaped my perception of conflict, war, and peace was a course I took in my second year of college entitled "conflict resolution." This was an introductory course in methods of mediation and

facilitation of conflicts. It involved role plays and actual skills to learn and practice. Everything I learned in that course seemed to comport with my personal, religious beliefs, and all that I learned while traveling abroad. I then discovered that I could actually have this field be my major area of study, and this is when I applied to an undergraduate program at Syracuse University in the field of conflict resolution.

My perception of conflict resolution has become much more complex since then, and I am still learning the intricacies of the field and the diversity of its approaches. I have come to realize that the diversity of approaches is exactly what is necessary to succeed at conflict resolution. There is no single answer that can solve every conflict in every corner of the world. Each conflict is unique and culturally specific. However, there are basic principles and guidelines which all approaches must share, and from that basis, one tailors the method used to specific situations; creativity plays an immense role in achieving a successful outcome.

I am continually learning about peace and conflict resolution. It is dynamic, and it is a never-ending learning process. I look forward to periodically rediscovering my ignorance and to be able to use what I have learned to achieve that final, inevitable goal of world peace.

THEORETICAL REVIEW AND CRITIQUE

In a way, this paper can be seen as a reaction to the field of conflict resolution, to which we have been intensely exposed as graduate students, through theory and practice, for almost two years.

The epistemological discussions behind each section of this paper have become part of a process whereby we have created our own conceptual tools to construct an intimate understanding of the field of conflict resolution, and indeed of peace and conflict.

First, we propose organizing the field of conflict resolution along a continuum, at the extreme ends of which there are two concepts: "from the mind" and "from the heart." The authors are well aware of the fact that any attempt at organizing a body of theory according to any given set of conceptual categories is inherently limiting, may skew or oversimplify the story, may miss crucial parts of the story, or even get the story wrong altogether. We believe that any body of theory, whether constructed through quantitative or qualitative methods, is, after all, a story crafted by the joint effort of many story-tellers who, regardless of the restrictions that their respective methodologies may impose on them, bring together their personal "life stories" in an effort to ultimately tell and re-tell the grander stories of the origin, present, and future of mankind.

Second, in spite of using a continuum as an tool of epistemological analysis, and while acknowledging the debates that may exist between theorists and practitioners at both ends of the spectrum, we do not see the two sides as incompatible and thus attempt to transcend the apparent dichotomies through their metaphorical model: *The Arc of Peace.*

"From the Mind," "From the Heart"

The concepts "from the mind" and "from the heart" are not original to the authors. They are often used among conflict resolution practitioners to describe two main groups of perspectives and approaches. We offer here, however, an articulated definition of these two grand concepts and how they can be used to characterize the work of theorists and practitioners in the field.

Approaches to conflict resolution theory and practice which are toward the "from the mind" end of the continuum generally exhibit the following characteristics:

linear and *deductive* (models-oriented) thinking

omni-cultural (conflict resolution either transcends culture or culture is irrelevant)

treat *symptoms* of conflicts

interest-based (emphasize interests rather than the needs of parties through conflict management and settlement)

prescriptive ("*we* have *the* solution or right approach *for you*")

Conversely, approaches to conflict resolution theory and practice which are toward the "from the heart" end of the continuum generally exhibit the following characteristics:

holistic and *inductive* thinking

culturally sensitive (culture matters in conflict resolution processes concerned with *root causes*,

needs-based (concentrate on needs rather than interests or "wants" of parties involved)

elicitive (*we* want to help you find *your* solution or approach for your conflict)

These are generalized attributes though, and most conflict resolution

theorists and practitioners clearly could be pinned to different points along the continuum. Still, we believe this is an informative way of mapping the great diversity of approaches which exist in the field.

