

TWO CULTURES OF RELIGION AS OBSTACLES TO PEACE

by *Elise Boulding*

Abstract. There are two contrasting cultures in every religious tradition, the holy war and peaceable garden cultures. Examples are given for Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Conflict is basic to human existence, stemming from the uniqueness of human individuals and their groups. Churches, instead of helping their societies develop the middle-ground skills of negotiation and mediation, have insisted on a choice between two extreme behaviors: unitive love or destruction of the enemy. In international affairs this has led to the identification of the church with the state in wartime and kept it from claiming the important middle ground of peacemaking. Institutionalized religion can pick up its missed opportunities.

Every religion has a vision of the peaceable kingdom. The Greeks pictured Elysian fields, where heroes hung their swords and shields on trees and walked arm in arm, discoursing of philosophy and poetry. The Hebrew Bible gives us Zion, the holy mountain where the lion shall lie down with the lamb and none shall hurt nor destroy. The Koran gives us the sanctuary in the desert, from which no one shall be turned away. Even in Valhalla, the warriors who fought each other by day feasted and sang together at night in the great hall of Asgard, drinking mead from a cow that never ran dry. The common features of this diverse imagery are peaceableness, shared abundance, and beauty in nature. This imagery of peaceableness can be thought of as a species characteristic, in Jungian terms, an archetype. In workshops which elicit the free-flowing fantasies of participants about what a world without weapons would be like, I have found something of the peaceable garden imagery coming through no matter what continent the imagers are from—Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas. There are

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great cultural differences in the specifics, but the general themes are there (Boulding 1983).

Every religion also has a vision of holy war, of divinely legitimated violence, as John Bowker has so vividly demonstrated. Either God enjoins battle on his people to destroy evildoers, as has happened frequently enough in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, or violence itself is elevated to the realm of the sacred, as a part of the created order, as in some Hindu and Buddhist teachings. This set of violence-justifying teachings has made it possible for every religion to support the state that houses it in times of war.

Every religion then contains two cultures: the culture of violence and war, and the culture of utopian peaceableness. The holy war culture is a highly activist culture and easily politicized. The culture of the peaceable garden relies on the concept of mystic oneness of humankind with the creator or the cosmos. When translated into the social order, it is most apt to translate into the island utopia of the intentional community or the contemplative monastery. The tension between these two cultures mutes the voice of peace which secular groups keep asking for from the church. That tension explains why a recent Bellagio conference which brought together church leaders from all the major traditions with distinguished members of the scientific community to produce a joint statement on the threat of nuclear war was unable to condemn the doctrine of deterrence *per se*. The gathering could only call for the development of a state of consciousness that would make it possible to move beyond deterrence some day.¹

THE CHURCH AND THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CONTINUUM

The two cultures represent two different ways of managing conflict. It happens that conflict, which stems from the basic fact of human individuality and difference in the context of limited physical and social resources, is often confused with violence, which is the intentional harming of others for one's own ends. This has introduced strong negative associations with conflict as a concept. In fact, however, the differences in wants, needs, perceptions, and aspirations among individuals and among groups stemming from individual uniqueness require a constant process of conflict management in daily life at every level from the intrapersonal (each of us has many selves), the family, and the community, to the international community. Conflict management may be thought of as a continuum from total destruction of the other to complete integration with the other.

As seen in figure 1, limited war, deterrence, and threat are all on the violence side of the continuum. Arbitration, mediation, and negotiation are in the middle region, and various forms of cooperation and

alliance are found near the integration end of the continuum. The church is oddly split between the holy war and the integration/mystical union ends of the continuum, with relatively little attention given to the middle ground of negotiation. While the concept of the Covenant, a negotiated pact between God and God's people, provides a precedent for operating in the middle ground, in practice it is not often utilized.

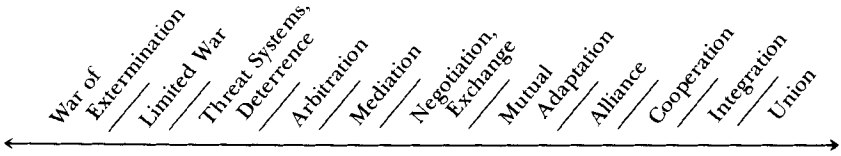


FIG 1.—The conflict continuum.

