



---

2022

## Roadmap to Reconciliation: An Institutional and Conceptual Framework for Jewish-Muslim Engagement

J. R. Rothstein, Esq.

Shlomo Pill

Ariel J. Liberman, Esq.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/lawreview>



Part of the [Educational Sociology Commons](#), [Law and Society Commons](#), [Religion Law Commons](#), and the [Sociology of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rothstein,, J. R. Esq.; Pill, Shlomo; and Liberman,, Ariel J. Esq. (2022) "Roadmap to Reconciliation: An Institutional and Conceptual Framework for Jewish-Muslim Engagement," *Touro Law Review*. Vol. 38: No. 1, Article 8.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/lawreview/vol38/iss1/8>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Touro Law Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Touro Law Review by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Touro Law Center. For more information, please contact [lross@tourolaw.edu](mailto:lross@tourolaw.edu).

**ROADMAP TO RECONCILIATION: AN INSTITUTIONAL AND  
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR JEWISH-MUSLIM ENGAGEMENT**

*J.R. Rothstein, Esq.\**

*Shlomo Pill\*\**

*Ariel J. Liberman, Esq.\*\*\**

---

\* J.R. Rothstein has over a decade of experience in Muslim-Jewish relations. Mr. Rothstein was previously a Fulbright visiting scholar at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, where he lectured on comparative Islamic and Jewish law. Mr. Rothstein is also a former member of the Steering Committee and Board of AJC ACCESS and the former Chair of the Muslim-Jewish Relations Committee. In 2017, he was appointed as a Board member of the New York Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council. Mr. Rothstein is a 2018-2019 Broome Fellow of Muslim-Jewish Relations at the American Sephardic Federation in New York City. He also lectures on the history of Muslim-Jewish relations in front of major North American Jewish organizations and synagogues. Mr. Rothstein was an Ariana De Rothschild Fellow at the University of Cambridge Judge Business School in Cambridge, United Kingdom, focusing on Social Entrepreneurship and impact investing with faith-based communities. Mr. Rothstein has lived, worked, studied, and traveled to over two dozen countries, including in Cairo, Egypt where he studied Islamic law. He is originally from Monsey, New York.

\*\* Senior Lecturer in Law, Emory Law School; Paul and Marion Kuntz Scholar in Law and Religion, Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Emory Law School, where his work focuses on constitutional law, comparative Jewish and Islamic law, religious liberty, and jurisprudence. Special thanks to Adnan Ilyas, Shaykh Ibrahim Hussain, Gibran Mailk, Dr. Nicole Mizrahi, Daphna Price, Rabbi Dr. Reuven Firestone, Rabbi Elhannan Miller, Dr. Ari Gordon, Isaac Choua, Moshe David HaCohen for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay, and to Akivah Unger for their research assistance.

\*\*\* LLM Candidate, Center for the Study of Law and Religion, Emory Law School. His research centers around the interplay between law and religion, specifically the ways in which the perspectives of different faith traditions can help inform pressing secular reform efforts in the fields of American education law and policy, constitutional law, and criminal law. His interest in the subject of this piece stems from his on-the-ground professional background facilitating interfaith exchanges on university campuses and engaging students in the work of building inclusive communities.

**ABSTRACT**

This paper calls for the establishment of a comprehensive academic and theological center to be created and located at a prestigious secular university in the United States. As the first of its kind in North America, it should be affiliated with both American Muslim and Jewish institutions. Modeled on similar Jewish-Christian centers, its mission will be to foster both a neutral ground for dialogue and the development of a theology of Jewish-Muslim coexistence.

## I. INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT TODAY: A GAP IN THE FIELD

### A. Jewish-Christian Relations

In the past seventy-five years, the world has witnessed the blossoming of Jewish-Christian relations. This historic shift has produced hundreds of Jewish-Christian interfaith organizations across the world whose singular purpose is to strengthen Jewish-Christian relations while developing and reinforcing a theology, philosophy, and interpretation of religious texts that facilitates cooperation between the two faiths. However, this was not always the case. The modern landscape of Jewish-Christian relations, characterized by historic shifts and unprecedented international cooperation, is, in many ways, a reaction to the historical anti-semitism and the Holocaust.<sup>1</sup> Several philosophers, including Jules Isaac of France,<sup>2</sup> James Parkes of England,<sup>3</sup> and A. Roy Eckardt of the United States,<sup>4</sup> pioneered the notion that the unreconciled theological roots of Christian anti-semitism, which were manifested throughout European history, provided the fodder for the Nazi's mass genocide.<sup>5</sup> This notion, coupled with regret for the complacency and even support with which many sectors of European Christendom had related to Nazi anti-semitism contributed to a flourishing of Jewish-Christian interreligious dialogue and reconciliation in the post-World War Two era.<sup>6</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century, Jewish-Christian interfaith engagement and reconciliation was limited to scholarly writing, informal dialogue, and coffee-house discussions. While non-

<sup>1</sup> See generally ALAN L. BERGER, POST HOLOCAUST JEWISH CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE (2014).

<sup>2</sup> See JULES ISAAC, L'ENSEIGNEMENT DU MÉPRIS (1962); JULES ISAAC, JESUS AND ISRAEL (1948).

<sup>3</sup> See JAMES PARKE, THE JEW AND HIS NEIGHBOR (1930).

<sup>4</sup> See ROY ECKARDT, YOUR PEOPLE, MY PEOPLE (1974).

<sup>5</sup> Ray Summers, *Reviewed Work(s): The Teaching of Contempt: The Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*, 6 J. CHURCH & STATE 382, 382-84 (1964) (reviewing JULES ISAAC, THE CHRISTIAN ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM (1960)).

<sup>6</sup> See generally BERGER, *supra* note 1; see also Jonathan Magonet, *The Growth of Interfaith Dialogue*, 48 EUR. JUDAISM: J. NEW EUR. 38 (2015).

polemical academic interest in Jewish-Christian dialogue and conciliatory social interactions between Christians and Jews were occurring with increasing frequency, there was not yet any concerted, organized effort to produce formal reconciliation between these deeply estranged religious communities.<sup>7</sup> In 1927, the very first formal Jewish-Christian association, the National Conference of Christians and Jews (“NCCJ”),<sup>8</sup> was founded in the United States as a reaction to increased evangelism to the Jewish community and heightened activity of white supremacy groups.<sup>9</sup> The organization featured a distinguished leadership that included three co-chairs representing the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths and had strong connections with other international faith-based organizations.<sup>10</sup> The NCCJ would go on to inspire similar working groups in South Africa and across Europe.<sup>11</sup>

In the wake of the Nazi’s novel and unprecedented brand of antisemitic rhetoric, ideology, and action, international Christian-Jewish constituencies began to coalesce in the post-war world to address the issue. These efforts led to the formation of the International Council of Christians and Jews in 1946<sup>12</sup> and the International Emergency Conference on Anti-Semitism in 1947.<sup>13</sup> Critically, this conference produced the “The Ten Points of Seelisburg,” which represents a major step forward in Christian reflection regarding the religious causes of Christian anti-semitism.<sup>14</sup> This document targeted the roots of anti-semitism in Christian doctrine by both (1) acknowledging the unity between Old and New Testaments and (2) instructing future Christian clergy, leaders, and communities about what traditional teachings lend themselves to interfaith hostility that they ought to “avoid” in the future.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Christian Rutishauser, *The 1947 Seelisberg Conf.: The Found. of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, 2 *STUD. CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELS.* 34, 36 (2007).

<sup>8</sup> *See id.* at 37; Benny Kraut, *Towards the Establishment of the National Conference of Christians and Jews: The Tenuous Road to Religious Goodwill in the 1920s*, 77 *AM. JEWISH HIST.* 388, 388 (1988).

<sup>9</sup> Kraut, *supra* note 8, at 388-89.

<sup>10</sup> *See id.* at 390.

<sup>11</sup> *See* Rutishauser, *supra* note 7, at 36.

<sup>12</sup> *See id.* at 37.

<sup>13</sup> *See id.*

<sup>14</sup> For a full version of these ten points, see *INT’L COUNCIL CHRISTIANS & JEWS, THE TEN POINTS OF SEELISBERG* (1947).

<sup>15</sup> Rutishauser, *supra* note 7, at 45.

In the years that followed, and as more of the Nazi's atrocities came to light, the Vatican—after initially opposing some efforts at fostering Jewish-Christian relations—grew to become one of the important institutional players on the international stage of Jewish-Christian relations.<sup>16</sup> Acknowledging the role Catholic dogma and leadership had in the perpetuation of an anti-semitic Europe throughout history, Pope Paul VI issued *Nostra Aetate* during the Second Vatican Council in 1965.<sup>17</sup> As part of the bold, albeit controversial declaration, the Church stated,

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ.

Furthermore, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.<sup>18</sup>

With this statement, the Pope—at some considerable risk to his own legitimacy and credibility—threw the weight, legitimacy, and authority of a major political and religious power behind efforts to bridge the divide between Jews and Catholics.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> See generally Remi Hoekman, *The Difficult Story of Jewish-Christian Relations*, 73 ANGLICUM 361 (1996); Magonet, *supra* note 6.

<sup>17</sup> Victoria Barnett & Dr. Franklin Sherman, *Jews and Christians: The Unfolding Interfaith Relationship*, U.S. HOLOCAUST MEM'L MUSEUM, <https://www.ushmm.org/research/about-the-mandel-center/initiatives/ethics-religion-holocaust/articles-and-resources/jews-and-christians-the-unfolding-interfaith-relationship> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> Declaration on the Rel. of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*, Oct. 28, 1965.

<sup>19</sup> Irving Greenberg, *From Enemy to Partner: Toward the Realization of a*

The Pope's initiative indeed paid off. The period between 1965 and 1995 saw unprecedented growth in Jewish-Christian dialogue.<sup>20</sup> In terms of scholarship, biblical researchers flocked to re-explore scripture in line with the recommendations made in *Nostra Aetate*.<sup>21</sup> Other scholars wrote on theodicy, the intersection between religion and political history, the psychology of antisemitism, and the history of Jewish-Christian relations.<sup>22</sup> On an institutional level, both within and outside of the Catholic orbit, educational, religious, and political conferences were launched on the subject of the Church's antisemitic history and paths forward.<sup>23</sup>

In response to these activities, Pope Paul VI issued another important Catholic statement on antisemitism and the Church in 1974 entitled "Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration '*Nostra Aetate*.'"<sup>24</sup> The document offers practical guidance for Catholic clergy on how they ought to present Jews and Judaism in church, provides notes on the teaching about antisemitism in Catholic schools, and calls for "joint social action" to "work willingly together, seeking social justice and peace at every level — local, national and international."<sup>25</sup> In many ways, this work, as well as the writings of anti-semitism historians like Jules Isaac, became a guidebook for education on the subject of Jewish-Christian peacebuilding.<sup>26</sup>

More recently, as the numbers of Christian centers for Jewish-Christian relations in the United States grew, the need arose for an umbrella organization to help coordinate and guide these efforts.

---

*Partnership between Judaism and Christianity, in NOSTRA AETATE: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE CHURCH'S DIALOGUE WITH JEWS AND MUSLIMS 178, 189* (Pim Valkenberg & Anthony Cirelli eds., 2016).

<sup>20</sup> Mary Christine Athans, *Courtesy, Confrontation, Cooperation: Jewish-Christian/Catholic Relations in the United States*, 5 *STUD. CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELS.* 107, 126 (2010).

<sup>21</sup> ANTHONY J CERNERA, *EXAMINING NOSTRA AETATE AFTER 40 YEARS* 30 (Sacred Heart Univ. Press 2007).

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> Barnett & Sherman, *supra* note 17.

<sup>24</sup> *Guidelines and Suggestions For Implementing The Conciliar Declaration "Nostra Aetate"* (n.4), *COMM'N FOR RELIGIOUS RELS. WITH JEWS*, <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/commissione-per-i-rapporti-religiosi-con-l-ebraismo/commissione-per-i-rapporti-religiosi-con-l-ebraismo-crrre/documenti-della-commissione/en3.html> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

This led to the formation of the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations in North America (“CCJCR”),<sup>27</sup> a member organization of the International Council of Christians and Jews. Member institutions of the CCJCR are located in national and regional academic institutions, theological seminaries, and communities across the United States and Canada.<sup>28</sup> These institutions focus on producing scholarship in the area of Jewish-Christian relations, developing inter-organizational connections, and disseminating educational programming about Jewish-Christian reconciliation across the country.<sup>29</sup> By doing so, these institutions have shaped generations of professional clergy, students, academics, and organizational leaders across the country and have tremendously influenced interfaith dialogue in all aspects of Jewish-Christian relations.

## B. Christian-Muslim Relations

Relations between Muslims and Christians have also undergone patterns of reconciliation through increased theological dialogue and institutional engagement in recent decades.<sup>30</sup> Inasmuch as the Second Vatican Council sought to smooth relations between Christians and Jews while reiterating some of its main differences with Judaism, the Church also sought to affirm the integrity of Muslims without conceding any serious theological ground to Islam. Thus, the Pope declared,

The Church has . . . a high regard for the Muslims. They worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth who has spoken to men. They strive to submit themselves without reserve to the hidden decrees of God, just as Abraham submitted himself to God’s plan, to whose faith Muslims eagerly link their own. Although not acknowledging him as God, they venerate Jesus as a prophet, his Virgin Mother they

---

<sup>27</sup> *About the CCJR*, COUNCIL CTRS. ON JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELS. (2017), <https://www.ccjr.us/about>.

<sup>28</sup> A list of these relevant organizations is annexed to this paper as Appendix A.

<sup>29</sup> *About the CCJR*, *supra* note 27.

<sup>30</sup> Lewis E. Winkler, CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO RELIGIOUS PLURALITY 43 (2011).



also honor, and even at times devoutly invoke. Further, they await the day of judgment and the reward of God following the resurrection of the dead. For this reason they highly esteem an upright life and worship God, especially by way of prayer, alms-deeds and fasting.

Over the centuries many quarrels and dissensions have arisen between Christians and Muslims. The sacred Council now pleads with all to forget the past and urges that a sincere effort be made to achieve mutual understanding; for the benefit of all men, let them together preserve and promote peace, liberty, social justice and moral values.<sup>31</sup>

Pursuant to this pronouncement, the Vatican's established a Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious dialogue in 1969 which began a centralized effort to increase Catholic literacy concerning Islam through courses and interfaith conferences.<sup>32</sup>

This Catholic move towards reconciliation with Muslims after long centuries of animosity, warfare, and religious condemnation paved the way for a sustained interfaith dialogue not just within the Catholic sphere, but also among Protestant circles.<sup>33</sup> Although Christian and Muslims have had their difficulties in dialogue, the details of which are beyond the scope of this paper, today, there are many organizations dedicated exclusively for Christian-Muslim relations on both a social and theological level.