The approaches to conflict resolution which we would place closest to the "from the mind" end of the continuum would be those which have a *negotiated* way out of a conflict as their main goal. Conflict is a problem to be solved, a disagreement that can result in compromise. By *managing* or *settling* the conflict, the goal is to reach an agreed "solution" to the conflict with which the different parties involved can (or have to) live. The desired outcome is usually achieved through negotiation, mediation, arbitration, or even adjudication. A clear example is the rapidly growing Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs in the United States which attempt to find an agreed solution in the form of a compromise between conflicting parties in order to avoid the formal judicial system.

Another example of what we would qualify as a "from the mind" approach is the work of Roger Fisher and its Conflict Management Group, Inc. As best laid out in the two books *Getting to Yes* and *Beyond Machiavelli: Tools for Coping with Conflict,* which he co-authored, Mr. Fisher's recipes for dealing with conflict fulfill all the "from the mind" attributes listed above. His deductive "a-b-c" models are claimed to be cross-cultural and applicable to all kinds of conflicts — from a personal disagreement with a co-worker, to the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

As *Beyond Machiavelli* exhorts, Fisher's methodology is filled with the optimism, dynamism, and determination typical of Anglo-American culture. His "checklists," "action plans," and "to-do lists" are indeed very empowering, in that he assumes any conflict can be "fit" into these lists and models and thus controlled and managed with a pen, easel, and the "right" disposition. Regardless of how

critically one approaches Mr.

Fisher[7] s work, however, it is virtually impossible to come away without some new insight, some readily usable skill on how to effectively deal with conflict—especially when managing it, rather than resolving or transforming it, is the goal being pursued. Thus, our basic contention with Mr. Fisher's work is his claim to universal applicability, regardless of the type and depth of conflict and culture.

Mr. Fisher and his co-authors, however, make it very clear that they are more concerned with "the process for handling a flow of problems than ... 'solving' a particular problem once and for all."[1] Indeed, Fisher et al points out a very important deficiency in the field of conflict resolution: "There is a shortage of theory on how conflicts ought to be handled, and a shortage of practical skill in bringing that theory to bear on the real world."[2]

We agree with the aforementioned criticism. Indeed, one of our main concerns with most conflict resolution theory stems from its elitism and unrepresentativeness. For instance, John Burton, provides the field with a very important conceptual dimension, that of "conflict prevention,"[3] whereby conflict resolution is used not only to address an existing situation, but also to operate preemptively, avoiding a future conflict. The concept is very valuable, in that it challenges the traditional "symptomatic" approach of formal power structures (such as governments, courts, etc.) to conflict. John Burton's principled macro analysis, however, is directed at the elites of the same institutions whose traditional approach to conflict resolution he criticizes. John Burton's critique, thus, does very little for those working with conflict at the micro-, grassroots level.

While Fisher's work is accessible and may be applicable to those dealing with conflict at the grassroots, it operates only at one level, that of conflict

management. It is

[1] **Beyond Machiavelli, p. 4.**
[2] **Beyond Machiavelli, p. 2.**
[3] **See John Burton,** *Conflict Resolution and Provention* **(New York, St. Martin's Press, 1990).**

perhaps this level of working with conflict which is generating the most growth, as measured by the number of practitioners and theorists who subscribe to this approach within the field of conflict resolution. As Fisher himself would have it, "conflict is a growth industry."[4]

Like Fisher, the work of theorist and practitioner Dudley Weeks, which we would place closer to the "from the heart" end of the continuum, is also based on a micro-approach to conflict resolution. Unlike Fisher's work, however, Dudley Weeks' Conflict Partnership Process,[5] operates at the level of conflict resolution beyond conflict management and settlement[6].

The main strength of the Conflict Partnership Process stems from the skills and principles rooted in human nature. The Process molds natural impulses, such as caring, loving, forgiving, and needing, into specific tools which can be used towards effective conflict resolution. Dudley Weeks' work reaches out to individuals actively involved in conflict resolution at the micro-, or grassroots level. The Process is concerned with human needs rather than interests, and it assumes that all individuals, even those who are fighting, are connected through the same basic human needs. Partly, the work of the Conflict Partnership facilitator is to assist the parties in conflict in discovering those connections. Through the discovery of mutual connections, the Process can be used in the absence of conflict to establish mutually enriching relationships, or for solidifying already existing ones. Indeed, it can be a way to *provent* (John Burton's term) conflict.