THE HOLY WAR CULTURE

The holy war culture is a male warrior culture headed by a patriarchal warrior God. It demands the subjection of women and other aliens to men, the proto-patriarchs, and to God (or the gods). We see it in the ancient Babylonian epics, in the Iliad, in the Bhagavad Gita, in the Hebrew Bible used by Jews and Christians, and we see it in the Koran. There are many who argue that, while battle-scene scriptures were taken literally at the time they entered the written record, literal meanings have been gradually replaced by metaphoric meanings. The only holy war going on, according to this view, is the holy war in the soul.² Mohandas Gandhi notably reinterpreted the warfare depicted in the Gita as a parable of the spiritual struggle between light and darkness. Many Jews and Christians do the same with the "Old" Testament. Yet the template of patriarchy as a social institution continues to mold generation after generation in each tradition, continuing the practice of warfare and the subjection of women. It is proposed here to look at the features of the holy war culture in each of these traditions in terms of the sociopolitical outcomes for the societies in question. We will consider the code of conduct required by the polity, the institutional norms of governance, and the type of role models available for the socialization of women and men. After reviewing the holy war cultures we will do the same for the peace cultures, and then consider what dilemmas these polarities create.

Judaism. Much of the history of Israel relates to the central theme of Jehovah's release of his people from bondage in Egypt and of his leading them to a promised land. Since this land happened to be occupied by seven Canaanite nations, the Hebrew Bible provides in-

structions on clearing the land for settlement through destruction of the previous inhabitants. The many different instructions were brought together in the Code of Maimonides. Treatise five, Laws Concerning Kings and Wars, gives specific commandments concerning the destruction of the seven Canaanite nations. No life is to be spared, and the seed of Amalek is to be blotted out. There are precise instructions about the conduct of wars, even to the building of latrines. Peace terms are to be offered before war is waged, but not *negotiated*. If the unilaterally proposed terms are not accepted, a war of extermination may be waged. (There are modifications in dealing with non-Canaanites.) The behavioral code of the warrior is spelled out repeatedly for the Israelites. They are to fight bravely and not turn back, because Jehovah is at the head of their army. However, they are also to protect the future productivity of the land on which they are fighting, and not lay it to waste. Generally, they are also to spare women and children.

The institutional outcome of this warrior period was the fall of Israel and the Diaspora, followed many centuries later by the ingathering of the modern state of Israel. The Diaspora produced a great flowering of scholarship within its scattered communities. This scholarship has borne fruit in a sophisticated zionism and the remarkable social invention of the kibbutz. The modern state of Israel is in many respects a model democratic polity. A political willingness to negotiate with surrounding Arab neighbors on the part of some of its citizenry stands over against fundamentalist zionism, which calls for a holy war against the Arabs. Continual border warfare and a highly trained military reinforces the holy war tradition.

The role model in the holy war culture of Israel is the warrior with sword ever at hand to defend city or kibbutz. Whereas in the early days of modern Israel women were both to fight and to till the fields side by side with men, the pressure of continuing hostilities and earlier traditions has returned women to more traditional hearth-bound and social service roles and to a more traditional obedience to men. Women are not primary participants in the warrior system; they are chiefly reproducers of it—this in spite of a tradition of charismatic women leaders from Deborah to Golda Meir and a practice of educating the minds as well as the hands of women.

Islam. Islam, like Israel, has an early history of fighting tribal wars for the survival of their religious faith. They fought for Allah, under his prophet Mohammed. Therefore, the Koran, like the book of Judges, lays down specific commandments about the conduct of war. Both codes, incidentally, prohibit the destruction of fruit trees and

fields where crops have been planted. They also command the protection of women and children. *Jihad*, or holy war, is to be conducted in a literal sense in the defense of *dar al-Islam*, the Islamic world, from intrusion by non-Islamic races. There is however significant reference in the Koran to the figurative *jihad*, the inner battle against the forces which prevent humans from living according to Allah's commands. In an oft-repeated story about the Prophet returning from a battle he says to his companions that they have returned from the lesser holy war to the greater holy war—the inner struggle against evil. Nevertheless, there is a strong sense in which the Prophet and his companions are to be thought of as an all-male warrior band. Like the Jews, they rapidly expanded their domain under the leadership of Allah. Unlike the Jews, they had some centuries of political success.

The outcome of the successive expansion and contraction of Islam was the development of some unique institutions of governance codified in the *shariah*. The millet system allowing for limited self-governance of non-Muslims under Muslim rule is an example. The expulsion from Spain in the late 1400s was followed by a prolonged period of isolationism, which has ended abruptly in this century with the twin developments of modernization and fundamentalism. Like Israel, Islam is struggling to use its more evolved system of governance in the face of a fundamentalist revival which has declared *jihad* not only on Christians and Jews but on nonfundamentalist Muslims as well.