### C. Jewish-Muslim Engagement: A Missing Link?

While Jewish-Christian and Christian-Muslim engagement has flourished over the last fifty years, efforts at institutionally-based Jewish-Muslim dialogue and reconciliation are few in comparison.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> *Vatican Council and Papal Statements on Islam*, UNITED CONF. CATH. BISHOPS, <https://www.usccb.org/committees/ecumenical-interreligious-affairs/vatican-council-and-papal-statements-islam> (quoting Second Vatican Council, *Nostra Aetate* 3, October 28, 1965).

<sup>32</sup> *Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue*, LA SANTA SEDE, [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/index.htm](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/index.htm) (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>33</sup> *Vatican Council and Papal Statements on Islam*, *supra* note 31.

<sup>34</sup> Notable exceptions include Cambridge University's Woolf Institute and the Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement at the University of Southern California.

Centuries of interactions between Muslims and Jews—admittedly not always peaceful or conciliatory—have given way to an uneasy coexistence often punctuated by suspicion, misunderstanding, distrust, and, in too many instances, violence. This is true, even though Jews and Muslims have arguably more bases for cooperation and coexistence today than ever before. During the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land find themselves engaged in projects of state-building within the complex context of commitments to modernity, religion, and economic and international relevance.<sup>35</sup> In the West, members of both faith communities are engaged in the challenging process of forging distinct religious identities while living as contributing, loyal minorities within non-Jewish or non-Muslim societies.<sup>36</sup> With extensive religious similarities, as well as an often clear feeling of “otherness,” there is so much to learn from a productive Jewish-Muslim dialogue.<sup>37</sup> Yet, such interchange today is rare, at least not without a Christian buffer. Professor Atif Khalil notes that

[t]he emotionally charged Palestinian-Israeli conflict has almost entirely laid siege to Jewish-Muslim relations since the Holocaust and subsequent creation of Israel with the unfortunate result that Jews and Muslims are often unable to meet for irenic interfaith exchanges without either party demanding of the other some form of politically oriented disclaimer, dissociation, or apology.<sup>38</sup>

This reality, along with the persistence of old and new forms of anti-semitism and Islamophobia within and around Jewish and Muslim communities, has caused any well-spring of goodwill to go dry.<sup>39</sup>

---

*Improving Relations Between Religion & Society Through Education*, WOOLF INSTIT., <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk> (last visited Jan. 9, 2022); *Events and Training*, UNIV. S. CAL. DORNSIFE CTR. REL. & CIVIC CULTURE, <https://crcc.usc.edu/events-and-training> (last visited Jan. 9, 2022).

<sup>35</sup> JOHN BUNZL, *ISLAM, JUDAISM, AND THE POLITICAL ROLE OF RELIGIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST* 61-75 (Univ. Press Fla. 2004).

<sup>36</sup> ABDELWAHAB MEDDEB & BENJAMIN STORA, *A HISTORY OF JEWISH-MUSLIM RELATIONS* 13, 20 (Princeton Univ. Press 2013).

<sup>37</sup> 41 RUTH FRIEDMAN, *MAPPING DIALOGUE BETWEEN JEWISH AND MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE* 46–61 (Berghnan Books 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Atif Khalil, *Jewish-Muslim Relations, Globalization, and the Judeo-Islamic Legacy*, 70 *J. RELIGION & SOC’Y* 1, 2 (2015).

<sup>39</sup> Matti Bunzl, *Between Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Some Thoughts on the*

To be sure, Muslim-Jewish interfaith encounters do take place.<sup>40</sup> However, rather than substantive theological or historical aspects of Jewish-Muslim relations, these modes of interaction focus more on developing social relationships and personal connections between Jewish and Muslim communities and individuals.<sup>41</sup> Consider, for example, the kinds of grassroots organizations focused on Jewish-Muslim engagement in the United States. There are over fifteen grassroots initiatives focused exclusively on building relationships between Muslim and Jewish peers.<sup>42</sup> New York University's "Bridges Muslim-Jewish Dialogue" group,<sup>43</sup> for instance, focuses on creating educational programming for Muslim and Jewish students to engage with one another socially, share in cultural events, and conduct interfaith prayer services.<sup>44</sup> At least eight established organizations focus on building coalitions against anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.<sup>45</sup> For example, the American Jewish Committee's Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council<sup>46</sup> works to create domestic policy agendas focused on combatting fundamentalism and improving the lives of American religious minorities.<sup>47</sup>

---

*New Europe*, 32 AM. ETHNOLOGIST 499, 506 (2005).

<sup>40</sup> See *infra* Appendix A (comprehensive list of such organizations touching upon Muslim-Jewish dialogue).

<sup>41</sup> Of course, this is not to say that there are *no* such conversations about theological or historical overlap. For instance, from 2010 to 2013, there were major U.S. conferences held under the title "Judaism and Islam in America." *Judaism and Islam in America*, ISLAMIC SOC'Y N. AM., <https://isna.net/judaism-and-islam-in-america> (last visited Jan. 20, 2022). These sessions were hosted by the Islamic Society of North America, The Jewish Theological Seminary, and Hartford Seminary. *Id.* Additionally, there is Jewish-Muslim Research Network at the University of Michigan, which is focused on increasing the scholarship quality in the field of Jewish-Muslim relations. *Jewish-Muslim Research Network*, UNIV. MICH., <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jmrn> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). However, this is not a formal center but rather a loose network. *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> See *infra* Appendix A.

<sup>43</sup> *Bridges: Muslim- Jewish Dialogue @ NYU*, N.Y. UNIV., <http://bridgesnyu.weebly.com> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> *Service Trip*, N.Y. UNIV., <http://bridgesnyu.weebly.com/service-trip.html> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> See *infra* Appendix A (providing complete lists).

<sup>46</sup> *About Us*, MUSLIM-JEWISH ADVOC. COUNCIL, <https://www.muslimjewishadvocacy.org/about-us> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> *Muslim-Jewish Relations*, AM. JEWISH COMM., <https://www.ajc.org/muslim-jewish-relations> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

However, unlike what exists within Jewish-Christian and Muslim-Christian dialogue spaces, there is not an active center or institution dedicated to Jewish-Muslim engagement that features a consortium of academics, spiritual leaders, and theologians coming together to create a systematic intellectual framework for reconciliation between Jews and Muslims—either from an academic or theological perspective.<sup>48</sup> Such centers materialized rapidly between Christians and Jews as a reaction to Vatican II, but no parallel development took place in the Muslim-Jewish sphere.<sup>49</sup> This is especially unfortunate because, while many of the underlying causes of Jewish-Christian and Christian-Muslim tensions have substantially dissipated over the last half-century,<sup>50</sup> the reverse is true of Jewish-Muslim relations.<sup>51</sup> Without any institutional commitment to research, instruction, and public action on issues of Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation, these tensions will never be resolved. This is because there would be no sustained, systemic, and broadly credible intellectual effort to address the many religious, cultural, historical, and theological issues that underlay modern tensions between Jews and Muslims and inhibit peacebuilding. The creation of such a theological and intellectual framework is essential to bolster tolerance, social cohesion, mutual understanding, and lasting reconciliation between Muslims and Jews. While social bonds and common causes will open the hearts of individual Muslims and Jews,

---

<sup>48</sup> The only institution of this kind, based at the University of Southern California, to have existed was made defunct in 2012. *Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement*, UNIV. S. CAL. DORNSIFE (Oct. 12, 2018), <https://crcc.usc.edu/cmje>. There is one such center in Europe, the Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations at Cambridge University, which is founded in 2006; however, this center is part of a larger consortium of centers under the “Woolf Institute” umbrella, including the Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations and the Centre for Policy and Public education. *Our Story*, WOOLF INST., <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/about/history> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). Additionally, the Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue at the Jewish Theological Seminary focuses mostly, if not exclusively, on Christian-Jewish Relations. *Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue*, JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, <https://www.jtsa.edu/milstein-center-for-interreligious-dialogue> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>49</sup> A review of the literature on this subject reveals no active, major center devoted exclusively to the task of Jewish-Muslim relations studies beyond those described in the preceding footnote.

<sup>50</sup> See *supra* Section I(A).

<sup>51</sup> See Yehudith Auerbach, *The Reconciliation Pyramid—A Narrative-Based Framework for Analyzing Identity Conflicts*, 30 POL. PSYCH. 291 (2009).

they will not permanently refashion Jewish-Muslim relations in a manner that is sustainable for the ages. Rather, to do that, a theology of Jewish-Muslim relations must be formulated.

## II. A CENTER FOR JEWISH-MUSLIM ENGAGEMENT

This article recommends the establishment of a dedicated academic center (“the Center”), the first of its kind,<sup>52</sup> to fill the current gap in institutional Jewish-Muslim engagement.<sup>53</sup> This center would ideally be well positioned to build a strong community of educated, capable, and willing Jews and Muslims committed to and active in Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation. Through its institutional affiliations, organizational partnerships, academic credentials, illustrious staff, religious and communal credibility, and public-facing activism, this center would be positioned uniquely as a thought leader in this important field from the outset.

Section II(A) offers a proposed mission and vision for the Center; meanwhile, Section II(B) offers some tentative thoughts on how the Center might be organized and structured within an established academic institution alongside important Jewish and Muslim organizational and institutional partnerships. The following three sections discuss some activities the Center might undertake to create a sustainable framework for ongoing Jewish-Muslim engagement in the areas of research, teaching, public engagement, and activism beyond the ivory tower of academe. Next, Section II(F) offers a more detailed proposal for a specific research and publication undertaking for the Center: a comprehensive sourcebook and teaching manual for Jewish-Muslim engagement that would help fill a notable gap in existing literature within the field.

We note that the proposed conceptualization of the Center offered here remains tentative and speculative. We offer food for thought in the hopes of generating serious conversations among scholars, activists, academic institutions, funders, and interested citizens about the possibilities and potential of an undertaking like the one described here. Any concrete structure and agenda of an

---

<sup>52</sup> See *infra* Appendix A.

<sup>53</sup> See Mark R. Cohen, *Islamic Policy Toward Jews from the Prophet Muhammad to the Pact of ‘Umar,’* in A HISTORY OF JEWISH-MUSLIM RELATIONS: FROM THE ORIGINS TO THE PRESENT DAY 58, 58-74 (Abdelwahab Meddeb & Benjamin Stora eds., Jane M. Todd & Michael B. Smith trans., Princeton Univ. Press 2013).

academic center for Jewish-Muslim engagement should be tailored to the specific interests, visions, and resources of those prepared to make serious efforts to further such a project.

### A. Mission and Vision

The Center's mission should be to promote engagement and reconciliation between Jews and Muslims through theological, academic, and popular explorations of historical and contemporary relationships between Judaism and Islam as well as between Jewish and Muslim interests and experiences.<sup>54</sup>

The Center should aspire to provide a foundation for Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation through rigorous scholarship, creative teaching, and public-facing activism at the intersections of Jewish and Muslim traditions, interests, and experiences. In doing so, the Center should maintain a strong academic emphasis by: hosting conferences and symposia; connecting academic and religious scholars across disciplinary, religious, and political boundaries; creating new forums and platforms for Jewish-Muslim education and discussion; developing university courses; and supporting publication projects.<sup>55</sup> The Center should also hold itself out as a community of connected, dedicated academics and religious professionals prepared to support community activities and educational programming around interfaith dialogue. In that

---

<sup>54</sup> Adopted, in part, from the mission statement of the now-defunct Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement at the University of Southern California. *Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement*, *supra* note 48.

<sup>55</sup> This paper acknowledges the limitations of a full comparison between the reconciliation between Jews and Christians and how the future reconciliation between Jews and Muslims will manifest. A key difference is that such a reconciliation effort is being conducted in a context of an armed conflict between Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land, which invokes strong passions throughout the Jewish and Muslim world. *See e.g.* Jacob Shamir & Khalil Shikaki, *Determinants of Reconciliation and Compromise Among Israelis and Palestinians*, 39 J. PEACE RSCH. 185 (2002) (discussing generally the different efforts towards reconciliation between the two groups that have sprung from prolonged armed conflict). Although such political difficulties cannot be ignored, the future Center will not be a place to address the political conflict between Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land. The purpose of the Center will be to focus on theology and academics as a basis for reconciliation—not on contemporary politics. At the same time, we must acknowledge the existence of that conflict and the reality that it does complicate this discourse. We believe, however, that the right institutional framework can be established to prevent the politization of Jewish-Muslim dialogue.

capacity, the Center should offer engaging public programming, as well as maintain strong connections with Muslim and Jewish clergy and lay leaders. Additionally, the Center should partner effectively with community organizations to support law and public policy initiatives at the intersections of Jewish and Muslim concerns. In these ways, the Center will position itself as a source of expertise and practical knowhow on Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation.

## **B. Organizational Structure**

### *1. Institutional Host and Affiliations*

The Center should be located within a prestigious secular university in the United States. Furthermore, it should be established through a generous and dedicated endowment and have access to some relatively strong university resources in place to support the Center's work. Such resources might include: (1) well-staffed and active Jewish and Islamic studies departments; (2) university faculty with Jewish and Muslim religious affiliations as well as relationships with Jewish and Muslim communal organizations, educational and religious institutions, interest groups, clergy, and lay leaders; (3) existing research centers within the university with related interests in religion, interfaith engagement, religion, and public policy; (4) existing relationships with Jewish and Muslim organizations; and (5) a substantial and active Jewish and Muslim student population on campus. A dedicated generous endowment sufficient to fund the Center's startup costs and operations for the first five years would help ensure an adequate degree of institutional freedom and independence from university budget priorities and research agendas while, at the same time, providing a host institution with financial and prestige incentives. Locating the Center at a university with pre-existing resources could help ensure a strong start to the initiative. Establishing credibility in Jewish and Muslim communities, creating and successfully administering new courses and programing, and developing and producing substantial publications are high-priority, high-impact, and challenging tasks. Utilizing existing resources and institutional networks, partnering with already present faculty and students, and leveraging existing networks can help set the Center up for early successes.

The Center should maintain institutional partnerships with key Jewish and Muslim organizations and institutions in the United States and abroad. First, such partners should include religious organizations like the: Association of Muslim Jurists of America (“AMJA”),<sup>56</sup> Conservative Jewish Rabbinical Assembly,<sup>57</sup> Yaqeen Institute,<sup>58</sup> and Orthodox Jewish Rabbinical Council of America.<sup>59</sup> Second, organizational partners should include important Jewish and Muslim educational institutions such as Yeshiva University,<sup>60</sup> the Jewish Theological Seminary,<sup>61</sup> Zaytuna College,<sup>62</sup> Bayan Claremont,<sup>63</sup> and Hebrew Union College.<sup>64</sup> The Center should also form working relationships with major Jewish and Muslim communal

---

<sup>56</sup> *About AMJA*, ASSEMBLY MUSLIM JURISTS AM., <https://www.amjaonline.org/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). AMJA was established as a consultative and professional organization for Muslim religious law scholars in the United States to address “the growing need of an Islamic jurisprudence specific to Muslims in the West.” *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *About Us*, RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY, <https://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/about-us-0> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). The Rabbinical Assembly is the international association of Conservative rabbis. *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> *About Yaqeen Institute*, YAQEEEN INST. ISLAMIC RSCH., <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/about-us/our-mission> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021) (“The institute aims to be the trusted source regarding these topics by generating well-researched Islamic content that is then distilled through various formats including articles, infographics, animations, videos, and cutting-edge app technology.”).