The Conflict Partnership Process has been used in such diverse areas as the United States, South Africa, Bosnia, and Japan. It has proven empirically the

ability to

[4] **Fisher,** *Beyond Machiavelli,* **p. 1.**

[5] **See Dudley Weeks,** *Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution* **(, 199).**

[6] **For an excellent definition of the terms conflict management, settlement and resolution, and the differentiation of the objectives of each approach, see John Burton and Frank Dukes' <u>Conflict : Practices in Management, Settlement & Resolution</u>.**

transcend cultural boundaries, as its eight basic skills seem to be rooted in

universal human values. The eight Process skills are as follows: create an effective

atmosphere clarify perceptions

> focus on individual and shared
>
> needs build shared and positive
>
> power look to the future, then
>
> learn from the past generate
>
> options develop "doables" make
>
> mutual-benefit agreements

Also close to the "from the heart" end of the continuum, are non-violence

theorists and practitioners, such as Gandhi, Reverend King, Gene Sharp and

Richard Gregg. Both spiritual non-violence and non-violent strategies are holistic,

elicitive, needs-based, and potentially transformative.

Finally, close to the "from the heart" end of our continuum we would place

the theory and practice of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD), a

description and analysis of which follows later in the paper.

The Arc of Peace

This paper's purpose is to facilitate a better understanding of the field of

conflict resolution. To accomplish this task, we have created the metaphor, *The Arc*

of Peace. We used the concepts "from the heart" and "from the mind" above to organize the field of conflict resolution in a way that would differentiate between the clearly dissimilar assumptions and approaches. The "from the mind" end of the continuum focuses on the "manageable," negotiable potential of the conflict. It is skill-driven, and it is enjoying an increasing degree of credibility and respect in the Track One community.

Those in the NGO community devoted to this approach have benefited from the bulk of private contributions and government-issued grants dedicated for conflict resolution work.

The "from the heart" end of the continuum, on the other hand, is labeled as "alternative" for its grassroots orientation, or as "soft" for its often spiritually-based principles of operation. These approaches tend to have limited or no credibility within the Track One community, and suffer financially as a result.

The characteristics (delineated above) of each end of the field continuum, while seemingly opposite and incompatible, are hardly mutually exclusive. Although both groups tend to act independently of (and often suspicious of) each other, they can exist in an environment of collaboration. Both ends of the continuum clearly have the same goal of peace. They only differ in the means to that end. Thus, the heart and mind must recognize that they are playing the same game, albeit with different rules and plays. Each may take their turn, but without cooperation and mutual recognition of the other player's utility, the game will more than likely fall short of reaching its ultimate goal, that of a lasting peace.

As is illustrated below (See *Diagram* A), *The Arc of Peace* recognizes the malleability of the continuum, pointing the heart and mind in the same direction: up, positively, towards the same goal of peace. When the ends meet, the utility of the two different approaches is recognized and appreciated. Of course, collaboration does not guarantee the transformation from an incomplete arc to a

full circle; however, it does improve the prospects for peace considerably. The arc represents a dynamic and active synthesis of efforts at achieving peace. Perspectives which have previously been seen as mutually exclusive are enjoined, permitting cooperation and a fluid exchange of ideas emanating from the mind and from the heart.

....TO THE INSTITUTE FOR MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY...

DESCRIPTION

Having embarked on a journey through the newly paved and continually developing pathway of the field of conflict resolution through our academic pursuits, the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD) became an attractive opportunity to us for exposure to the practice and reality of peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

A detailed description of the organization and its approach has already been elucidated in numerous publications,[7] so we will only provide a brief mention of its mission statement and philosophy in order to present the context in which we will analyze the organization and what we have learned thereby.