The role model in the *jihad* culture is the warrior with sword ever at hand to defend hearth, village, or pastureland from marauders, but always ready for the inner war as well. The pilgrimage to Mecca and the five daily calls to prayer are also part of the warrior's life. The taking of the sacred Mosque at Mecca by an armed fundamentalist Moslem group several years ago suggests how thin the line is between inner and outer warfare. The veiling and seclusion of women gives them little role in public life and emphasizes their role as obedient reproducers of the warrior society. That power has been exerted by charismatic women from behind the veil goes without saying; however, as in the case of Israel, it has been power exerted to maintain the warrior society.

Christianity. Christianity, unlike Israel and Islam, started out as a pacifist sect. Only when the persecuted minority attained a protected position within the Roman Empire did it begin to see war as a legitimate instrument to protect its lands against intrusion by heretics and infidels. The just war doctrine, developed from the days of Augustine of Hippo onward, contained provisions similar to those of the Code of Maimonides and the Koran, particularly for the protection of the innocent and for proportionality, which can be translated as, protect

those fruit trees for the future! Over time, the *crusade* developed as the Christian counterpart of the *jihad*. Protective war changed to expansionist war when Pope Urban II in 1095 urged Christian princes of Europe to liberate the Holy Land from the Muslims. Three hundred years of crusades against the infidel were followed by three hundred more years of war between and within Christian denominations, finally brought to a close by the Treaty of Westphalia. Male warrior bands, fighting under the banner of king, pope, Holy Roman Emperor, or as independent warrior orders like the Knights Templar, roamed Europe from 500 C.E. on. Not a few of them were funded and equipped from monastic houses. They fought, not only under a warrior God, but under a warrior king Jesus, transformed from peace-bringer by the just war doctrine.

The institutional outcome of these centuries of warfare has been a gradual separation of church and state and a decline in overtly religious wars in the West. The church however supports the secular state. The nineteenth century, century of political revolutions, eschewed support of churches. In a twentieth-century reversal, states have welcomed the legitimization of war provided by the enthusiastic blessing of the churches within their respective borders. The state is now seen as upholding the moral order and must be defended. The attempts in this same century, beginning with the Hague conferences, to create agreements that would outlaw the use of force in settling international differences were undertaken without the aid of the church. The peace-maintaining machinery of the League of Nations and the United Nations was also formed without the aid of the church. The new role of the church as backstop for the nation-state has greatly multiplied the incidence of war in this century, since there are many more states than religions, and therefore more potential enemies.

The role model in the Christian secular state is once again the warrior, most recently exemplified in the United States by Rambo. The cigarette-smoking, hard-drinking cowboy warrior in blue jeans is a particularly American version of the warrior model. He is tough and keeps his women under tight control, equal opportunity and affirmative action notwithstanding. While the women's peace movement is trying to create an alternative role model of woman as autonomous peacemaker, rejecting the warrior support option, nevertheless many women continue the role of reproducing the warrior society.

At the same time the development of the welfare state has involved a much higher standard of living and greater opportunity for citizen development, male and female, than existed before. Social technologies are racing with physical technologies for the honor of defending the social order, with the nuclear technological fix appar-

ently winning the race at the moment. Fundamentalist Christian movements strengthen this tendency.

There is no question but that some politically more progressive systems of governance have evolved alongside the warrior culture in each of the traditions mentioned. It is also a fact that each of the three traditions is now experiencing fundamentalist revivals that are promoting a return to a more overt reliance on the holy war culture. These revivals are aided by the continuing presence of the warrior-hero role model, and by the powerful emotions evoked by that model.

Now we will consider the peace cultures of the churches using the same format of code of conduct, institutional outcomes, and role models.

THE PEACEABLE GARDEN CULTURE

The peaceable garden culture is nonviolent. One of its most notable characteristics is that men and women move about in it with equal freedom. The elderly and the very young are also visible. Love of God and love of nature go hand in hand. The highest experience in this culture is the unitive experience—oneness with God and humankind. The culture comes in two versions: the mystical union version and the practical pacifist version. We will consider the two versions in each of the three traditions under examination. This makes for a somewhat complex discussion. It should be emphasized however that both peaceable subcultures are generally very small groups compared to the warrior culture in the same tradition.