<sup>59</sup> *Who We Are*, RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AM., <https://rabbis.org/about-us> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). The RCA is the principle rabbinic association of Orthodox Jewish rabbis in the United States whose members include synagogue leaders, religious law scholars, teachers and heads of rabbinic seminaries. *Id.*

<sup>60</sup> *About*, YESHIVA UNIV., <https://www.yu.edu/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>61</sup> *About JTS*, JEWISH THEOL. SEMINARY, <https://www.jtsa.edu/about-jts> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). JTS is the primary rabbinical school of the Conservative Jewish movement in the United States. *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> *About*, ZAYTUNA COLL., <https://zaytuna.edu/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021) (“In 2009, Zaytuna College was founded in Berkeley, California, with a mission that called for grounding students in the Islamic scholarly tradition as well as in the cultural currents and critical ideas shaping modern society.”).

<sup>63</sup> *About*, BAYAN, <https://www.bayanonline.org/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021) (“Bayan Islamic Graduate School was founded in 2011 at the Claremont School of Theology (CST), a world-renowned seminary that sought to ‘desegregate’ theological education and enable its students to learn about multiple faith traditions in an authentic manner.”).

<sup>64</sup> *About*, HEBREW UNION COLL. JEWISH INST. RELIGION, <http://huc.edu/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). HUC-JIR is a premier rabbinical training school for Reform Judaism in North America. *Id.*



organizations like the: Islamic Society of North America,<sup>65</sup> American Jewish Committee,<sup>66</sup> Orthodox Union,<sup>67</sup> Union for Reform Judaism,<sup>68</sup> Quran Club of Toronto, Canada,<sup>69</sup> El-Hibri Foundation,<sup>70</sup> and Emgage Foundation.<sup>71</sup> Third, the Center should also develop contacts and partnerships with existing Jewish-Muslim dialogue organizations, such as the Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council,<sup>72</sup> the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council,<sup>73</sup> the Sisterhood of Salaam-Shalom,<sup>74</sup> the Center for Ethnic Understanding,<sup>75</sup> and the many smaller informal groups listed in Appendix A.<sup>76</sup> Finally, the Center should build working relationships with other academic centers for the study of, among other relevant fields, Judaism, Islam,

<sup>65</sup> *About ISNA*, ISLAMIC SOC'Y N. AM., <https://isna.net/about-isna> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). ISNA's mission is to "foster the development of the Muslim community, interfaith relations, civic engagement, and a better understanding of Islam." *Id.*

<sup>66</sup> *Who We Are*, AM. JEWISH COMM., <https://www.ajc.org/whoweare> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). American Jewish Committee (AJC) is the "leading global Jewish advocacy organization." *Id.*

<sup>67</sup> *From Strength to Strength*, ORTHODOX UNION, <https://www.ou.org/impact-report/leadership-messages/narrative-essay.html> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). Orthodox Union is one of the biggest Orthodox Jewish organizations in the U.S.A. whose activities include synagogue support, community development, and support for Jewish religious schools, Jewish learning initiatives, political advocacy, and kosher food supervision. *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM, <https://urj.org> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> QURAN CLUB TORONTO, <https://quranclubtoronto.org> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>70</sup> EL-HIBRI FOUND., <https://www.elhibrifoundation.org> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>71</sup> EMGAGE FOUND., <https://emgageusa.org> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>72</sup> *About Us*, *supra* note 46 ("The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council brings together recognized business, political, and religious leaders in the American Jewish and American Muslim communities to advocate jointly for issues of common concern.").

<sup>73</sup> *Mission*, MUSLIM JEWISH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (2017), <https://mjlc-europe.org/Mission> ("The European Muslim and Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) regards it as her prime obligation to renew in Europe a culture of respect and appreciation of religious identities, specifically Judaism and Islam . . .").

<sup>74</sup> *Who We Are*, SISTERHOOD OF SALAAM SHALOM, <https://sosspeace.org/who-we-are> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). The organization aims to "grow relationships between Muslim and Jewish women to build bridges and fight hate, negative stereotyping and prejudice." *Id.*

<sup>75</sup> *Rabbi Marc Schneier*, FOUND. ETHNIC UNDERSTANDING, <https://ffeu.org/about-us/rabbi-marc-schneier> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021). The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding was originally created in 1989 "to rebuild historic Black-Jewish alliances in the United States, and for nearly the last 15 years has focused heavily on building Muslim-Jewish relations globally." *Id.*

<sup>76</sup> *See infra* Appendix A.

interreligious engagement, law, and religion. The Center could develop such partnerships through maintaining affiliations with faculty at other institutions, pursuing joint programs and projects, and by undertaking other, mutually enhancing initiatives.

In forming these partnerships, the Center should aim to hold itself above the particular sectarian religious, ideological, or political positions of specific partner organizations. The Center should instead function as a resource for partner organizations in their individual efforts to further Jewish-Muslim engagement and seek to work with its partners to help the Center implement and promote its own programs and projects. Within all reasonable bounds, the Center should position itself to work with partner organizations and individuals on issues of common concern without thereby implying endorsement, or even approval, of all the positions taken by its affiliates.<sup>77</sup>

## 2. *Management and Administration*

The Center should be run by a director with appropriate academic, management, development, and religious qualifications. The director should provide strategic vision and oversight for the

---

<sup>77</sup> This approach to negotiating overlapping, but not fully compatible, agendas draws on theories advocated by many mid-twentieth century political scientists. Thad Dunning & Lauren Harrison, *Cross-Cutting Cleavages and Ethnic Voting: Results from an Experiment in Mali*, 104 AM. POL. SCI. REV. 21, 21 (2010). This school of thought demonstrates that individuals' political preferences were riddled with "cross-cutting cleavages," or "dimensions of identity or interest along which members of the same . . . group may have diverse allegiances." *Id.* This theory maintains that individuals' interests are complex and often inconsistent, straddling class, racial, ethnic, religious, geographical, educational, and many other identities all at once; while individuals may share common preferences with respect to some issues, they will also maintain conflicting interests on other issues. *See, e.g.*, ROBERT A. DAHL, WHO GOVERNS?: DEMOCRACY AND POWER IN AN AMERICAN CITY (1961) (describing how cross-cutting cleavages effect voting patterns and contribute to political domination by a plurality of different political elites in New Haven); DAVID B. TRUMAN, THE GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS: POLITICAL INTERESTS AND PUBLIC OPINION 156-87 (1951) (describing how cross-cutting cleavages help diffuse intense political conflict because as a result of such pluralistic interests individuals who disagree on issue X are likely to find themselves in agreement on issue Y while finding themselves on opposite spectrum from their issue X compatriots). *See generally* Tsung-Tao Yang, *Cleavage Patterns and Social Conflict: A Theory with an Application to Political Conflict over Fiscal Policy 1*, 10-12 (U.C. Berkeley, 2003).

Center's work, develop funding sources, and expand the Center's network of partnerships and affiliations. Also, the director should manage the Center's operations undertaken within the six directorates outlined below—Finance and Business Development,<sup>78</sup> Communications and Marketing,<sup>79</sup> Research and Publications,<sup>80</sup> Academic Education,<sup>81</sup> Public Programming and Activism,<sup>82</sup> and the Jewish-Muslim Sourcebook Project.<sup>83</sup> Each directorate should be headed by a deputy director that is a full-time employee of the Center or that holds a joint appointment as a faculty and staff member within the Center and its host university.

The Center should also form an advisory board to help further the Center's activities and growth. An ideal advisory board would include prominent clergy, academics, communal leaders, philanthropists, professionals, and activists working in fields related to Center's work. The advisory board should meet periodically with the Center's director and other key personnel, provide advice and support for Center activities, remain apprised of Center activities and institutional health, and seek new opportunities for the Center to expand its impact.

#### **i. Directorate for Finance and Business Development**

The Directorate for Finance and Business Development focuses on ensuring the continued operations of the Center. In addition to managing grants and human resources, this office would interface with facilities operations, information technology, and other university service departments. Additionally, this office will assist the Executive Director in maintaining existing relationships with donors, diversifying funding sources, and focusing on obtaining lucrative multi-year grants to ensure the Center's longevity. Furthermore, the Directorate will provide long-term strategies for the financial growth of the institution, account for the annual budget, and be responsible for auditing internal expenditures. All financial

---

<sup>78</sup> See *infra* Section II(B)(2)(i).

<sup>79</sup> See *infra* Section II(B)(2)(ii).

<sup>80</sup> See *infra* Section II(B)(2)(iii).

<sup>81</sup> See *infra* Section II(B)(2)(iv).

<sup>82</sup> See *infra* Section II(B)(2)(v).

<sup>83</sup> See *infra* Section II(F).

matters associated with publishing content, producing programming, maintaining physical spaces, and retaining talent will also go through this office.

**ii. Directorate for Communications and Marketing**

This Directorate will oversee internal and external communications strategies and operations. This office will have control over brand and mission messaging as well as over the development of the Center's public presence, which would ensure that the resources the Center offers are well-publicized and widely known. The Directorate will develop the Center's digital footprint by establishing a professional website and social media presence, designing and producing an informative newsletter, writing and distributing press-releases, managing email contact lists, and keeping subscribers updated on the Center's activities and accomplishments. This office should also facilitate the online publication of lectures, publicity videos, and educational content through channels like YouTube, the university website, podcasts, and social media. The Communications and Marketing Directorate should also handle public relations and media inquiries, and this office needs to work with the Executive Director to integrate digital communications and marketing into the Center's overall development strategy and operations.

**iii. Directorate for Research and Publications**

This Directorate is responsible for the creation and execution of the Center's research agenda. This will include planning and executing impactful academic projects that seek to intellectually explore the traditions and relationships between Islam and Judaism. Some possible projects might be to work with established publishers to pioneer a book series on Jewish-Muslim issues or to partner in the continued development of existing series on Judaism or Islam that will enhance knowledge and understanding of these traditions, especially among adherents of other faiths. In doing so, this office could leverage Center networks to identify appropriate authors, funding sources and sponsors, and distribution networks while

targeting readerships for such publications. Additionally, this Directorate should develop a regular academic newsletter featuring relevant news in Jewish and Muslim studies, as well as short essays or articles from scholars in relevant fields on thematic and timely topics. The Center's publication activities should also include the creation of full journals, like an academically-oriented Journal of Jewish-Muslim Studies and a more popularly-focused Journal of Jewish-Muslim Dialogue, that feature the work of Center staff and outside scholars. This office should also support affiliated scholars in their own independent research projects that fall within the Center's research priorities and agendas by providing funding, research support, publisher contacts, and fellowships designed to give recipients time to complete worthy projects. Acting as a liaison between scholars and publishing outfits, including law reviews and academic journals, the Directorate should also help ensure the dissemination of ideas and the continued impact of the Center. The office will also monitor developments in the field of Jewish-Muslim relations and maintain a sophisticated international network of scholars in the field. This office should also oversee the Jewish-Muslim Sourcebook project, which will compile, organize, and provide relevant commentary and notes source materials essential to Jewish-Muslim understanding.<sup>84</sup>

#### **iv. Directorate for Academic Education Programming**

This office will focus on the development of a vibrant environment for student education regarding Judaism, Islam, and Jewish-Muslim relations in academic settings. The Directorate should work with Center staff and affiliated faculty, as well as administrative offices within its host university, to develop and teach traditional university courses that support the Center's mission. Such courses might include introductory classes in Jewish and Islamic law, theology, and history, as well as classes that put Jewish and Islamic perspectives in conversation with each other and with American culture, law, self-conception, and history. The Directorate should work with university officials to develop curricula for courses in Jewish-Muslim dialogue, create an online certificate program in interfaith leadership, and facilitate online and in-person courses.

---

<sup>84</sup> See *infra* Section II(F).

These courses should be dedicated to common Jewish-Muslim heritage, the comparative study of Jewish and Islamic law, and the history of Jews and Muslims. Furthermore, these classes should aim to bring Jewish and Muslim students together in the same learning spaces and to educate students on Jewish and Muslim traditions, histories, experiences, and contemporary concerns. The Center should also utilize this office to develop international exchange or study-abroad programs for students interested in Jewish-Muslim engagement, and to create graduate fellowship programs for intense study, research, and mentoring on Jewish-Muslim relations. The Directorate should also engage with religious seminaries training the next generation of clergy of the importance of Jewish-Muslim relations. Finally, this office could also function as a liaison between students interested in Jewish-Muslim relations and other organizations regarding internship allocation, work placement, or career planning.

**v. Directorate for Public Programming and Activism**

The Directorate will be responsible for developing, coordinating, and executing a wide range of Center activities that extend beyond the ivory tower and venture into the public sphere. Such activities might include things typically associated with the “dialogue of everyday life,”<sup>85</sup> the “dialogue of religious experience,”<sup>86</sup> and the “dialogue of theological exchange.”<sup>87</sup> For example, the Center might host and sponsor public lectures; arrange

---

<sup>85</sup> Shlomo C. Pill, *Types of Interfaith Dialogue*, CANOPY F. ON INTERACTIONS L. & RELIGION, (Feb. 14, 2020), <https://canopyforum.org/2020/02/14/religious-literacy-and-the-challenge-of-interfaith-dialogue-part-2-by-shlomo-c-pill> (“The dialogue of everyday life is simply the way we respect people who identify with and belong to a different faith community from our own. It is less purposeful than the other kinds of interfaith dialogue and is nothing more than the way we coexist in pluralistic societies without permitting religious differences to fray the basic fabric of civil society.”).

<sup>86</sup> Pill, *supra* note 85 (“The dialogue of religious experience involves attempting to, on the one hand, place one’s self within the thought and practice of a different faith group by participating in or experiencing its rituals, worship, and religious practices from within.”).

<sup>87</sup> *Id.* (“The dialogue of theological exchange entails participation in religiously-focused debate, teaching, and learning in an effort to better understand others’ religious traditions and practices, ways of life, and spiritual values.”).

for programming that provides members of the public with a window into Jewish and Islamic religious practices and lifestyles; organize roundtable discussions between Jewish and Muslim clergy, scholars, and lay leaders on timely topics of interest using the Scriptural Reasoning framework for interfaith dialogue;<sup>88</sup> host events focused around community service where Jewish and Muslim students, staff, and community members could gather to give back to charitable causes; facilitate visitations by Jews and Muslims to each other's houses of worship, educational institutions, and community organizations; and coordinate workshops for Jewish and Muslim professionals discussing religious perspectives on their career areas. This office should also manage the Center's engagement with the "dialogue of action."<sup>89</sup> In this capacity, the Directorate of Public Programming and Activism should identify issues in law and public policy that impact the interests, and speak to the concerns, of Jewish and Muslim communities. Upon identifying these common interests and concerns, the Directorate should leverage partnerships with other organizations to support collaborative efforts to advance those interests in the public and political spheres through providing a variety of benefits such as, but not limited to, consultations, litigation support, resources for expert testimony, and sources of credible information for journalists and policymakers.