IMTD was founded by Dr. Louise Diamond and Ambassador John W. McDonald in 1992 as an independent private voluntary organization. The organization focuses on enhancing peacebuilding infrastructures around the world. "The mission of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy is to promote a systems approach to peacebuilding and to facilitate the transformation of deep-rooted social conflicts."

The "multi-track" model of conflict resolution looks at conflict holistically. It inclusively recognizes the importance of engaging different tracks and sectors of society in peacebuilding, each track bringing its own perspective, approach, and resources. Promoting a systems approach involves understanding that individuals

and organizations are important to the process of transforming conflicts only insofar as they recognize the importance of each other as interrelated parts working towards a common goal: peace.

[7] **See Louise Diamond and John McDonald,** *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace,* **Third Edition (W. Hartford, CT: Kumanan Press, 1996) and Louise, Diamond, "Beyond Win-Win: The Heroic Journey of Conflict Transformation, Occasional Paper #4, Revised Edition (Washington, DC: Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, 1996), for example.**

Peacebuilding includes activities on three levels: (1) establishing a legal framework and satisfying political needs; (2) facilitating the implementation of peace through the creation of infrastructure, be it economic, military or social, in order to form the foundation for a peaceful system; and (3) stitching together the social fabric of a human infrastructure through addressing beliefs, attitudes and values sociologically.

The final element of the mission statement speaks of "conflict transformation." This concept is a step beyond "conflict resolution" as it focuses on transforming, over time, conflict-habituated systems to peace systems. It is about the development of a peace culture. The methods used cover a wide array of tools including problem-solving, conflict analysis workshops, research, training and education programs, intergroup dialogues and reconciliation.

ANALYSIS

During our internship at IMTD we learned a lot about the organization, about its theory and its practice, about the conflict resolution field, and about the management of nonprofit organizations. Through our participation in various IMTD projects, we were able to witness the theory of conflict transformation being put into practice, and through our support of the organization, we were able to understand more clearly some of the challenges facing nonprofits in the conflict resolution field.

Specifically, our experience at IMTD has highlighted three important

issues that IMTD is struggling with as an organization which have implications for other nonprofits in the field: (1) fundraising and lack of funding; (2) elicitive versus prescriptive approaches and the issue of reproducibility; and (3) evaluation and assessing the impact of conflict resolution training programs.

Lack of funding for the work of conflict resolution is a problem that has not escaped IMTD. As a result, the staff at IMTD must spend a considerable amount of time trying to raise money for their work. We have seen situations where IMTD is ready to implement training programs that seem likely to meet with some success, but lack of funding opportunities prevents any work from being done. For example, IMTD is part of a consortium of nonprofit organizations who have been trying to implement a reconciliation and healing program in war-torn Liberia. With a proposal in hand, they spent several months pursuing funding intensively, but without success. With funders not willing to allocate resources to Liberia or unable to respond quickly enough, the bloodshed in Liberia continues. Private foundations tend to be cutting their conflict resolution programs, and government funding is still encumbered by rigid bureaucracies, which constricts the potentially powerful work of IMTD and other organizations in the field.

The second important issue we encountered during our internship focuses on the difference between elicitive and prescriptive approaches to conflict resolution. We alluded to the difference between elicitive and prescriptive approaches above in our discussion of the "from the heart" and "from the mind" perspectives of conflict resolution. Clearly, IMTD's approach is much closer to the elicitive end of the continuum. Their projects are generally "context-specific," and they rely on the individuals involved to help design and support their intervention. This issue ties into the funding issue, however, because funders are

often looking for projects that are "reproducible." They want to support projects with models that can be used in other contexts and projects that can be reproduced by the local populations once the conflict resolution organization has pulled out. IMTD is critical of groups that push a generic process in all conflict situations, but at the same time IMTD has been frustrated by funders who want more generically applicable projects.