Judaism. One mystical union version of the peaceable Judaic culture is Hasidism. The zaddik, filled with holy ecstasy and prophetic fervor, sees visions and teaches his disciples through tales. The legends of the hasidim point the way to a holy and transformed life, filled with joy. Every hasidic community is the kingdom of God in germ. However, these communities deal only with spiritual transformation and not with social transformation. Partly anarchic, partly authoritarian, this is an enclave culture within Judaism, protected by the larger culture. Since the zaddik combines total humility and absolute authority, there is socialization for obedience rather than for autonomy, and women's chief role is as nurturer of the zaddik and his disciples.

The practical utopian-pacifist version of the peaceable culture is well exemplified in that form of zionism represented by Martin Buber (1948). He saw a Jewish national community in Palestine as an opportunity to create a model political community embodying the highest spiritual values of Judaism while practicing a nonviolent, reconciling relationship with Arab brothers as co-tillers of the same soil. He called

for the following of the precepts of Leviticus: communal ownership of the land, regularly recurrent leveling of social distinctions, guarantee of the independence of each individual, mutual aid, and the Sabbath year of rest and enjoyment of the fruits of labor for all. The kibbutzim were to be the practical experiments in creating this model society, and men and women were to be equal partners in every respect.

In some groups within Israel, including some kibbutzim, gender and ethnic equality is practiced, as well as alternative political policies of reconciliation with Arab neighbors. Environmental conservation is a high priority. The role models for socialization are the peace heroes of scripture; the teachings on social justice are very strong.

Islam. Sufism is the best known mystical union tradition in Islam. The central Sufi doctrine is the "doctrine of the Perfect Man or the Universal Man, *al-insan al-kamil*, according to which every creature reflects in its own way some aspect, or quality, of the Divine Nature, some Divine Name or Divine Quality. . . . Only man is the mirror of all the Divine Names and Qualities."³ This means that the spiritual task is to realize that divine reflection in one's being. For the Sufi master and her/his disciples, that realization is the major activity of life, and each individual needs to be guided to it in a unique way, based on a body of esoteric teachings which center on the invocation of the name of God. The practices for women and men are the same. There is a tradition of women saints and teachers, of whom R'abia is the best known. The special service of the Sufi is to be a silent witness to God. Since there is no separation of political and religious institutions in Islam, the Sufi play a special role within the polity, standing over against bureaucracy and formalism. The Dervish orders perform a similar function.

The social action version of the Muslim peaceable garden culture best known in the West is the Baha'i faith, treated as a heresy in Islam. The Baha'i make working for international peace a high priority. They are associated with movements for gender and racial equality and social justice in all the countries where they have sought refuge. There is also a strong element of Sufi-type spirituality in the religious practice. The Baha'i saints and martyrs provide strong role models for public witness on difficult social issues, for men and women equally. Since the severity of persecution has driven many Baha'i into exile, it cannot be said that they function as role models within most Muslim communities.

Christianity. Christian mysticism has strong traditions in Catholicism, in the Greek Orthodox church, and, since the Reformation, in Protestantism. The Desert Fathers (and Mothers) may be taken as an example of a development that exists in all three of the main branches of Christianity. Their story begins in the fourth and fifth centuries,

when men and women flocked to the deserts of Egypt and Syria to live a life of prayer and asceticism (Waddell 1951). They fled the distractions and temptations of city life to become more perfect in the love of God. Today the term "going into the desert" is used to refer to choosing a life of asceticism and prayer, apart from worldly things. The desert can be anywhere. Whether as hermits, members of secluded religious orders, or self-selected inner-city contemplatives, the men and women who have made this choice pray for the world while cut off from it. There are not infrequent stories of hermits sought out by secular heads of state for political advice because of their great spiritual wisdom, but for the most part they give themselves to God in solitude. While monastic rule is hierarchical, and women and men are in separate orders, within orders there is a strong familial ethic and a pattern of mutual aid and sharing. Nuns and monks are considered role models for peace in a larger community, and prayer is interpreted by many as a form of social action.