### C. Research and Publications

As a major hub for scholarship and novel conversation, the Center must consistently produce impactful academic literature that seeks to explore the histories, scriptures, traditions, theology, and politics of Judaism and Islam, which paved the way for an intellectual

---

<sup>88</sup> *Reflecting Together on Sacred-Texts*, SCRIPTURAL REASONING ROSE CASTLE FOUND., <http://www.scripturalreasoning.org> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021) (calling Scriptural Reasoning a framework for interreligious engagement that uses shared reading of scriptural texts as a tool for facilitating interreligious understanding and discussion).

<sup>89</sup> Pill, *supra* note 85 (stating the dialogue of action entails different religious groups working together to advance each other's interests and wellbeing in a variety of areas). It "is often built on the idea that diverse religious communities have many material interests and concerns in common despite their ecumenical disagreements, and that these groups can and should engage and cooperate with each other in order to promote and protect these shared interests in the public sphere." *Id.*

query into common values and traditions. These commonalities will support the notion that a peaceful dialogue between faiths is possible, helpful and necessary. This requires publication of a standard sourcebook as well as academic and popular journals, regular newsletters, and other serial publications.

### *1. Strategic Focus Areas*

The Center will better avoid institutional rigidity, while retaining flexibility to shift its research and publishing efforts to timely and needed issues, by organizing these efforts around particular strategic focus areas (“SFAs”).<sup>90</sup> Each SFA will constitute a distinct area of study, and projects within that focus area would be developed and executed either by a Center staff member or an affiliated scholar who has expertise in the relevant field and significant networks of similarly situated colleagues. Organizing research and publishing efforts around specific focus areas will allow the Center to pursue topical grant funding opportunities; identify established and emerging scholars, clergy, policy makers, and other professionals in particular fields; and bring in relevant talent to execute discrete, contained academic projects. Some examples of possible focus areas include Judaism, Islam, and Healthcare; Islam, Judaism, and Social Justice; Gender and Sex in Judaism and Islam; Judaism, Islam, and Pluralism; Religious Law in Islam and Judaism; Religion and State in Islam and Judaism; as well as many other possibilities. The active focus areas at the Center will depend on funding priorities, available personnel and expertise, institutional interest, and other considerations.<sup>91</sup>

### *2. Academic Conferences and Workshops*

The Center will build a community of scholars, clergy, policymakers, and other professionals invested in Jewish-Muslim issues by running and supporting academic conferences, workshops, and symposia dedicated to the Center’s goals. The Center should run

<sup>90</sup> *CSLR Strategic Plan 2018-2025*, EMORY UNIV. CTR. STUDY L. & RELIGION, <https://cslr.law.emory.edu/about/strategic-plan-2018-2025.html> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>91</sup> Other considerations might include grant opportunities and specifically-funded projects geared toward current events facing the field and major current events that prompt new inquiry.



a yearly two- or three-day academic conference focused on research in areas of interest to Jewish-Muslim engagement. This annual conference should aim to bring together scholars and other professionals working directly on Jewish-Muslim engagement, in Jewish or Islamic studies, or in related fields that bear on the Center's work. Annual conferences should focus on specific topics of timely concern to Jews, Muslims, and the broader community; invite the presentation of new research that bears on those questions; and incorporate discussion panels to directly stimulate engagement between Jewish and Muslim participants while sparking genuine dialogue on Jewish-Muslim issues.

The Center should also plan to organize or sponsor smaller, local workshops and academic symposia at both the Center's home institution and affiliated organizations. These smaller events would bring together smaller groups of locally-based researchers, clergy, and other professionals to learn about and discuss specific topics within the broader field of Jewish-Muslim engagement. For example, the Center might convene Jewish and Muslim medical professionals for a series of monthly roundtables on medical ethics, or Jewish and Islamic studies faculty within a local university could compare research methods and new directions in their respective fields. Workshops might also be marketed as opportunities for faculty and other researchers to present and receive constructive feedback on new research projects from colleagues. This feedback could then build academic credibility and professional support networks between Jewish and Muslim scholars that may lead to additional, joint projects in the future.

### 3. *Journal of Jewish-Muslim Studies*

The Center should produce a multi-disciplinary academic journal dedicated to publishing peer-reviewed scholarship relevant to the broad field of Jewish-Muslim engagement. Appropriate content might bear directly on the history, theology, challenges, and opportunities of Jewish-Muslim engagement. In addition to those topics directly addressing engagement, the journal could discuss Jewish and Muslim history, law, religion, politics, sociology, culture, language, and other areas that may be of interest to Jewish and Muslim scholars, policymakers, and engagement activists. The journal should also maintain a literature review section to highlight

and evaluate new materials in the field of Jewish-Muslim relations. Journal content may be drawn from ordinary submissions and from the content of annual conferences, workshops, and symposia organized by the Center. While the Center might seek to partner with an established academic publisher to produce traditional print editions, the Center should pay special attention to also make the journal available in a user-friendly, open-access, and academically useful digital format.

#### **4. *Cousins: A Journal of Jewish-Muslim Dialogue***

In addition to an academic journal geared towards content, authors and readers that are professional scholars, university faculty, or researchers and policy professionals, the Center should also publish a more popularly-oriented journal. This popular journal should feature content authored by Jewish and Muslim professionals, clergy, community leaders, and activists. These contributors offer important perspectives on the Jewish and Muslim communities, and are keenly aware of the ways and means for expanded cooperation, engagement, and affinity between these groups. This journal can be used as a forum for Jews and Muslims to discuss issues they face, share best practices, compare experiences, and develop a sense of shared concerns and interests. Like the Center's academic journal, its popular journal should be produced and distributed in print and open-source digital formats to better ensure wider readership and impact.

#### **5. *Monographs, Articles, Op-Eds, Scriptural Reasoning Guides, "About" Pamphlets, and Literature Reviews***

As an academic institution, the Center should support and facilitate the production of a broad range of publications that will support its missions of strengthening the foundations, and expanding the incidence, of Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation. Through its Director for Research, as well as the coordinators of its various SFAs, the Center will work to coordinate, incentivize, and facilitate research and publishing projects related to its mission. It may develop contacts with reputable academic and popular publishers to secure contracts for books; provide financial support for research and publication costs; offer honoraria for op-eds and other

popular writings on topics of interest; support the creation of curricular materials for use in university and public classes on Jewish-Muslim engagement subjects; and identify appropriate topics and authors for the production of informational pamphlets on discrete topics of Jewish-Muslim interest.

The Center should seek funding to publish translated editions of its books and articles so that materials will be accessible to Jews and Muslims whose principal languages include English, Arabic, Hebrew, Farsi, Urdu, and others. The Center should also, to the greatest extent possible, make the books and articles published under its auspices available as open-access digital texts and e-books.

### **6. *Digital Scholarship Platform***

In addition to its own institutional website, the Center should develop a dedicated digital scholarship platform for the publication and distribution of text, video, and audio content that informs, explains, and comments on topics within the wide sphere of Jewish-Muslim engagement. Aimed at a broad, non-specialist audience, this digital platform will offer accurate information, expert analysis, and a contextualized explanation of Jewish-Muslim issues to the broader community of digital consumers. The Center's digital scholarship platform will aim to deliver a range of content including short-form essays, long-form articles, literature views, professionally produced videos, and podcast episodes designed to engage a global network of Jews, Muslims, and others. The platform, supplemented by associated social media accounts, will stimulate conversations on relevant topics, secure the Center's place as an important locus for academic dialogue, and serve as both a resource and a community for Jewish-Muslim engagement.

### **D. Teaching**

In collaboration with the host-university, the Center should develop courses and other, informal learning opportunities for academic credit and also for public consumption, that provide foundational knowledge in the subject of Jewish-Muslim relations. This will help further understanding of both faiths, as well as a sense of unity of purpose. Importantly, high-quality and consistent course offerings on Jewish-Muslim studies topics will help create a robust and engaged learning environment in which students and faculty are

seriously engaged with the study and practice of Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation.

### *I. University Courses*

Courses for formal academic credit in the subject of Jewish-Muslim relations have already been created at a host of institutions. These existing offerings can serve as a valuable template for the Center's own university coursework. Center-sponsored courses might include topics like "Bridging the Great Divide: The Jewish Muslim Encounter,"<sup>92</sup> "Medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Conversation,"<sup>93</sup> "Readings in Judeo-Arabic Texts,"<sup>94</sup> "Prophets and Prophecy in Judaism and Islam,"<sup>95</sup> or "Islam in Jewish Contexts/Judaism in Muslim Contexts."<sup>96</sup>

Informal courses present an opportunity to involve participants beyond only formerly matriculated students. Community members, seminarians, and outside scholars might be interested in coursework that focuses less heavily on scholarly literature and more on the on the development of skills in interfaith dialogue and multi-cultural understanding. One example of such a course is "Multifaith Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," which can be found at New York University.<sup>97</sup> This class invites both Jewish and Muslim spiritual leaders to educate students on how to build bridges between faith communities, utilize their own experiences to engage others in

---

<sup>92</sup> Akbar Ahmed, *Bridging the Great Divide: The Jewish-Muslim Encounter*, WOOLF INST., <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/online-courses/bridging-the-great-divide-the-jewish-muslim-encounter> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>93</sup> Ivan Marcus, *The Humanities Program*, YALE UNIV., <https://humanities.yale.edu/special-courses/hums-443-medieval-jews-christians-and-muslims-conversation> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>94</sup> *Jewish Studies Program*, EMORY COLL., <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/departments-program/index.php?YToxOntzOjI6ImklJt9OjI6IjI5Ijt9> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>95</sup> *Jewish/Muslim Studies Initiative*, UNIV. ILL. CHI., <https://rels.uic.edu/academics/jewish-studies/jewish-muslim-studies-initiative> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>96</sup> *Major in Jewish Studies*, HENRY M. JACKSON S. INT'L STUD. UNIV. WASH., <https://jsis.washington.edu/programs/undergraduate/jewish-studies> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>97</sup> *Multi-Faith Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, N.Y.U., <https://wagner.nyu.edu/education/courses/multi-faith-leadership-21st-century> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

conversations about religious commonality, and build upon their engagement skills.<sup>98</sup> Other such courses could include “Using Interreligious Dialogue to Reduce Religiophobia,”<sup>99</sup> “Mapping Religions,”<sup>100</sup> or “Peacebuilding in Perilous Times.”<sup>101</sup>

## 2. *International Summer School*

Building on international university and organizational partnerships, the Center should develop immersive summer experiences with the goal of promoting and inspiring student interest in the Jewish-Muslim conversation. For instance, the Center might work to place interested students at internships within vetted international organizations or nonprofits or bring students from other institutions to the Center for sponsored summer fellowships during which participants can actively support Center activities. The Center should also aim to create university-exchange programs. Students from the Center’s home university might pursue a summer or semester abroad studies in Jewish-majority or Muslim-majority countries, or in other universities with specialized programs in Jewish or Islamic studies. The Center might also host its own exchange program in which students from other universities seeking greater exposure or expertise in Jewish-Muslim dialogue and engagement could pursue a course of study and active participation in Center activities over a summer or semester.

## 3. *Online Short Courses and Workshops*

Online short courses and workshops are accessible ways for community members to not only engage with academic material, but also meet lay-leaders, faith-based organization heads, activists, and Center scholars working on the front lines of Jewish-Muslim

---

<sup>98</sup> *See id.*

<sup>99</sup> *Using Interreligious Dialogue to Strengthen Peace, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion*, INT’L DIALOGUE CTR, <https://www.kaiciid.org/dialogue-knowledge-hub/e-learning-courses> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>100</sup> *Diploma Interfaith Dialogue*, UNIV. ST. MICHAEL’S COLL. UNIV. TORONTO, <https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/program/diploma-interfaith> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>101</sup> Prabha Sankaranarayan & Dave Joseph, *Peacebuilding in Perilous Times*, MEDIATORS BEYOND BOARDERS INT’L, <https://mediatorsbeyondborders.org/peacebuilding-in-perilous-times> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

relations. These opportunities would provide participants with a foundational knowledge of existing policy efforts in Jewish-Muslim relations, as well as the intellectual and practical challenges facing the field today, and help participants build skills to contribute to Jewish-Muslim engagement. Some potential courses might include “Comparative Study of Jewish and Islamic Law,” “Civilizational Contributions of Jews and Muslims,” “Jewish History in the Arabian Peninsula,” “Muslim History and Interfaith Relations,” “Muslim Minorities in the USA: Challenges and Responses,” “Jewish Minorities in the USA: Challenges and Responses.”

#### 4. *Certification/Degree Programs*

As an organization within a larger university structure, the Center should work collaboratively with its host institution to offer formal degree and certificate programs for students taking its courses. While there are some degree programs in interfaith relations and inter-religious dialogue around the world,<sup>102</sup> none specifically approach Jewish-Muslim relations from a theoretical or historical perspective. Certificate programs in Jewish-Muslim Heritage or Jewish-Muslim Studies would help build academic bases for understanding the two religious communities phenomenologically and equip students with a knowledge-based approach to engage in interreligious dialogue.

#### E. **Public Engagement**

The Center should not limit its activities to the academy. Certainly, academic research, publication, and instruction about Judaism, Islam, and opportunities for engagement between them are important foundational activities for Jewish-Muslim reconciliation. However, Jewish-Muslim engagement can, and should, take place in the “real world” as well. Some of the Center’s research and teaching activities, such as joint research projects between Jewish and Muslim

---

<sup>102</sup> See *Ecumenical & Interfaith Studies*, ST. MARY’S ECUMENICAL INST., <http://www.stmarys.edu/ecumenical-institute/academics/masters-programs/courses/ecumenical-interfaith-studies> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021); *Program at a Glance*, UNIV. CENT. FLA., <https://www.ucf.edu/degree/interfaith-dialogue-certificate> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021); *Diploma Interfaith Dialogue*, UNIV. ST. MICHAEL’S COLL. UNIV. TORONTO, <https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/program/diploma-interfaith> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

scholars or courses and summer school programs that bring together Jewish and Muslim students, will directly affect Jewish-Muslim engagement. However, many other initiatives, like the Jewish-Muslim Sourcebook, publications, and course offerings designed to educate Jewish and Muslims about each other, are best seen as creating the bases and tools for actual Jewish-Muslim reconciliation. Those tools need to be put to good use in the public sphere. Therefore, the Center's activities should develop strong relationships with Jewish and Muslim community members, larger communal organizations, religious institutions, individual clergy, and lay leaders. Such public engagement activities should aim to support existing grassroots and organizational efforts at Jewish-Muslim engagement, identify and develop new avenues for cooperation and reconciliation, and provide the tools to Jews and Muslims outside the academy to develop their own interreligious initiatives.