Related to the issue of reproducibility, is the issue of evaluation. Funders in this field also demand that the impact of a project be measured and documented, but finding reliable indicators of impact in projects that are long-term, unique, and context- specific is difficult.[8] IMTD projects take a systems approach, thus the focus for evaluation is on measuring systems change. IMTD projects also start by focusing on grass-roots individuals and on building the foundation for systemic change. IMTD tends to use indicators like increased conflict resolution activity by participants, willingness and eagerness to continue training and to be trained as trainers, and, in cases like Cyprus where they have been training for several years, the creation of freestanding institutions and independent conflict resolution projects.

The issue of fundraising and lack of funding seems to place such small organizations as IMTD in a vicious cycle dynamic, whereby the more resources are spent on seeking funding, the fewer resources can be spent on project development and implementation—the latter being precisely the type of evidence funders seek in determine whether to fund an organization. IMTD is currently exploring new, less human-resource-intensive fundraising strategies. On the issue of elicitive versus prescriptive approaches, IMTD faces the challenge of making its work more reproducible, while observing at the same time its operating principles on elicitivenss and context-specificity. Finally, we believe that conflict resolution

practitioners have an obligation to be openly accountable for their work. Nonprofit organizations such as IMTD undergo regular implicit evaluation every time a funder scrutinizes their work. Often, as we have experienced with IMTD, organizations also have their own internal evaluating mechanisms. There is, however, an urgent need for neutral, third party, systematic evaluation of conflict resolution work. Despite the rapid and intense ongoing growth of the field of conflict resolution, there exists no central entity which evaluates and accredits the work of its professionals, as the American Medical Association, for instance, does for medical doctors.

[8] For information on one organization's attempt to study the costs and benefits of preventive action, contact the Institute for Resource and Security Studies, 28 Ellsworth Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

V. CONCLUDING INTROSPECTIVE REMARKS

...RETURNING TO MICHIGAN, by Benjamin Kasoff

My initial conception of peace and conflict resolution was colored by three important tracks in my life, namely my identity as a Jew, my University of Michigan education, and my inner city job experience. Returning to Michigan, there are two very clear applications of IMTD's approach to conflict resolution. In light of the recent assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yizchak Rabin, there appears a very clear division within the Jewish community worldwide about the means by which Jews can simultaneously preserve their identity and exist in a state of peace.

In a sense, this is a perennial conflict. Historically, the pursuit of peace, or *shalom* in Hebrew, has paradoxically led to divisions within the Jewish community. The internal conflict has placed those Jews who advocate a rigid adherence to religious principles on one side, and proponents of accommodation and compromise on the other side. Initially, the Old Testament describes the dilemma among the ancient Israelites over the proper policy of conquest and entry into the Promised Land. At the time, some members of the Jewish community espoused accommodation with the indigenous Canaanite peoples, while others, on religious grounds, maintained that an unwavering opposition to and annihilation of the indigenous Canaanite peoples was most appropriate. Ultimately, the latter option was invoked by the Israelites, and accommodation lost out to adherents to religious principles.

Another clear example followed with the creation of two separate Israelite kingdoms, Judea and Sumeria. Among the reasons for the split, aside from tribal factionalism, was the issue of accommodation with the surrounding peoples. The northern kingdom of Sumeria felt conformity and religious compromise were

acceptable, while the kingdom of Judea believed that ancient traditions and religious

practices were to be strictly kept. In the end, the Sumerians adopted pagan principles, and the Old Testament tells that they were conquered, eventually disappearing. The Judeans, on the other hand, maintained ancient traditional practices and survived.

Moreover, upon the return from Babylonia, Ezrah and Nehemiah were divided over whether the Israelites should accommodate or reject relationships with the Samaritans. Ultimately, the decision came down on the side of total rejection, but not without bitter infighting and virtual civil war. In the beginning of the Christian era, at the time of Josephus, a similar instance of a split developed in the Jewish community over association with the Karaites, a Jewish fundamentalist sect. Factions of accommodationists and zealots served to divide the Jewish people once again. Finally, in the eighth century, Saadiah Ga'on drove the Karaites out of the Jewish community, refusing to accommodate their beliefs.