If we turn to the social action version of the peaceable garden culture in Christianity we find the anabaptists. Catholicism also has a strong peace action wing, based primarily in the noncontemplative orders and (in this century) in the Catholic worker and the Catholic trade union movements. Both anabaptist and catholic social action traditions emerged in response to Joachim de Fiore's teachings about the post-bureaucratic age of the Holy Spirit in the twelfth century.⁴ Men and women all over Europe translated and taught from the Bible in the vernacular, set up communities where goods were held in common, and generally worked to break the bonds of the feudal order. Many of the chiliastic sects went to excesses, but the anabaptists kept to a disciplined, nonhierarchical, socially and spiritually open set of teachings. The participation of women as equal partners with men and an emphasis on nonviolence in the pursuit of social justice were notable characteristics of the anabaptists (Boulding 1976). Their later descendants include Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren, now known as the historic peace churches. Anabaptist groups established many model communities over the centuries and were often politically active. (Pennsylvania was started by Quaker William Penn as a holy experiment.) They consistently opposed wars and war taxes. They also opened schools. In the twentieth century the colleges administered by the peace churches have pioneered in the development of peace studies programs. The activist saints and martyrs of the peaceable garden culture come from all denominations within Christianity. Some are well known, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Coretta Scott King, and Dorothy Day. The anabaptist names are less familiar, but they will be found as quiet peace workers in local peace action groups everywhere.

The “peace face” of the church is hardly unknown. It does not however enter the popular culture in the same way that the “war face” does. The fact that in each tradition described above one part of the peace culture follows a mystical, contemplative pattern accentuates its invisibility. The activist peace culture in each case is a small minority which carries the full burden of trying to apply spiritual understandings and equalitarian, nonviolent practices to the social problems and conflicts of community life. The wonder is not that they are ineffective, but that they have managed to create a public witness at all. The contemplatives and the activists have in common a spiritual condition which involves a powerful emotional commitment to doing God’s work as they understand it and a powerful sense of belonging to God’s whole earthly family. It is the intensity of these feelings which sets them apart in the Christian community. They do not talk about the middle ground, but they are in fact pathbreakers in it.

THE MIDDLE GROUND

We have been looking at the extremes of war and peace cultures in three religious traditions. While the extremes appear to interact hardly at all, the pattern of secular authorities seeking political wisdom from the holy man or woman exists in all three traditions. The fact that the warrior cultures did develop viable political institutions suggests the moderating influence of the peace culture. However, we have seen how vulnerable these political institutions are today when they come under attack from the extremists and fundamentalists among the holy warriors. The institutional church has never publicly claimed the middle ground of daily conflict, so its adherents are left struggling with the extremes. By legitimating the violent crusading spirit on the one hand and praising an apparently unattainable sanctity of spirit on the other, the church has missed the opportunity to prepare adherents in precisely the arena where most of their daily efforts go—to handling the many small differences that arise in the course of getting through a day’s tasks. In the end, societies stand or fall by the degree of competence they can muster to deal with problem solving and conflict resolution under conditions of pressure. This competence can be purely manipulative, or it can be based on spiritual understandings of human interdependence. Fostering a spiritually sensitive approach to the ever-needed skills of negotiation shifts attention away from the overglorified threat system and provides much-needed support to the ordinary citizen in what she has to do anyway, but is left to flounder with alone: the resolution of small conflicts.

This approach to the middle ground may be one of the few ways available for the longer run task of reworking the spiritual underpin-

nings of the holy war culture. The spirit of struggle itself belongs to our psychobiological nature and is not to be erased. It has to do, as stated earlier, with the unique individuality of each human being, an individuality which has to be protected as over against the other, to retain its integrity. That same individuality also requires bonding with others to make it whole, a lifelong extension of the nurturance every person received in infancy. This means that the terms of relationship with others must be continually established and re-established. It is each person's fate to want, need, perceive, and value different things than her neighbor, but also to feel responsibility for the neighbor's wants, perceptions, and values within the greater bond. The inner *jihad* involves the struggle between self and other. Drawing on the vigor of the struggle for individuality and on the strength of the bonding impulse within the unitive spirit creates the possibility of a peace culture in the middle ground of everyday reconciling behavior. As Bowker says, the anthropologies of each religion are so different, and the feelings about these anthropologies run so deep, that pragmatic conflict resolution which leaves anthropologies intact is the only alternative to Armageddon. This is precisely what Malcolm Sutherland, Jr. has described as the task of the World Conference on Religion and Peace—the development of middle-ground behavior. Yet the churches in general give little recognition to the valiant efforts of the few who work at this.

The development of a middle-ground peace culture will not come by fiat. In the brief discussion of the holy war culture and the mystical union culture of three religious traditions the role models utilized by each for the socialization of the next generation were emphasized. The holy war models far outnumber the peace models, in numerical frequency and ease of popular appeal. The conception of the middle-ground peacemaker has to be worked on. The craft and discipline of linking assertiveness and nurturant listening in one set of behaviors (something the women's movement gives a lot of attention to) needs to be brought to the level of consciousness as an empowering model for people of all faiths. The spiritual energy and the charismatic legitimation which only the church can provide could usefully be channeled into providing this new model.