There are many avenues by which the Center can engage its interested, outside community. Through online, open-source short courses, for instance, the Center might focus on how to address some of the major questions, issues, and events that underlay the Muslim-Jewish conversation.<sup>103</sup> By contrast, public lectures can offer deep dives into the work of current scholars focusing on the socio-political, historical, or religious dimensions of coexistence, diplomacy, and Jewish-Muslim engagement.<sup>104</sup> The Center might also further support efforts being made across faith-based organizations operating in the world of Muslim-Jewish policy. These organizations could potentially bolster research efforts in support of policy changes, write articles in support of policy, or generally hold forums about policy changes to its cultivated online scholarly

---

<sup>103</sup> One example of such a short-course was offered by the Jewish Theological Seminary's Milstein Center for Interreligious Engagement upon completion of its work "Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Muslim-Jewish Engagement." Kim Zeitman & Mohamed Elsanousi, *Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Muslim-Jewish Engagement*, JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (Nov. 18, 2014), <https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/sharing-the-well-a-resource-guide-for-jewish-muslim-engagement>.

<sup>104</sup> Hebah Farrag, *Muslim and Jewish Parliamentarians to Discuss Faith-based Public Diplomacy at USC*, HEBREW UNION COLL. (Apr. 14, 2009), <http://huc.edu/news/article/2009/cmje-event-april-22-2009> (One example of a particularly notable and relevant lecture took place in 2009 at the University of Southern California. The event was entitled "*Beyond Politics: The Coexistence Trust and Public Diplomacy in Muslim and Jewish Engagement*" and featured Jewish and Muslim Parliamentarians in conversation.).

following.

On a more individual level, the Center could sponsor seminary visitations, clergy training, and roundtables that allow faith leaders of both Islam and Judaism to engage with each other. These individual engagement programs could allow Muslim and Jewish faith leaders to visit each other's houses of worship, attend courses at seminaries, and host discussions on shared history as well as pressing contemporary issues facing both communities. Utilizing the Center's lay-network, students could also become involved in the in-person interfaith conversations by way of primary and secondary school visits. At these visits, Jewish and Muslim students can discuss, in an accessible and personable way, distinctions and similarities between different faiths. This creates on-the-ground opportunities for multifaith dialogue and addresses the need for promoting amicable relations between groups. The Center could later retain such students to be community ambassadors around the host-university campus who would raise awareness about the Center's initiatives and offer other ways to get involved.

Finally, the Center could endeavor to build up a community on social media, using a variety of platforms including Clubhouse, YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, to bring together scholars, lay-leaders, students, and community members for informal programming around the clock. In this way, the Center can consistently engage interested people, reach a larger audience, and vary programmatic offerings without restriction.

#### **F. The Jewish-Muslim Engagement Sourcebook Project**

We tend to fear what we do not understand, and to hate that which we fear. Thus, the cause of Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation will be furthered by members of each community better understanding the other. In part, this can be achieved by helping Jews and Muslims achieve greater familiarity and understanding of core texts, traditions, practices, histories, experiences, and cultural norms of both faiths. We live in a world where virtually all the information ever generated by humanity is easily accessed from the palm of our hand; however, much of that internet content is inaccurate—often intentionally so. The World Wide Web is replete with distorted presentations of Judaism and



Islam or Jews and Muslims that masquerades as knowledge while distorting consumers' impressions of these communities. Such online misinformation often paints Judaism or Islam in an inaccurate, negative light; this presentation then leaves Jews deeply mistrustful and fearful of Muslims and Muslims suspicious and malevolent toward Jews. In other cases, Jewish or Muslim advocates offer sanitized and overly rosy portrayals of their faiths and communities. While not directly harmful, these sources nevertheless tend to undermine the ability for members of both faiths to have hard, honest conversations about the more challenging, and perhaps discomfiting, aspects of their complex and multivocal faith traditions. Therefore, moving towards greater Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation depends on developing a renewed understanding of the core scriptures, traditions, histories, experiences, and canonical literature of both faiths.

To that end, the Center should produce a dynamic and ever-expanding digital Jewish-Muslim Sourcebook Project ("JMSP") as the centerpiece of the Center's research and publication activities. The JMSP should identify, compile, and translate relevant sections of primary legal, religious, and historical primary source texts. These texts will help to inform readers of Jewish and Muslim traditions separately *and* place the two in conversation with one another in relation to topics important for Jewish-Muslim reconciliation. The JMSP is meant to be a collaborative effort by a team of respected international theologians, academics, and community leaders from both the Jewish and Islamic faiths who identify and collect texts, author articles of commentary and notes on those texts, and provide editorial oversight.

Thus, the impact of the JMSP will be two-fold. On a substantive level, the sourcebook will be an important tool to facilitate Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation by providing participants in interreligious dialogue with a wealth of resources. These tools can then provide necessary guidance for those interested in educating themselves and others on the relationships between Judaism and Islam through their own material records. Additionally, from a procedural perspective, the creation, maintenance, and expansion of the sourcebook will be a direct, sustained effort in Jewish-Muslim engagement as scholars and educators from both traditions will continue to work cooperatively on the project.

### 1. *Another Sourcebook? Existing Materials and the Uniqueness of the JMSP*

The JMSP represents a unique undertaking that offers unprecedented access and utility for activists, students, and scholars interested in Jewish-Muslim engagement and dialogue. The sourcebook will be modeled on the genre of Jewish-Christian sourcebooks that were created in the last century.<sup>105</sup> Such texts instrumentally facilitated many of the constructive dialogues between Jewish and Christian groups around the world that contributed to the impressive extent of modern theological reconciliation between Judaism and Christianity.<sup>106</sup> The JMSP will also draw on previously created Jewish-Muslim sourcebooks.<sup>107</sup>

The JMSP, however, will go further than these works. First, and most importantly, the JMSP will take advantage of modern technology and digital culture to produce sourcebook material in an online, rather than traditional print, format. Consider, as a comparison, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,<sup>108</sup> which has

---

<sup>105</sup> See, e.g., Andrew Wilson, *Judaism and Christianity*, INT'L RELIGIOUS FOUND. (1991),

<https://www.northampton.edu/Documents/Subsites/HaroldWeiss/World%20Religions/JudaismandChristianity.pdf>.

<sup>106</sup> *Orthodox Rabbinic Statement on Christianity: To Do the Will of Our Father in Heaven: Toward a Partnership Between Jews and Christians*, CTR. JEWISH-CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING & COOPERATION (Dec. 3, 2015), <https://www.cjcuc.org/2015/12/03/orthodox-rabbinic-statement-on-christianity>;

Cardinal W. Kasper, *The Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Foundations, Progress, Difficulties and Perspectives*, BOS. COLL. (Nov. 21, 2001), [https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research\\_sites/cjl/texts/cjrelations/news/kasper\\_21\\_Nov\\_01.htm](https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cjl/texts/cjrelations/news/kasper_21_Nov_01.htm).

<sup>107</sup> Such texts include Jacob Neuser's JUDAISM AND ISLAM IN PRACTICE, which provides a small group of select texts and accompanying explanatory commentary on a range of religious law topics addressed by both Jewish and Islamic sources; Kim Zeitman and Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi's *Sharing the Well: A Resource Guide for Jewish-Muslim Engagement*, which offers general guidance on Jewish-Muslim dialogue, sourced essays explaining general Jewish and Muslim perspectives on a range of religious topics, and discussion questions and prompts for further dialogue; and F.E. Peters' JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM, which collects extensive scriptural passages from each of the three main Abrahamic religions on a broad range of theological topics. JACOB NEUSNER ET AL., JUDAISM AND ISLAM IN PRACTICE: A SOURCEBOOK (1999); Zeitman & Elsanousi *supra* note 103; FRANCIS EDWARD PETERS, JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM: THE WORKS OF THE SPIRIT (1990).

<sup>108</sup> *Philosophy of History*, STAN. ENCYC. PHIL. (Feb. 18, 2007),

become a domineering, invaluable, and respected online resource characterized by its reliability and its ease of accessibility. Like the Stanford Encyclopedia, the JMSP will aim to be a dynamic platform. Instead of a traditional-print text that, once published will remain static until resources and expected demand might justify the preparation of a new edition, the digital JMSP will be a dynamic and ongoing initiative. The sourcebook will be launched once the editors agree that a critical mass of source texts, explanatory commentary, and dialogue guidance has been prepared to allow the work to serve as a useful tool for Jewish-Muslim dialogue. After its initial release, a dynamic and evolving team of researchers and educators will continue to expand the JMSP with new material and enhanced media to facilitate reader engagement. This digital format will also allow the JMSP to take advantage of technological advances and the latest pedagogical tools to deliver content in effective and engaging ways, including, for example, using embedded scroll-over content that will make source texts available in multiple languages; linked references for further reading; embedded audio and visual media to portray, explain, and illustrate concepts and practices referred to in textual content; links to cross-references and related texts contained elsewhere within the sourcebook; and expandable roadmaps and prompts for Jewish-Muslim dialogue practices in relation to particular topics and sources. Also, as a digital publication, the JMSP will offer open access to the public, which avoids the high costs of some other dialogue materials and academic works.

In these ways, the JMSP represents an important step forward beyond the limitations of many existing sourcebooks for Jewish-Muslim relations. The sourcebook will offer a comprehensive compilation of the primary texts and commentary relevant to faith-based conversations between Jews and Muslims that can be used for the academic research, grassroots dialogue, and organizational programming instrumental to shaping the future of Muslim-Jewish relations.<sup>109</sup>

---

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/history>.

<sup>109</sup> *Id.* (A more detailed outline of the contents of the JMPS are annexed to this paper as Appendix B).

### III. INTELLECTUAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

Islam and Judaism have much in common. On the whole, there is more that unites the two faiths communities than divides them—though the divisions are real and important as well. In conceptualizing an institutional home for Jewish-Muslim engagement, it is worth exploring, however briefly, some of the more salient bases upon which the actual work of reconciliation may be built. This part briefly discusses four such foundations, though there are undoubtedly many others.<sup>110</sup> In Section III(A), we consider some shared features of Judaism and Islam as religious systems. These commonalities, which in many cases distinguish Judaism and Islam among the Abrahamic faiths as having a unique religious ethos and worldview, include the emphasis both traditions place on law as a central feature of religiosity and the positive valuation both traditions place on religious disagreement as a function of an eternal search for unattainable religious truth. Section III(B) considers shared experiences as a possible basis for Jewish-Muslim engagement. This section pays special attention to Judaism and Islam in the modern world, where members of both religious communities have the need to navigate the diaspora experience of living as distinct religious and ethnic minorities in non-Jewish or non-Muslim societies. Also, in this section, we consider the common experiences of anti-semitism and Islamophobia—persecution and mistreatment by individuals, communities, and governments. Finally, this section concludes with a brief overview of some pragmatic bases for Jewish-Muslim engagement and cooperation, including shared interests in numerous issues of domestic and foreign policy as well as common concerns for religious community development.

#### A. Religion and Spirituality

Some of the most salient, and we think potentially fruitful,

---

<sup>110</sup> *Philosophy of History*, *supra* note 108. One valuable foundation for Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation in the modern world may be found in the historical and narrative records of Muslim dealings with Jews, and vice-versa, reaching back to the earliest years of Islam—such as the *Mithaq Madina*, or “Charter of Madina.” Although beyond the scope of this paper, the Center should also be a place to be able to explore this history and how it may relate and inform the future of relations between the two communities.

foundations for future Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation are the many religious views, spiritual perspectives, values, and ideas common to both Jewish and Muslim traditions. Section III(A)(1) discusses resonances between Jewish and Muslim conceptions of religion as law. In Section III(A)(2), we explore the common commitment of Jewish and Islamic religious and intellectual traditions to the positive value of disagreement as an inherent feature of the human search for truth.

### *1. Religion as Law*

The focus on law and legalism as a primary focus of religious devotion and practice is an important feature within both Jewish and Islamic traditions.<sup>111</sup> Judaism and Islam view the advent of religion occasioned by Divine revelation as being primarily about God's intentional will to communicate an approved way of living in this world to human beings.<sup>112</sup> God, from this perspective, has determined the normative quality of various courses of human conduct, expects human beings to aspire to regulate their private and public lives in accordance with those determinations, and has communicated those norms of behavior to humanity through various media.<sup>113</sup>

Unlike many Christian traditions, traditional Jewish and Islamic thought maintain that religious law relates to virtually every aspect of human existence.<sup>114</sup> As Shuki Friedman has put it, “[b]oth religions organize reality through total legalization.”<sup>115</sup> Thus, Jewish and Islamic laws address both ritual and interpersonal matters.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Shlomo C. Pill, *Law as Faith, Faith as Law: The Legalization of Theology in Islam and Judaism in the Thought of Al-Ghazali and Maimonides*, 6 BERKELEY J. MIDDLE E. & ISLAMIC L. 1, 25 (2014).

<sup>112</sup> THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF DIVINE REVELATION 355-474 (Balazs M. Mezei et al. eds., Oxford Univ. Press 2021).

<sup>113</sup> *Id.*

<sup>114</sup> See, e.g., MUHAMMAD IBN IDRIS AL-SHAFI'I, THE EPISTLE ON LEGAL THEORY 341 (Joseph Lowry ed., 2013) (“There is, for everything that befalls a Muslim ... a binding rule ...”).

<sup>115</sup> Shuki Friedman, *Religion Can Be the Bridge Linking Jews and Muslims*, HAARETZ (Oct. 11, 2017), <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-religion-can-be-the-bridge-linking-jews-and-muslims-1.5457179>.

<sup>116</sup> See 1 MENACHEM ELON, JEWISH LAW: HISTORY, SOURCES, PRINCIPLES 93, 105–07, 109–13, 116, 122–23 (Bernard Auerbach & Melvin J. Sykes trans., Jewish Publ'n Soc'y 1st Eng. ed. 1994) (1988); MOSES MAIMONIDES, THE GUIDE FOR

Each system includes laws regulating prayer practices,<sup>117</sup> celebration of religious holy days,<sup>118</sup> sexual morality,<sup>119</sup> food consumption,<sup>120</sup> marriage and divorce,<sup>121</sup> contract formation,<sup>122</sup> criminal law and procedure,<sup>123</sup> and tort liability.<sup>124</sup> Likewise, Jewish and Islamic laws cover both private and public matters, from the regulation of government functions to sexual morality, and personal hygiene.<sup>125</sup> These laws are not exclusive to clergy or the organization of religious institutions within each tradition; instead, they universally address lay members, religious leaders, public institutions, private institutions, secular activities, and religious activities alike.

In Judaism, this divine law is made manifest initially through the written Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. Rabbinic tradition maintains that the Hebrew Bible was revealed by God to

---

THE PERPLEXED 331 (George Routledge & Sons 2d ed. 1910) (1904) (1190); MOHAMMAD HASHIM KAMALI, SHARIAH LAW: AN INTRODUCTION 42-43 (2008).

<sup>117</sup> See 1 IBN RUSHD, THE DISTINGUISHED JURIST'S PRIMER 96-258 (Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee, trans., 1994) (discussing laws of ritual prayer); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Taanit* (detailing laws for various prayers).

<sup>118</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 117, at 330-453 (discussing laws of fasting on holy days and the celebration and performance of pilgrimage rituals); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Seder Moed* (detailing laws for various Jewish holidays, including Sabbath observances, Passover, fast days, and Yom Kippur).