In recent history, the most significant divisions within the Jewish community are similarly framed. The Zionist enterprise has presented challenges since its ideological inception with Theodore Herzl at the end of the 19th century. And, of course, the religious debates among the Jewish reformists, conservatives, and orthodoxy have served to draw battle lines along which internal hostility has frequently coalesced. Finally, the most obvious modern example of division in the Jewish community manifests in Israel's relations with its Arab neighbors; that is, whether accommodation or rejection is the state's appropriate way of securing peace.

It is clear, therefore, that the Jewish people could benefit from basic conflict resolution skills. IMTD has recognized this opportunity and established an

initiative within Israel called the "Left/Right Dialogue." It amounts to an effort to bring together the community whose internal dissension most recently culminated in the unfortunate and violent episode of assassination mentioned earlier. The IMTD project is still in the formative stage, yet it has an opportunity to address the deep societal divisions between

Israelis who maintain a strict adherence to religious principles and Israelis who espouse accommodation and compromise.

Transformation will only take place, however, if the Left/Right Dialogue can get beyond mere political dichotomies; conflict within the Jewish community is multifaceted and fluid. Over the years, the disputes have encompassed a whole range of issues, but they have all been rooted in a conflict which, grossly stated, pits identity preservation against pacific coexistence-two seemingly compatible goals. Historically, disputes have been reflected in struggles dealing with Canaanites, paganism, Samaritans, Karaites, and Zionism; currently, the struggles deal with Reformists and Conservatives, Arabs, interfaith marriages, conversion practices, and Palestinians. The disputes have changed, but the conflict clearly has not. In opposition to each other, ardently-preserved religious principles and the principle of accommodation have resulted in considerable frustration, agony, and strife within the Jewish community.

IMTD's initiative holds considerable promise, provided its funding and problem area do not remain limiting factors. Reconciliation work, needs analysis, and other conflict resolution tactics and training practices of IMTD would certainly be useful in addressing a conflict which has played a significant part in shaping my world view. Previously, I stated that confronting my Jewish identity was one of three central experiences which colored my understanding of peace and conflict. After working at IMTD, it has become clear to me that its unique

approach to conflict resolution can be applied to the Jewish community in disputes related to identity and religious principles.

...RETURNING TO BARCELONA, by Sergi Farre

In trying to relate conflict between Catalan and Basque separatists on the one hand, and the Central Government and Spanish nationalists on the other, to the field of conflict resolution, the most obvious remark one could make is that there has been virtually no Track Two conflict resolution processes involved in trying to deal with this centuries-old conflict.

The whole idea of conflict resolution is totally foreign to most Spaniards, in and outside the government. For Spaniards, straightforward, pragmatic, flexible, dynamic, simply-presented approaches, such as those proposed by Fisher, et al. in *Beyond Machiavelli's* conflict management models, are often perceived as superficial, and consequently dismissed *prima facie*. While I have my own doubts about Fisher's approach to conflict resolution, I believe his models can serve as very useful analytical tools.

The style of negotiation used to deal with the Catalan-Spanish conflict since the beginning of the democratic process in Spain in the late 1970s has been what Fisher, et al. call "concession hunting," the goal being to ultimately "edge the parties" positions toward each other until they eventually converge."[9] The dynamism of the field of conflict resolution, exemplified in *Beyond Machiavelli*, reminded me, by contrast, about the rigid, zero-sum way Spanish politicians have dealt and are presently dealing with nationalist conflicts in their country.

It will take a long time before the formal political processes in Spain can be positively influenced by conflict resolution principles. To my knowledge, no Spanish university offers a full degree in Peace Studies or Conflict Resolution. There are, however, independent peace researchers and institutions, and very few

NGOs doing conflict resolution work. (The NGO movement is fairly new in Spain, and most NGOs depend on government funding for their existence.)