In one way this is a very old model, not a new model at all. The *via media*, the golden mean, is a concept that goes back to the ancients. But the sense in which the middle ground is used here is not in the sense of some kind of halfway point. It is rather in the sense of a process that incorporates the polarities of human experience in interacting with others. That kind of mental discipline and behavioral training is scarce in our society. I have said earlier that people practice negotiation every day in all kinds of settings, simply to resolve the small differences that

arise in any task requiring cooperative activity with others. The family is sometimes praised as the training ground for skills in social behavior and sometimes condemned for not giving better training. Yet the family gets little help from outside. Recent studies of conflict management in families suggest that, even in families committed to the pacifist tradition, there is a surprising amount of violent interaction in the home.⁵ Families do not ordinarily intend to be violent. They fall into violence because they do not know how else to deal with their conflicts. The fighting culture that surrounds them in both religious and secular institutions give them no help at all in finding alternative behaviors. The rise of litigiousness in dealing with social relationships of all kinds similarly reflects a lack of knowledge of alternatives. The everyday pragmatic conflict resolution knowledge we acquire on our own just is not enough to deal with the conflict levels that prevail in our society.

The social diversity that intensifies the conflicts will increase, not decrease, in coming decades. At the international level the familiar and relatively homogeneous political and economic culture of the West, known as the old international order, is being replaced by something very unfamiliar indeed. The new international order has a number of dimensions: economic, environmental, security, culture, information. The Third World is becoming increasingly articulate about the inclusion of their traditions under each of these dimensions (Boulding 1985a). The diversity we deal with now is nothing compared to the diversity we will be dealing with in the future, as more and more hitherto silent communication sources begin to channel new information to the world community. The journey from a fifty-nation Western-oriented world to an over one hundred sixty-nation highly pluralistic world in just a few decades is one that the West has barely begun to fathom, much less assimilate.

As Barkun (1968) points out, the behavioral underpinnings for peaceable negotiation with potential adversaries are only developed through repeated interaction which renders the other to a degree predictable. Some shared knowledge has to develop between adversaries for negotiation to be possible. Tribal societies manage a certain level of peaceableness with neighboring tribes based on a degree of familiarity, even though there are no overarching political structures. We do not have even the beginnings of that familiarity with most of the world's nations. Overarching structures cannot replace that familiarity, as unwillingness by the major powers to accept initiatives generated by the Third World in the United Nations General Assembly demonstrates. What this means is that the future of the international order depends on increased willingness of states to enter into learning dialogues with other states in the fora provided by the United Nations,

intergovernmental structures, and nongovernmental associations. This involves moving to the middle ground and developing basic middle-ground skills of listening, observation, and then mediation and negotiation.

REWORKING THE HOLY WAR CULTURE

The holy war culture will not simply fade away. It is too deeply embedded in our consciousness. It has to be reworked. That reworking will involve reformulating the idea of struggle as conquest and destruction of the other; it will involve no longer seeing struggle as a zero-sum game with only winners and losers. The reformulation called for is toward the middle-ground concept of struggle as a positive-sum game in which each party gains something of advantage while giving something to the other side, so that in the end both are better off. Positive-sum game attitudes provide the necessary cultural context for an increase in peacemaking behavior at every level. As long as negotiation is seen as cowardly at the interpersonal or community level, then negotiation will be seen as cowardly at the international level. Peacemakers do not come out of the blue. They are formed by their culture. At present the shaping culture of most industrialized countries is highly violent. As the Italian political theorist Sergio Cotta writes:

Violence hides in the antinomies of our very ways of life, which are lawless and mass-dominated, intellectualized and emotive. . . . Violence enters even into our habits of speaking and communicating: in the amplified and dehumanized screaming from loudspeakers at political rallies and in places of amusement, or simply in the unbearable noises of the streets, in the constant use of deliberately desecrating and cruel words and images that are brutally applied to anyone, without restraint, respect or decency. How often people, by substituting the language of war for the language of dialogue, inject the words "struggle," "battle," "victory" into every insignificant discussion or controversy (Cotta 1985, 2).