<sup>119</sup> See 2 IBN RUSHD, THE DISTINGUISHED JURIST'S PRIMER 521-5233 (Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee, trans., 1994) (discussing the laws of ritually forbidden sexual relationships); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Sotah* 1:1-22:21 (detailing ritual laws regulating sexual morality).

<sup>120</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 117, at 563-576 (detailing laws of permitted food consumption and alcoholic beverages); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Tahorot* 1:1-32 (rulings on permitted and forbidden foods and food mixtures); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Chullin* 1:1-14:17 (detailing rules for ritually prescribed animal slaughter for food consumption).

<sup>121</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 119, at 1-70 (laws of marriage); *id.* at 71-120 (laws of divorce); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Kiddushin* (detailing laws of marriage, divorce, and adultery).

<sup>122</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 119, at 153-281 (laws regarding the conditions and elements for the formation of various kinds of contracts); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Bava Metzia*.

<sup>123</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 119, at 478-572 (laws of criminal offenses and judicial procedure); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Sanhedrin* (criminal offenses and judicial procedure for the adjudication of criminal and civil matters).

<sup>124</sup> See RUSHD, *supra* note 119, at 478-505 (discussing laws of retaliation for tort damages); Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, *Seder Nezikin* (detailing laws governing damages to property and persons, and liability for theft).

<sup>125</sup> See ADAM B. SELIGMAN, ISLAMIC AND JEWISH LEGAL REASONING ENCOUNTERING OUR LEGAL OTHER 220 (Anver M. Emon ed., 2016).

Moses, and that Moses, in turn, communicated it to the ancient Israelites for the purposes of establishing a functioning society modeled on the Torah's teachings and rules.<sup>126</sup> Jewish law is also revealed through the Oral Torah, a wide-ranging collection of teachings, traditions, and scriptural interpretations that rabbinic jurisprudence also revealed to Moses by God.<sup>127</sup> This Oral Torah tradition was subsequently transmitted orally from teacher to student until the sixth century, when it was collected into the Talmud, along with centuries of additional rabbinic scholarship.<sup>128</sup> The primary textual sources of Jewish law are shaped by: the Talmud, numerous commentaries, subsequent codifications, restatements each with their own collection of commentaries, and voluminous responsa in which rabbis have provided advisory opinions on normative questions posed to them by congregants and colleagues.<sup>129</sup>

In Islam, the *Shari'ah*, or the Divinely determined "path to life," was manifested through God's communication of the text of the Qur'an to Muhammad.<sup>130</sup> While the Qur'an contains important legal material,<sup>131</sup> the normative content of revelation in Islam is supplemented by *hadith*, or narrated traditions of the *Sunnah*—Muhammad's divinely-guided actions and teachings.<sup>132</sup> These teachings were initially communicated orally, and ultimately collected into several authoritative texts around three-hundred years after Muhammad's death in 632 A.D.<sup>133</sup> As Islamic jurisprudence matured in the ninth century, Muslim jurists thought critically about how the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and other indicators of the Divine will

---

<sup>126</sup> Immanuel M. O'Levy, *Jewish Practices & Rituals: The Laws of the Basic Principles of the Torah*, JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBR. (1993), <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-laws-of-the-basic-principles-of-the-torah>.

<sup>127</sup> Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History*, JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBR. (1991), <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-oral-law-talmud-and-mishna>.

<sup>128</sup> MOSES MIELZINER, INTRODUCTION TO THE TALMUD (1894).

<sup>129</sup> *Id.*

<sup>130</sup> MOHAMMAD HASHIM KAMALI, SHARI'AH LAW: AN INTRODUCTION (Oneworld 2008).

<sup>131</sup> Of the Qur'an's more than 6,200 verses, less than 500 address legal issues or provide normative, prescriptive content. See MOHAMMAD H. KAMALI, PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE 25 (2003) (referring to the Qur'an as a book of guidance rather than a code of law).

<sup>132</sup> See GHASSAN ABDUL-JABBAR, THE "SIX BOOKS" OF HADITH 4-8 (2017).

<sup>133</sup> See generally JONATHAN A. C. BROWN, HADITH 15-66 (Omid Safi ed., 2018).

interact to produce knowledge of concrete, practical legal norms.<sup>134</sup> Different jurisprudential outlooks produced several distinct bodies of Islamic laws associated with particular schools of thought, and each school produced its own body of substantive and methodological works.<sup>135</sup> These texts, as well as *fatawa* (s. *fatwa*), or advisory opinions on legal questions issued by Muslim jurists, form the core materials of Islamic law.<sup>136</sup>

In both traditions, revelatory legal texts—the Torah and Talmud in Judaism, and the Qur’an and *hadith* in Islam—serve as the ultimate *grundnorm* of religious life.<sup>137</sup> In both traditions, scripture is not the final say regarding religious law. Instead, these materials constitute the soil from which Jewish and Muslim scholars have cultivated and grown their respective systems of complex and comprehensive law.<sup>138</sup> Jewish and Islamic jurisprudence encompass broad commitments to the inevitability and centrality of human interpretation and reasoning in the determination of religious rules and principles.<sup>139</sup> Epistemologically, both traditions recognize that texts—even Divinely authored texts—can provide only limited knowledge of the law.<sup>140</sup> They are often vague and susceptible to various constructions that do not fully address later innovations in human experience, and must be negotiated in relation to other sources of legal, religious, and factual truth as they are applied to real world contexts.<sup>141</sup> Rabbinic scholarship focused on Talmudic dialectics placed human scholars, and their ability to transmit and further develop a living tradition of textual interpretation, at the center of the

---

<sup>134</sup> On the development of Islamic legal reasoning and jurisprudential methods, *see generally* WAEL B. HALLAQ, AN INTRODUCTION TO ISLAMIC LAW (1997).

<sup>135</sup> KAMALI, *supra* note 131, at 68-96.

<sup>136</sup> *See* KNUT S. VIKOR, BETWEEN GOD AND THE SULTAN 141-43 (2005).

<sup>137</sup> *See* AARON KIRSHENBAUM, EQUITY IN JEWISH LAW BEYOND EQUITY: HALAKHIC ASPIRATIONISM IN JEWISH CIVIL LAW 10 (Norman Lamm ed., 1991); KAMALI, *supra* note 131, at 15-16, 208.

<sup>138</sup> *See* SAMUEL J. LEVINE, JEWISH LAW AND AMERICAN LAW: A COMPARATIVE STUDY 178-207 (2018); BERNARD G. WEISS, THE SPIRIT OF ISLAMIC LAW 66 (2006).

<sup>139</sup> *See generally*, Shlomo C. Pill, Law as Engagement: A Judeo-Islamic Conception of the Rule of Law for Twenty-First Century America (Apr. 13, 2016) (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory Law School).

<sup>140</sup> ANVER EMON, ISLAMIC AND JEWISH LEGAL REASONING: ENCOUNTERING OUR LEGAL ORDER 219-30 (Oneworld 2016).

<sup>141</sup> *Id.*



Jewish law universe.<sup>142</sup> In a similar way, Muslim jurists who devoted themselves to the punctilious explication of practical legal norms based on the primary sources of the *Shari'ah*, occupy a central place within the world of Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>143</sup> In both traditions, these religious law scholars straddle the fence between power and powerlessness; they hold the keys to normative religious guidance by virtue of their learning and erudition and, at the same time, must carefully cultivate an authority of persuasion as they traditionally lack the direct ability to enforce their legal determinations.<sup>144</sup>

These parallels in legal architecture mean that very similar considerations animate jurisprudential conversations in both traditions. For example, as overarching legal systems that stem from a supra-human authority, traditional Jewish and Islamic law each grapple with questions about the relationship between religious law and state law.<sup>145</sup> Both recognize that the relatively fixed and eternal character of religious law means that there must be some means for governments to legitimately determine good public policy in response to evolving circumstances.<sup>146</sup> In both traditions, scholars have attempted to theorize how such extra-religious law can exist and operate outside the limits of inflexible Divine commands while at the same time being authorized under the broader umbrella of religious norms and values.<sup>147</sup> In a related vein, Jewish and Islamic law each take careful stock of how their own internal religious norms relate to other legal regimes that may exist alongside and—in the case of diasporic communities living in non-Jewish or non-Muslim polities—even above religious law.<sup>148</sup> Thus, rabbinic jurisprudence developed the doctrine of *dina d'makhuta dina* (“the law of the land is the law”) to: (1) help explain when and how Jewish law incorporates secular laws and commercial customs and (2) account for religious duties

---

<sup>142</sup> Moshe Silberg, Note, *Law and Morals in Jewish Jurisprudence*, 75 HARV. L. REV. 306, 306-31 (1961).

<sup>143</sup> See David Johnston, *A Turn in the Epistemology and Hermeneutics of Twentieth Century Uṣūl Al-Fiqh*, 11 ISLAMIC L. & SOC'Y 233, 234, 240-54 (2004).

<sup>144</sup> See Mahmoud M. Tomeh, *Persuasion and Authority in Islamic Law*, 3 BERKLEY J. OF MIDDLE E. & ISLAMIC L. 141, 143.

<sup>145</sup> Johnston, *supra* note 143.

<sup>146</sup> Deina Abdelkader, *Modernity, the Principle of Public Welfare (Maslaha) and the End Goals of Shari'a (Maqasid) in Muslim Legal Thought*, 14 ISLAM & MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN REL. 163 (2003).

<sup>147</sup> EMON, *supra* note 140.

<sup>148</sup> *Id.*

Jews have to abide by in accordance with the laws of the countries they reside in.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, Muslim scholars accounted for how local customs impact aspects of Islamic commercial law, and what duties devout Muslims may owe to non-Muslim governments.<sup>150</sup> In recent decades, as Muslim diasporas have become an ever more permanent and common reality in non-Muslim societies, Islamic law scholars have begun to develop a field of law known as *fiqh al-aqalliyyat* (“Islamic law for Muslim minorities”).<sup>151</sup> This area of law deals directly with the many points of tension and congruence between Islamic religious observance and living as citizens of non-Muslim-majority countries subject to secular state laws.<sup>152</sup>

## 2. *Disagreement and the Elusive Search for Truth*

This shared emphasis on law as a central hallmark or religiosity relates to another important feature of both Judaism and Islam that provides a valuable basis for interreligious engagement and reconciliation. Important streams of both Judaism and Islam embrace disagreement as a pervasive—even positive—feature of religion and of the human condition more generally.

Discussions about disagreement feature prominently in Jewish and Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>153</sup> Like many other religious concepts, disagreement is examined through a legal lens. Both traditions, concerned about the proper determination and observance of Divine law, grapple with the implications of pervasive disagreement among

<sup>149</sup> Aaron Rakefet-Rothkoff, *Dina D'malkhuta Dina — The Law Of The Land In Halakhic Perspective*, 13 TRADITION: J. ORTHODOX JEWISH THOUGHT 5, 5- 6, 10, 12 (1972).

<sup>150</sup> See, e.g., ANDREW F. MARCH, ISLAM AND LIBERAL CITIZENSHIP (2009); Tauseef A. Parray, *The Legal Methodology of “Fiqh al-Aqalliyyat” and its Critics: An Analytical Study*, 32 J. MUSLIM MINORITY AFFS. 88, 94 (2012).

<sup>151</sup> See generally Andrew F. March, *Are Secularism and Neutrality Attractive to Religious Minorities - Islamic Discussions of Western Secularism in the Jurisprudence of Muslim Minorities (Fiqh Al-Aqalliyyat) Discourse*, 30 CARDOZO L. REV. 2821 (2009).

<sup>152</sup> Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries*, 1 J. ISLAM. L. & SOC'Y 141, 141-142 (1994).

<sup>153</sup> See generally Pill, *supra* note 139; Jeffrey I. Roth, *The Justification for Controversy Under Jewish Law*, 76 CAL. L. REV. 337 (1988); KAMALI, *supra* note 131, at 99-121.

religious law scholars about the right rules of religious conduct.<sup>154</sup> Both Jewish and Muslim religious scholars have addressed this concern by drawing a distinction between the law as it really is in the mind of God and the law as it is imperfectly understood by diverse human interpreters and decision makers on the basis of written material; thus, these interpretations are imperfect indicators of the law embedded in revelatory sources like the Torah and Talmud or Qur'an and *hadith*.<sup>155</sup> Put differently, Jewish and Muslim traditions have posited that there may be a singularly correct, metaphysically objective legal rule for every scenario.<sup>156</sup> Furthermore, human knowledge of those rules is also inevitably a product of human engagement with revelation—the means through which God communicates the objective law to others.<sup>157</sup> This process of human cognition is unavoidably subjective; human scholars will reach different conclusions about what they think the law is and requires.<sup>158</sup>

Ultimately, Jewish and Islamic legal traditions developed not

---

<sup>154</sup> See generally Pill, *supra* note 139.

<sup>155</sup> See e.g., 1 RABBI MOSES FEINSTEIN, INTRODUCTION TO IGEROT MOSHE 8 (distinguishing between “truth from the perspective of heaven” and “truth from the perspective of legal judgment”); KAMALI, SHARIAH LAW: AN INTRODUCTION 40-41 (Oneworld 2008) (distinguishing between the *Shari'ah* as it actually is in the mind of God, and *fiqh*, or imperfect human conceptualizations of the *Shari'ah* based on juristic understandings of Islamic legal sources); see also EMON, *supra* note 140, at 219-30.

<sup>156</sup> See AVI SAGI, THE OPEN CANON: ON THE MEANING OF HALAKHIC DISCOURSE 31 (1st ed. 2007); JOSEPH E. LOWRY, EARLY ISLAMIC LEGAL THEORY 144-45 (2007) (noting that according to Muhammad al-Sahfi'i, there is a singularly correct legal answer to every question); KHALED ABOU EL FADL, SPEAKING IN GOD'S NAME 147-49 (2001).

<sup>157</sup> Judith Romney Wegner, *Islamic and Talmudic Jurisprudence: The Four Roots of Islamic Law and Their Talmudic Counterparts*, 26 AM. J. LEGAL HIST. 25 (1982).