It is my intention to go back to Spain next year, prepare myself to pass the challenging Diplomatic School examinations, and ultimately enter the Spanish Foreign Service. After having been exposed to the field of conflict resolution, it will be very hard [9] **Fisher, et al.,** *Beyond Machiavelli,* **p. 125.** to deal with the teachings of Spain's orthodox diplomacy. It is my hope, however, to contribute to the change which has already started in Spain from within. In this way, my country has, as Ireland, Israel, and Palestine are having, the chance to re-tell their story of peace and conflict resolution.

....RETURNING TO TEHRAN, by Shahram Ahmadzadegan

My journey through the wide expanse of conflict and conflict resolution has included my own personal life experiences and background, academic training in the field, and experience at IMTD. It has been an evolutionary process, one full of change, growth, and development. In trying to implement some of what I have learned on this journey to a conflict that is close and personal to my life, the Baha'is in Iran, I have come to realize the applicability as well as the limitations of conflict resolution.

The history of the Baha'i conflict has been one plagued with oppression and injustice. The conflict is reminiscent of the movement led by Ghandi against the British in India, in that the Baha'is have been completely nonviolent. The difference is that the fight is not for independence, but simply acceptance as equal, full citizens of Iran with civil and political rights. At the moment, the Baha'is have no rights at all: they have no right to receive higher education, no rights in the judicial system, no political rights, and no rights to land, property, marriage, divorce, and burial. All these rights are withheld because the Baha'i Faith is not

accepted as a legitimate religion and the adherents are thus viewed as heretics by the Islamic government.

The attempts at resolution have been mostly characterized by pressure on governments outside Iran and on international organizations to use their leverage to encourage Iran to stop the arbitrary execution and imprisonment of Baha'is as well as to grant them equal status. This has worked to some extent, as the killings and imprisonment have ceased; so the effectiveness of nonviolent methods of resolving conflicts was thus demonstrated. If the Baha'is decided to arm themselves and fight, probably more would have died, as it would have given the Iranian government a perfect excuse to eliminate such "terrorists."

Unfortunately, however, the Baha'is still lack basic civil and political rights. There are various obstacles that prevent many conflict resolution models from being effective. One is that the government of Iran is authoritarian and extremely oppressive. Any attempt at Track-Two conflict resolution from some neutral third party would not be tolerated. If a government tries to intervene as a third party to open discussions with the government of Iran, all persecutions are simply denied and fake documentation and proofs are provided. Track-two work cannot be done secretively, as security and mobility in Iran is extremely tight.

In addition, the conflict is mostly between the government and the Baha'is, not the rest of the Iranian population and the Baha'is. Other Iranians do not interact with the Baha'is very much because they are fed with misinformation by the government about the Baha'is and thus have formed false perceptions, and also because they fear the government may label them as being sympathetic towards the Baha'is and thus fear the consequences. Of course, there are also those who truly believe that Baha'is are heretics and deserve to be treated accordingly. It involves all the basic dynamics of prejudice.

One could possibly argue that nonviolence could be carried further to include civil disobedience. However, this is against the teachings and principles of the Baha'i Faith, so another complication results. The notion of collective security may be a useful model to consider. This would require an international body like the U.N. with more definitive powers and legitimacy and whose mandate would include the protection of all peoples from persecution, and thus would allow collective security to be applicable beyond simple acts of international aggression. However, such a power does not exist today, although the U.N. may very gradually developing towards such an entity. In addition, the ill-conceived concept of sovereignty still reigns supreme in the international arena.

It seems to me that the only way of resolving such a conflict may be to infuse into conflict resolution models a spiritual aspect. This falls under what we have called conflict resolution "from the heart," while others have called it the power of love. Possibly, the nature of the Baha'i problem in Iran is fundamentally a spiritual one. In other words, the source of the conflict lies in the simple fact that the spiritual principle of the oneness of humanity is not being accepted. This seems rather simplistic. But, prejudice has allowed such oppressive policies to be implemented; and a transformation of the heart therefore, is required in order for their to be true reconciliation. If one defines transformation of the heart as a spiritual transformation, then the solution must be spiritual.