Cotta is writing of the secular culture. When you add that for religious communities people's deepest and most inward prayer life has been formed by battle language of one scripture or another, *even when they consciously try to reinterpret it*, there is a heavy loading toward violence in our mental life. The sheer repetition of words independently of the wishes of the hearer has its own effect, as the gradual acceptance of the star-wars concept in a public initially hostile to it suggests. How then with the words calling the hearer to God's battle against the enemy?

Cultures do change over time. Revolutions which fail to rework the basic symbol systems of the society they propose to reconstitute fail utterly in that reconstitution, since new structures are maintained with an old consciousness. The discipline of semiotics has a great deal to say

about how meanings are produced and reproduced in society, and indeed points to the production of meanings as a central social task (Coward & Ellis 1977). A study of how Sweden developed in three centuries from being a conquest culture to a peaceable community-building culture in terms of how new meanings were produced would be an illuminating undertaking. So would a study of the struggle in contemporary Japan between the older conquest culture and the post-war culture of peaceableness, undergirded by a peace constitution. Outside forces are pushing in both directions, toward rearmament and toward continued nonmilitary diplomacy. What is the nature of the struggle for meaning that is going on within Japan at present? We need to know much more about these processes.

Reworking of meanings in the women's movement. Women have a particularly powerful role to play in the creation, reproduction, and reworking of meanings through their work of maintenance and nurturance in family and community settings. They have reproduced the warrior culture by raising sons to go forth to battle and daughters to produce the next generation of warriors. They have also, with varying degrees of success, tried to create a culture of peaceableness over the centuries. Today the women's movement takes the task of creating a culture of peaceableness as part of its mandate. Since there are many dimensions to that task, economic, political, and legal as well as cultural, the women's movement has much to do. I will discuss here only the reworking of symbolic meanings in certain specific contexts.

The reworking of the language of scripture, hymns, and prayers to remove patriarchal and warrior language and replace it with a more inclusive and peaceable language has been a major target for the church-related wing of the women's movement. This activity, in its more vigorous form, has created hostility between men and women. At the same time it has moved male-female interaction on the subject from the domination end of the conflict continuum toward the middle ground of dialogue.

The reworking of women's history to include in the public record women's roles as public nurturers of the body social as teachers, healers, mediators, and also as scientists and artists has been another major undertaking of recent decades. The sheer invisibility in the public record of work done by women in the public domain gives an underground character to the peaceable culture that distorts its empirical reality. Making it visible strengthens the culture and affirms and celebrates the women who have created it.

The redefinition of the familial or nurturer role as a role for both men and women is an important example of the reworking of mean-

ings. As Dorothy Dinnerstein (1976) has shown, assigning nurturance roles to mothers and authority roles to fathers reproduces the warrior culture and leaves men untrained in alternative forms of social behavior, thus closing the door to the development of more peaceable problem solving behavior in men. It also fuels the smoldering struggle between the sexes, leaving no room for productive outcomes. Another type of reworking in settings involving children is the reworking of play from competitive to cooperative interaction. Many books, articles, and workshops have been devoted to recovering play from the battle arena. Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1955) is still the major theoretical work on how culture is created through play. It will take much work to apply these fertile ideas on culture creation to our present cultural dilemma.

Finally, the redefinition of public spaces devoted to war and the symbols of war as public zones of peace has been one of the most visible and in the long run the most politically significant of the activities of the women's movement. The redefinition of the meaning of security is involved. A powerful symbolic redefinition took place in the wrapping of the Pentagon in a peace ribbon woven and embroidered by thousands of women across the United States. Weaving ribbons and yarn around military installations as an act of weaving the web of life happens almost weekly at one installation or another, although rarely reported. The women's encampments at military installations in Greenham Common, England; Seneca Falls, United States; Neva Shalom, Israel; in France, Germany, Italy, Japan and elsewhere—all these encampments symbolically claim space from militarism for peace. The significance of the encampment is not only that women are there, but that they try to carry on in the claimed space a community life of the quality that could model community life for people everywhere. Peace is being visibly practiced. As the Greenham Common women testify (Hartford & Hopkins 1984), this means a great deal of middle-ground negotiation and mediation, since these women are strong individualists! The nuclear-free zone movement is an extension of the encampment idea. An individual, a family, a school, a town, a country, or a group of countries may declare their "territory" a nuclear-free zone and commit that area to a course of action that will create the conditions of political and social peace. The latest issue of "The New Abolitionist"⁶ reports more than 2,700 nuclear-free zone communities in seventeen countries, five nuclear-free zone treaties (the fifth and most recent covers the South Pacific from the equator to the Antarctic and from Australia to South America), and seventeen countries which prohibit nuclear weapons by law or as part of their constitution. The significance of these symbolic approaches is that they not only provide a new cultural formulation for the larger society and a new set of

meanings about peace and war, but they offer an experimental space in which actual peacemaking efforts can take place. It is ironic that the reworking of the meaning of security should be happening outside the religious community. Here is a public action space waiting to be claimed by the churches.