<sup>158</sup> See 1 CONTROVERSY AND DIALOGUE IN HALAKHIC SOURCES 69 (Hanina ben-Menahem et al., eds., 1991) (quoting Rabbi Yehudah Loew, Be'er Hagolah §1, “All human beings diverge in their cognitive processes . . . Therefore, each person internalizes different aspects of a legal issue in accordance with their own perspective . . . Just as one person will conclude that the subject of legal inquiry is ritually pure and provide reasons and analysis for this conclusion, and certainly some aspect of the issue favors purity, another person will rule the same object to be ritually impure and will also reason and analyze based on some other aspect of the issue.”); Wael B. Hallaq, *On the Authoritativeness of Sunni Consensus* 18 MIDDLE EAST. STUD. 427, 427 (1986). See generally, James Donato, *Dworkin and Subjectivity in Legal Interpretation*, 40 STAN. L. REV., 1517, 1517-41 (1988) (explaining subjectivity of interpretation).

only a tolerance for this inevitable plurality of legal views, but a jurisprudence that embraced the positive value of such disagreement.<sup>159</sup> These theories of disagreement offered understandings of the lessons and benefits of the great diversity of human perspectives and conceptualizations of Divine truth; additionally, these schools of thought demonstrated the practical legal benefits of legal indeterminacy, uncertainty, and disagreement. For example, Jewish scholars have suggested that the existence of legal disagreement creates space for individual legal decision makers to reach their own considered determinations without the debilitating anxiety that they may reach the wrong conclusion about God's will.<sup>160</sup> Others have suggested that legal disagreement helps insure that Jewish law remains eternally relevant, since the range of legal possibilities remains broad and flexible enough to address evolving circumstances.<sup>161</sup> In a more spiritual sense, some rabbis have suggested that legal disagreement is a positive religious value because it manifests active engagement with the law and religious texts and traditions.<sup>162</sup>

Muslim jurists have made similar points about the positive value of disagreement in Islamic law.<sup>163</sup> Scholars have argued that the presence of disagreement confirms the absence of *ijma'*, or "consensus." Since consensus is one of the primary sources of Islamic legal norms,<sup>164</sup> the absence of consensus confirms that the right answer to a given legal question remains open to interpretive determination.<sup>165</sup> Disagreement, then, drives the law's continued

<sup>159</sup> See generally Pill, *supra* note 139, at 198-233, 332-367.

<sup>160</sup> See Mishnah Soferim 15:5-6; Rabbi Shmuel b. Meir, Rashbam: Bava Basra 131a (s.v. *v'al yigmor*) (observing that rabbinic decisors need not feel incapacitated by uncertainty about the facts, law, or their own analysis because "a judge has only what his own eyes see; he only has what his own heart understands.").

<sup>161</sup> See Jeffrey I. Roth, *The Justification for Controversy Under Jewish Law*, 76 CAL. L. REV. 337, 384-85 (1988).

<sup>162</sup> See Leon Wieseltier, *The Argumentative Jew*, JEWISH REV. BOOKS (January 7, 2015, 10:07AM), <http://jewishreviewofbooks.com/articles/1491/the-argumentative-jew>.

<sup>163</sup> KHALED ABOU EL FADL, REASONING WITH GOD: RECLAIMING SHARI'AH IN THE MODERN AGE 10 (2014) ("Not only is disagreement to be expected, but it is actually a positive reality to be embraced and encouraged.").

<sup>164</sup> George F. Hourani, *The Basis of Authority of Consensus in Sunnite Islam*, 21 STUDIA ISLAMICA 13, 13-14; ALAN J. BRILL, JUDAISM AND OTHER RELIGIONS 13-60 (2010).

<sup>165</sup> Hourani, *supra* note 164, at 21; BRILL, *supra* note 164.

indeterminacy and variability. The existence of variant opinions on virtually every issue gives Muslim jurists a wide range of different legal interpretations to draw upon when they seek to resolve specific contemporaneous questions.<sup>166</sup> Disagreement also legitimates and encourages Muslim scholars to become active participants in the construction of Islamic legal truth.<sup>167</sup> From a religious perspective, this is an important idea. Islamic jurisprudence maintains that *ijtihad*, the process of active engagement with and interpretation of revelatory sources of law, is an important religious duty.<sup>168</sup> The legitimacy of juristic disagreement reinforces this religious obligation by indicating that each qualified scholar can, and should, engage the legal tradition on their own terms. Rather than passively deferring to the precedential rulings articulated by great scholars of the past, decisors can formulate, express, and apply their own source-based understandings of the *Shari'ah*. Moreover, they can be confident that they may do so even if they disagree with their peers and teachers. Numerous early scholars expressed this very idea in cautioning their students not to abrogate their own duties to perform *ijtihad* in deferential, reverential imitation of earlier masters.<sup>169</sup>

The jurisprudence of disagreement under Jewish and Islamic law extends beyond the technically legal realm and ventures into broader questions of religious truth. These traditions' normative recognition of disagreement entails appreciation because, at least from the perspective of human-beings, truth is ultimately pluralistic.<sup>170</sup> Like other monotheistic faiths, Judaism and Islam often make important and exclusive truth-based claims.<sup>171</sup> Both

---

<sup>166</sup> See KAMALI, *supra* note 155, at 101.

<sup>167</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Scope of Diversity And 'Ikhtilāf' (Juristic Disagreement) In The Shari'ah Islamic Studies*, 37 ISLAM. RSCH. INST. 315, 315–37 (1998).

<sup>168</sup> See EL FADL, *supra* note 163, at 310; MUHAMMAD IBN IDRIS AL-SHAFI'I, *AL-RISALA [THE EPISTLE ON LEGAL THEORY]* 17 (Joseph E. Lowery tranl. ed., 2013) (“God has imposed on His creatures the obligation to engage in legal interpretation in order to arrive at an answer.”).

<sup>169</sup> KAMALI, *supra* note 155, at 71-72, 77, 80-81.

<sup>170</sup> David Basinger, *Religious Diversity (Pluralism)*, STAN. ENCYC. PHIL. (May 24, 2004), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/religious-pluralism>.

<sup>171</sup> See Abdullahi an-Naim, *Religious Minorities Under Islamic Law and the Limits of Cultural Relativism*, 9 HUM. RTS. Q. 1, 11-12 (1987) (discussing the exclusivity of Islam's truth claims with respect to other religious traditions); BRILL, *supra* note 164, at 151-174 (reviewing classical Jewish views on the theological exclusivity of Jewish truth claims).

faiths, however, recognize that while there may be a singular, objective truth identical with the Divine mind, human beings do not have access to such knowledge.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, such objective, universal truth is inevitably able to unify what appears to be incompatible opposite claims more than any human beings' single subjective truth ever could.<sup>173</sup> Critically, this view extends even to the religious truths of Judaism and Islam as those traditions and normative systems are subjectively understood and conceptualized by their human adherents.

The Qur'an affirms these ideas in several verses that point to God's intentional creation of diversity among human communities and the fundamental legitimacy of at least some other religious revelations that differ from the religious message of Islam revealed to Muhammad.<sup>174</sup> These verses not only offer the legitimacy of Jews and Christians practicing their own religions even after the advent of Islam, but also go even further "by asserting the providential nature of different religious communities and their distinct laws and practices."<sup>175</sup> According to some Muslim scholars, the simultaneous legitimacy of other religions and the normativity of Islam is explained by distinguishing between multiple levels of religious truth.<sup>176</sup> While there is one universal religious truth that exists in God—one above any material manifestation—that universal truth takes different forms and expresses in distinct ways as it is revealed to particular communities in specific contexts.<sup>177</sup> On this view, Islam and Judaism may disagree on many things, but each expresses truth for its own adherents, and both are expressions of a higher, broader

---

<sup>172</sup> See REUVEN FIRESTONE, *CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM: AN INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM FOR MUSLIMS* (1st ed., 2001).

<sup>173</sup> *Id.*

<sup>174</sup> See, e.g., *Qur'an* 5:44-49; *Qur'an* 2:62 ("The believers, the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabians – all those who believe in God and the Last Day and do good – will have their rewards with their Lord. No fear for them, nor will they grieve").

<sup>175</sup> SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR, *THE STUDY QURAN* 301 (2015).

<sup>176</sup> See generally, e.g., Adnan Aslan, *Religious Pluralism in Islam*, 1 J. ISLAMIC THOUGHT & CIVILIZATION 35 (2011). See also ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI, *THE QUR'AN: TEXT, TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY* 150 (Maryland: Amana Corporation, 1989) ("The Muslim does not claim to have a religion peculiar to himself. Islam is not a sect or an ethnic religion. In its view all Religion is one, for the Truth is one.").

<sup>177</sup> See *Qur'an* 10:47 ("To every nation We sent a messenger"); *Qur'an* 16:36 ("Verily we have raised in every nation a messenger, proclaiming to serve Allah and shun false gods."); Aslan, *supra* note 176, at 35-39.

religious truth.<sup>178</sup> More importantly, the Qur'an clarifies the purpose behind God's intentional differentiation of religious truth among various faith communities: "If God had willed it, He would have made you one [religious] community; but He did not do so in order that He might test you in that which He has given to you. So, compete with each other in good deeds."<sup>179</sup> For some Muslim scholars, this indicates that different peoples are supposed to adhere to their respective faiths, and that the simultaneous existence of multiple religious practices and traditions is a means of promoting religious progress and human perfection through healthy, spiritual competition.<sup>180</sup>

Jewish scholars have expressed similar ideas with respect to the particular—and thus limited—truth of Jewish revelation and religion.<sup>181</sup> The Talmud is explicit that Judaism is a more detailed and specific form of a universal spiritual path appropriate for all humanity.<sup>182</sup> Building on this idea, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, an influential nineteenth-century expositor of Jewish thought, maintained that the revelation of Judaism as a particular religious system was a consequence of humanity's early repeated failures to embrace a more universal spiritual imperative.<sup>183</sup> Consequently, rabbinic Judaism has not typically viewed Jewish practice and dogma as something that those outside the Jewish community should embrace. Rabbinic Judaism is not a proselytizing faith.<sup>184</sup> To the

---

<sup>178</sup> See Aslan, *supra* note 176, at 38 ("According to the Quran, Islam is not a name only given to a system of faith or religion but it is also a name of an act of surrendering to the will of God. Any thing which bows to God's will voluntarily or even involuntarily is qualified as Muslim. Only human beings who have the freedom of faith can go against God's will and reject Islam, while all other creatures affirm it.").

<sup>179</sup> *Qur'an* 5:48.

<sup>180</sup> See NASR, *supra* note 175, at 301 (explaining that the verse "supposes not a process of supersession among religious forms, but rather a contemporaneous existence of different religious communities competing in virtue.").

<sup>181</sup> See generally BRILL, *supra* note 164; JONATHAN SACKS, *THE DIGNITY OF DIFFERENCE* (2d ed., 2003).

<sup>182</sup> See Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 56a.

<sup>183</sup> See SAMSON RAPHAEL HIRSCH, *THE NINETEEN LETTERS OF BEN UZIEL* 53-56, 69-70, 75-79, 85-86, 100-17, 121-23 (Bernard Drachman trans., 1899); see also BRILL, *supra* note 164, at 76-77.

<sup>184</sup> DAVID NOVAK, *IN DEFENSE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY* 62-80 (Intercollegiate Stud. Inst., 2d ed., 2009); Solomon Schechter, *The Dogmas of Judaism*, 1 *JEWISH Q. REV.* 48, 48, 50, 58, 60-61 (1888).

contrary, Jewish scholars have explicitly discussed the fundamental validity of other faiths, especially Islam.<sup>185</sup> However, they are clear that those religions are appropriate for non-Jews and that Jews remain obligated to embrace Judaism's more particularistic system of beliefs and practices.<sup>186</sup>

Focusing on Jewish and Islamic perspectives of religious disagreement can be particularly valuable for facilitating Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation. Some approaches to interfaith dialogue paper-over differences between religious groups, focusing on the lowest common denominators that faith traditions have in common, whether very general spiritual values, foods, modes of dress, commitments to social justice, or abstract conceptions of God. While such efforts should not be discounted, there are very real, potentially divisive differences between religions—this is why they are different religions, after all—and Judaism and Islam are no exception. Drawing on Jewish and Islamic thinking about religious disagreement may permit those committed to Jewish-Muslim engagement to acknowledge such differences without jeopardizing continued dialogue and reconciliation. From the perspective of traditional Jewish and Muslim thought, disagreement need not challenge the possibility of meaningful engagement. On the contrary, it can be viewed as an opportunity for dialogue, discussion, and meaning-making. On this ethos and the spirit of the divine debate found within both traditions, the Center should be established.

### **B. The North American & European Diasporic Experience**

A sense of scattering – a *diaspora* – offers another insight into commonalities between the Jewish and Muslim people, though their diasporic presentations certainly differ.<sup>187</sup>

Throughout history, the Jewish people resided in separate and

<sup>185</sup> See BRILL, *supra* note 164, at 99-128.

<sup>186</sup> See *Qur'an* 5:44 (“We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The Jewish prophets who submitted to God judged by it for the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Scripture of God, and they were witnesses thereto.”).

<sup>187</sup> See generally Sander Gilman, *Can the Experience of Diaspora Judaism Serve as a Model for Islam in Today's Multicultural Europe?*, in THE NEW GERMAN JEWRY AND THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT 51, 53-72 (2008) (explaining the similarities between Jewish and Muslim diasporas).



distinct communities alongside Christian neighbors.<sup>188</sup> Without a functioning territory, or even a concentrated population in a single part of the world, Jewish communities in Europe, Asia, and Africa developed separately and distinctly from their neighbors and from one another.<sup>189</sup> Yet, these Jewish communities universally consented to governance by *halakha*.<sup>190</sup> *Halakha*, literally translating to “the way,” provided an organizational structure and legal system by which Jews could survive, express their faith, develop community, maintain order, and observe rituals. In a sense, *halakha*’s deep-rooted sense of tradition and expansive scope provided Jews with a way to control what little they could as “stranger[s] in a strange land.”<sup>191</sup> While the Talmud’s *halakha* was, and is, a religiously-motivated system proscribing ways for people to live holier lives, the legal directions gained almost normative status in these communities. Reasons for this are numerous, but certainly among them was the fear of their often hostile Christian neighbors and presumed need to conform.<sup>192</sup> Jews accepted the teachings and interpretations of rabbis as instructive in resolving all facets of life – from property disputes, criminal punishments, family affairs, to youth educational requirements. *Halakha* also provided a system for engaging with foreign laws and even provided guidance when those laws conflicted with Jewish Law.<sup>193</sup>

Yet, while the level of legal sophistication in these Jewish communities was remarkable, the diaspora was always synonymous with helplessness and minority status.<sup>194</sup> As Professor William Safran notes, the “Jews have been the proverbial Other in terms of religion, dress, customs, cuisine, and language, so that they have constituted [] scapegoats and have been subjected to forcible

---

<sup>188</sup> Betty C. Levine, *Religious Commitment and Integration into a Jewish Community in the United States*, 27 REV. RELIGIOUS RSCH. 328, 328-31 (1986).

<sup>189</sup> See YAKOV M. RABKIN, “THE JEWS OF EUROPE: BETWEEN EQUALITY AND EXTERMINATION,” WHAT IS MODERN ISRAEL? 29-30 (discussing the balance between separation and integration of Jewish communities in European and non-European countries).

<sup>190</sup> Daniel J. Elazar, *Land, State, and Diaspora in the History of the Jewish Polity*, 3 JEWISH POL. STUD. REV. 3, 3-5, 14-15 (1991).

<sup>191</sup> 2 *Exodus* 22 (King James).

<sup>192</sup> See William Safran, *The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective*, 10 ISR. STUD. 36, 38 (2005).

<sup>193</sup> See *supra* Section III(A)(1) (discussing *Dina D'Malkhuta Dina*).