If we look at the example of racism here in the U.S., we can see that many laws and regulations have been passed to ensure equal opportunity, yet still there are examples of individuals finding ways around the laws to discriminate against minorities, be it in employment, housing, etc. Eliminating racism or prejudice of any kind means necessarily providing an atmosphere in which all feel welcome and socially accepted. So, as an example, even if a company is forced to hire a

minority because of quota laws, if the atmosphere in the office is one in which the minority employee is not accepted, or tension still exists, that person will probably leave the company at some point. It will not be until we diversify our dining room table, our living room, our own family, which requires a transformation of the heart, that unity in diversity will be established.

The government of Iran is an Islamic government. However, it is clearly lacking the spiritual nature of Islam which is so central to its tenets, and I would argue to all of the world's religions. Islam, being one of the great world religions, is divine and spiritual in its source. Still, the clergy and peoples of Islam in Iran have perverted the spirituality latent within it and used it to support oppression and injustice. Possibly the infusion of that spirituality into the Islamic regime by other Islamic elements, could lead to a possible transformation of the heart and a re-education of the people about the Baha'is.

CONCLUSION

We have concluded our journey. In joining the life paths of three very different individuals, we have attempted to provide the reader with an introspective analysis of the field of conflict resolution generally and IMTD's multi-track approach specifically. Ultimately, this paper has been manifold in purpose. First, we have attempted to demonstrate the value of including personal experiences in any understanding of peace and conflict. Clearly the terms mean different things to different people; however, in assembling a richly diverse set of views on these concepts, we have shown that there are points at which meanings can coalesce.

Second, we have reviewed the field of conflict resolution, its theory and practice, and have assessed its role in shaping and ending conflict. As is demonstrated by the analysis above, the field of conflict resolution holds considerable promise. Still, if approaches "from the mind" do not recognize and appreciate approaches "from the heart," and vice versa, then the field's potential will be severely limited. In proposing a new way of viewing conflict resolution through *The Arc of Peace,* we are not attempting to blaze new epistemological trails; rather, we are only illustrating the way in which the field, both practically and theoretically, makes sense to us. Each approach that lies along the continuum carries with it many normative assumptions about peace and conflict, as well as its own methodology, model, and underpinning principles. Thus, understanding the utility of each approach necessitates looking at the field broadly and comprehensively. We have determined that the best means of doing this is to internalize the concepts of peace and conflict. In finding out what colors our individual perceptions, we have attempted to show how peace and conflict may be viewed unrefracted, in their purest essence. *The Arc of Peace* bends the continuum along which practitioners and theoreticians operate. In doing so, the

authors have shown how approaches "from the mind" may be appreciated to the same degree as approaches "from the heart"; the apparent dichotomy is thus transcended, and the field is advanced.

Third, we have taken an insider's look at one of the leading non-governmental, international conflict resolution organizations: the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy. It is certain that IMTD's theoretical work and project initiatives have moved the field of conflict resolution forward significantly. Those who are familiar with the organization know of its "cutting edge" approach to a field which is largely in transition. IMTD's description of the multi-track diplomacy system, the conceptual development of IMTD's practice, and the Cyprus project are clearly IMTD's most successful efforts at understanding and forging peace. Still, it is quite evident that there are limitations to the work IMTD undertakes. We have found some questions and further considerations that must be addressed with the organization's applications in the form of project initiatives.

Finally, we have brought the field of conflict resolution back to our own life paths. In analyzing three very different conflicts, based as they were on personal experience, we each sought to further internalize the meanings of peace and conflict as well as a critical understanding of the field of conflict resolution. Again, the utility of personal experience is demonstrated, as is the applicability of various approaches to conflicts which are *sui generis.*

The introspective analysis has thus served as a tool of examination, capable of animating visions of peace and illuminating approaches to conflict resolution. Ultimately, our intention was to do more than inform the reader; this paper was an attempt at making a unique contribution to the field of conflict resolution by providing the reader with the means to personally understand its theoretical and practical dimensions.