The skills of peacemaking. It is only a step from new cultural meanings and new spaces for social experiments to the development of the actual skills of peacemaking. To their credit, the churches have mobilized strongly to lobby for the enabling legislation which has brought the National Peace Institute into being. Yet they have done little to establish their own training programs. Given the public image of the church as mediator in social crises, especially at the local level, it is strange that the churches have done so little beyond providing their workers with psychological counseling skills. What other skills are we talking about when we talk about peacemaking skills? First and last, the skills of listening dialogue, then systems analysis of conflict situations, including analysis of power imbalances and the empowerment of weaker parties; the development of best case scenarios for persistent conflicts; the imaging of alternative futures for the parties concerned; and the actual processes of mediation and negotiation. The historic peace churches have been the lone pioneers in the development of peace studies programs through their system of denominational colleges. Nongovernmental associations like the World Peace Brigade and the Indian Shanti Sena (nonviolent army) provide training which attracts numbers of church activists. Eventually, if the National Peace Institute develops along the lines envisioned by the National Peace Institute Foundation, there will be peace studies and peace training centers not only on college campuses around the country but also in noncampus-based community centers. The potential for church involvement is substantial.

The role of international nongovernmental organizations in dealing with pressing social problems at the global level is continually increasing. With the rise of nationalism and the limitations of the United Nations in dealing with the major powers, nongovernmental associations are putting more and more of their special skills and resources, scientific, economic, and educational, into the gaps in the international system. There were only 400 international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) at the beginning of the century. There are now well over 8,000, all committed to working as private citizens' groups across national borders to increase world welfare (Boulding 1985b). The churches constitute a not insignificant proportion of these INGOs and they are gaining more and more experience in working with develop-

mental problems. Yet peacemaking is an area they have scarcely entered, with the major exception of the World Conference on Religion and Peace and the work of the historic peace churches.

If we think of the households of faith as a loosely interconnected world system, we can see that it represents a set of social commitments and spiritual, intellectual, and social resources which could contribute powerfully to practical peacemaking—if the middle ground in which praxis must take place were given higher priority by the constituent churches. The energy which has been expended in religious quarrels, and in support of the quarrels of nation-states, can be redirected to the middle ground if the churches choose to explore new ways to respond to the new threats to human survival. At least some of the energy which has been expended in the highest states of prayer can be similarly redirected. Meister Eckhart, the great Christian mystic, maintained that communion with God in the highest state of mystical exaltation should be interrupted to give a cup of water to a thirsty person. How much more necessary to interrupt that exaltation to act on the world's quarrels? The models for a coming together in the middle ground of warrior and mystic are there. They need only be used.

NOTES

1. The Bellagio Statement on Nuclear War: Consequences and Prevention was issued jointly on December 1, 1984, by the International Council of Scientific Unions and the Interfaith Academy of Peace. It can be obtained from the Center for Theology and Public Policy, 4500 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

2. See the holy war issue in *Parabola*, vol. 7, no. 4, for different interpretations of holy war in various traditions.

3. Quoted from "The Long Journey," an interview with Sayyed Hossein Nasr, in *Parabola*, vol. 10, pp. 28-41.

4. For an extended analysis of Joachim's writing and influence see Marjorie Reeves (1969).

5. For writing on this subject, see articles by David Mace, Judy Brutz, and Demien Kurtz in *Friends Journal*, 1 October 1984.

6. Information taken from "The New Abolitionist," Newsletter of Nuclear Free America, vol. 3, no. 4, September-October 1985.

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Notice

The Bertrand Russell Society announces a call for papers to be presented at its meeting with the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association in December 1987. Papers may be on any aspect of Russell's philosophy. They should have a reading time of about half an hour and should be submitted in triplicate, typed double-spaced with an abstract of not more than 150 words. The author's name, address, and title of the paper should be submitted on a separate page. The submission deadline is April 15, 1987, and the papers should be sent to David E. Johnson, Chair, Philosopher's Committee, The Bertrand Russell Society, Sampson Hall, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD 21402. Those desiring the return of their papers should enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.