<sup>194</sup> Safran, *supra* note 192, at 36-39 (2005).

conversation, expulsions, and massacres.”<sup>195</sup> The culmination of this endemic vitriol was, of course, the Holocaust. With the decimation of European Jewry came the fundamental reshaping of the Jewish diaspora and the shifting of Jewish life to other parts of the world – specifically, to North America and, soon after that, to Israel.<sup>196</sup> For those Jews that would immigrate to Israel, a centuries-old dream of returning “home” was finally realized. For others, however, finding “home” – a permanent settling – would take place elsewhere.

The attempted destruction, increased population concentration, and community reorganization did not stifle the preservation of Jewish religious and cultural integrity in other nations.<sup>197</sup> Indeed, as it had done in the past, the Jewish community developed tools, resources and even industries devoted to maintaining Judaism while also integrating and thriving in host societies.<sup>198</sup> For instance, North American Jewish communities provided robust Jewish educational alternatives to public schooling for children.<sup>199</sup> Full-time congregational schools developed, which boasted religious instruction in fulfillment of the desire to instill a special Jewish cultural pride in their students.<sup>200</sup> These set the stage for the modern parochial school concept, which features an education replete with secular and religious courses, a focus on creatively educating students to navigate the unity of Judaism and Americanism, and the cultivation of a traditionally-minded

---

<sup>195</sup> *Id.* at 38.

<sup>196</sup> Laura Jockush & Avinoam Patt, *Holocaust Survivor Diaspora*, in THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE JEWISH DIASPORA 458, 467-68 (2021).

<sup>197</sup> See generally NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM: EXILE AND RETURN IN JEWISH HISTORY (Leonard J. Greenspoon ed., 2019).

<sup>198</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, *The Jewish Experience in the Contemporary Scene: The Transformations of the Nation-State and the Development of New Inter-Civilizational Relations*, REVUE EUROPÉENNE DES SCIENCES SOCIALES 157, 157-64, 166, 168 (2006).

<sup>199</sup> Daniel Lehmann et. al., *Jewish Education in America Today: Essays by Rabbi Daniel Lehmann, Dr. Alvin Mars, Michael H. Steinhardt, Marshall Breger, Mark J. Pelavin, and Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin*, 1 J. JEWISH LIFE NETWORK, 3, 3-4, 5-10 (2000).

<sup>200</sup> Melissa R. Klapper, *The History of Jewish Education in America, 1700-2000*, in THE COLUMBIA HISTORY OF JEWS AND JUDAISM IN AMERICA 189, 191 (Marc Lee Raphael ed., 2008) (“The religious environment would protect Jewish children from evangelizing public schools and help them sustain deeply ingrained commitments to living as Jew[ish] in America.”).

community.<sup>201</sup>

Outside of schooling, the Jewish community developed a similarly robust Jewish philanthropic network connecting families and children to Judaism in an un-strict, cultural, opt-in fashion.<sup>202</sup> Regardless of one's level of Jewish literacy, Jews today are empowered to join Jewish youth movements and organizations that offer cultural and ideological social activities.<sup>203</sup> Jewish Community Centers offer a “new kind of Jewish neighborhood” for families young and old.<sup>204</sup> In addition, college Hillels<sup>205</sup> and Chabad Houses<sup>206</sup> focus worldwide on ensuring that Jewish students, community members, and travelers have a chance to build Jewish experiences, learn, and engage with Jewish ideas.<sup>207</sup> More than ever, Jews need to engage with Judaism *every day*, both within their Jewish micro-community and as members of a secular society. This engagement yields a Jewish people who are integrated yet distinctively in tune with their history and culture—a community toeing the line between assimilation and isolation.

The North American and European diasporic story of the Muslim community is different. Still, it carries some common underpinnings – most centrally, the notion that Muslims living in non-Muslim states have suffered abuse and “othering” by host populations yet have strived to maintain religious integrity and pride.<sup>208</sup>

Parallel ideas to a diaspora can be found within the laws and history of Islam for Muslims who have migrated from Muslim majority nations to lands in the Western world.<sup>209</sup> The Qur'an itself

---

<sup>201</sup> *Id.*

<sup>202</sup> BARRY CHAZAN, *The Philosophy of Informal Jewish Education*, in EXPERIENCE & JEWISH EDUCATION 13, 14-16 (David Bryfman ed., 2014).

<sup>203</sup> Daniel Rose, *The World of the Jewish Youth Movement*, INFED (July 8, 2019), <https://infed.org/mobi/the-world-of-the-jewish-youth-movement>.

<sup>204</sup> See CHAZAN, *supra* note 202, at 13, 14-16.

<sup>205</sup> *About Hillel*, HILLEL INT'L, <https://www.hillel.org/about> (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>206</sup> *The Chabad House*, CHABAD, [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/244374/jewish/The-Chabad-House.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/244374/jewish/The-Chabad-House.htm) (last visited Dec. 4, 2021).

<sup>207</sup> CHAZAN *supra* note 202, at 54-56, 59, 61, 65.

<sup>208</sup> Rachid Acim, *Islamophobia, Racism and the Vilification of the Muslim Diaspora*, 5 ISLAMAPHOBIA STUD. J. 26, 34 (2019).

<sup>209</sup> Halim Rane, *Islam in Diaspora*, in ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF ISLAM IN THE WEST (R. Tottoli, ed., 2d ed., 2020).

encourages Muslims to cross seas and venture into far-off lands in search of knowledge, prosperity, and sustenance.<sup>210</sup> And, indeed, for centuries, Muslims have done just that. Muslim communities have grown worldwide as a consequence of old ages of conquest, trade activity, proselytism, and, of course, intentional mass-immigrations in past decades.<sup>211</sup> So entwined is this history of the movement and re-settling that the very term *diaspora*, harkening to some sense of exile, can be inappropriate when speaking about those Muslims who were born, raised, and have every intention of remaining settled in non-Muslim states.<sup>212</sup> The *permanent* nature of this diaspora is something that North American and European Muslims have in common with Jews. Today, these communities, with deep roots in their host countries, offer open arms to those Muslims fleeing majority-Muslim countries to escape conflict.<sup>213</sup>

Islamic law also offers one kind of structure for Muslim communities balancing their faith-based religious and legal obligations with the obligations of conscientious citizenship in non-Muslim host countries.<sup>214</sup> From pronouncements regarding tax payments, serving in foreign militaries, observing host-nation laws, to observing ritualistic obligations in a secular space, this guidance ensures that diasporic faith communities remain connected with and steeped in tradition while not altogether divorced from secular society.<sup>215</sup>

This is important, especially considering that Muslim relations with their neighbors can be strained, similar to the Jewish experience.<sup>216</sup> Muslims often live in separate and distinct neighborhoods, siloed in a way that make residents more ease in

---

<sup>210</sup> *Qur'an* 37:99; 4:97.

<sup>211</sup> Rane, *supra* note 209.

<sup>212</sup> Sara Silvestri, *Misconceptions of the Muslim Diaspora*, CURRENT HIST., Nov. 2016.

<sup>213</sup> See Bichara Khader, *Muslims in Europe: The Construction of a "Problem,"* OPEN MIND BBVA, <https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/articles/muslims-in-europe-the-construction-of-a-problem> (last visited Nov. 1, 2021).

<sup>214</sup> See SHEIKH YUSUF AL-QARADAWI, *FIQH OF MUSLIM MINORITIES: CONTENTIOUS ISSUES & RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS* (Al-Falah Found. ed., 2003).

<sup>215</sup> L. ALI KHAN & HISHAM M. RAMADAN, *CONTEMPORARY IJTIHAD: LIMITS AND CONTROVERSIES* 215 (Edinburgh Univ. Press Ltd. ed., 2011).

<sup>216</sup> Hicham Tiflati, *Muslim No-Go Zones in the West—A Myth or a Reality?*, EUR. EYE ON RADICALIZATION (July 24, 2018), <https://eeradicalization.com/muslim-no-go-zones-in-the-west-a-myth-or-a-reality>.

observing Islamic Law as well as provide group protection.<sup>217</sup> They often observe cultural customs, such as wearing *hijabs*, that identify them as Muslim and differentiate them from secular neighbors.<sup>218</sup> This isolation, as well as the ever-increasing vilification and othering of Muslims in recent decades,<sup>219</sup> has led to discrimination, hostility, persecution, and condemnation.<sup>220</sup> This happens everywhere that secularism seems to conflict with Islam's traditional sensibilities, customs, and ethics.<sup>221</sup> Children might face micro-aggressions and Islamophobic remarks, employers might fire or refuse to hire Muslim men and women, others may shame women for body coverings, and maintaining religious practices might violate European Union Laws.<sup>222</sup> Even those Muslims who, either by virtue of time, education, or societal position, assimilate entirely into the host-nation society can be subjected to stereotypical, ignorant disrespect.<sup>223</sup>

However, even despite this attitude, Professor Rivka Yadin observes that, on the whole, Muslim communities are seeing a "re-Islamization" as a reaction to external hostility.<sup>224</sup> In other words, as more Muslims begin finding their permanent homes in foreign places on a permanently settled basis, they are strengthening communal connections and growing more steadfast in their maintenance of religious integrity.<sup>225</sup> To support this, Muslim communal networks and organizations have developed locally, nationally, and globally to offer resources, money, and social support for the diasporic community.<sup>226</sup> Muslim organizations have made it possible for

---

<sup>217</sup> *Id.*

<sup>218</sup> RIVKA YADLIN, MIDDLE EASTERN MINORITIES AND DIASPORAS 219-30 (Moshe Ma'oz & Gabriel Sheffer, eds., 2002).

<sup>219</sup> Acim, *supra* note 208, at 26, 34.

<sup>220</sup> *Id.* at 35.

<sup>221</sup> YADLIN, *supra* note 218, at 219-30.

<sup>222</sup> *See* Acim, *supra* note 208.

<sup>223</sup> *See* Katrine Fangen, *Why Did Muslims Become the New Enemy in Norway and Europe?*, PRIO BLOGS (July 9, 2021), <https://blogs.prio.org/2021/07/why-did-muslims-become-the-new-enemy-in-norway-and-europe>.

<sup>224</sup> YADLIN, *supra* note 218.

<sup>225</sup> *See Religion Vs. Culture: Where does Islam fit?*, DAR AL-IFTAA AL-MISSRIYYAH, <https://www.dar-alifta.org/foreign/ViewArticle.aspx?ID=447&CategoryID=6> (last visited Nov. 6, 2021).

<sup>226</sup> Theodore Karasik & Cheryl Benard, *Muslim Disporas and Networks*, in THE MUSLIM WORLD AFTER 9/11 436-38 (RAND Corp. ed., 2004).

community members to go on the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca,<sup>227</sup> equipped Muslim children to interact with Islamic teachings through various educational programs,<sup>228</sup> provided social networks for new community members,<sup>229</sup> and begun educating a new generation of Muslim religious scholars and clergy in seminaries situated in Western countries that are well-attuned to the realities of diasporic life.<sup>230</sup> A byproduct of the Center is that both Jews and Muslims may find within each other examples and inspiration of how to operate as religious minorities in the Christian-dominated Western world.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

There are strong legal, theological, political, and social bases for increased Jewish-Muslim engagement and reconciliation. While many efforts in Jewish-Muslim dialogue have been taking place, the vast majority of these activities take place between those already inclined to religious coexistence and lack intellectual and religious rigor. The establishment of a Center of Muslim-Jewish Engagement along the lines proposed in this essay would go a long way towards enhancing and expanding these efforts. The Center will provide a strong basis for exploring avenues for Jewish-Muslim engagement and for implementing programming in which these ideas can be for social and political reconciliation between Jews and Muslims in North America. A Center of this kind is needed to fill a vast vacuum in the interfaith, academic and theological arena of Jewish-Muslim relations. Through this initiative, Muslim and Jewish communities are afforded the chance to join their voices in support of their beliefs and community needs. And, certainly, this is only the beginning.

---

<sup>227</sup> Leila Seurat, *The Politics of Islam in Europe and North America*, 32 POEMPS STUD. 14, 14 (2018).

<sup>228</sup> *Get to Know NWMI*, NEXT WAVE MUSLIM INITIATIVE, <https://nwmi.org/about> (last visited Nov. 6, 2021).

<sup>229</sup> *Id.*

<sup>230</sup> *Id.*

**APPENDIX A: LIST OF SELECT INTERFAITH GROUPS PROMOTING  
DIALOGUE BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND JEWS IN NORTH AMERICA**

Organization/ Group	Website	Main Focus / Contribution
The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding (with ISNA)	<a href="https://ffeu.org">https://ffeu.org</a>	Founded in 1989, the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding is committed to the belief that direct dialogue between ethnic communities is the most effective path towards reconciliation. Focus is mostly social in nature.
Institute for Islamic - Christian - Jewish Studies, Baltimore, MD	<a href="https://icjs.org">https://icjs.org</a>	Building learning communities where the religious difference becomes a powerful force for good. To make Baltimore a model interreligious city. Fellowships in social justice and teaching.
Abe's Eats, Interfaith Ventures	<a href="https://www.abeseats.com">https://www.abeseats.com</a>	The amalgamation of Jewish and Muslim Dietary laws, Zabihah Halal & Glatt Kosher Interfaith Meat. To make high-quality, faith-based foods accessible, nutritious, and delicious for all. Community dinners and online products. Cut the Beef Comedy Show
Children of Abraham Initiative (ISNA, URJ- Union for Reform Judaism and	<a href="https://www.cbisacramento.org">https://www.cbisacramento.org</a>  <a href="https://urj.org/what-we-believe/resolutions/jewish-muslim-dialogue">https://urj.org/what-we-believe/resolutions/jewish-muslim-dialogue</a>	An interfaith coalition of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim clergy and lay leaders, whose purpose is to foster mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation.

AJC- American Jewish Committee)	<a href="https://www.ajc.org/news/us-modern-orthodox-jews-and-muslims-find-common-ground">https://www.ajc.org/news/us-modern-orthodox-jews-and-muslims-find-common-ground</a>	
Jewish Islamic Dialogue Society of Washington DC	<a href="http://www.jids.org/about-us/our-mission/">http://www.jids.org/about-us/our-mission/</a>	Focus: interfaith dialogues focusing on a previously announced topic. The topics involve theology, war, and peace, history, ritual, or culture.
JAMAAT (Jews and Muslim Allies Acting Together)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/grogro/jamaatdc/about">https://www.facebook.com/grogro/jamaatdc/about</a>	Building Unity, Countering Hate, Enhancing Partnerships, Promoting Social Action
Muslim Jewish Interfaith Coalition	<a href="https://www.themjic.org">https://www.themjic.org</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/peoplethebook/">https://www.facebook.com/peoplethebook/</a>	Community of Muslims, Jews, and allies based around the world working together to heal the fractured relationship between Muslims and Jews globally by challenging notions of the perceived 'other' through personal connection, religious education, and skill-building. Focus on commonality as Middle Eastern and N. African descent.
Muslim Jewish Advisory Council	<a href="https://www.muslimjewishadvocacy.org">https://www.muslimjewishadvocacy.org</a>	A national group of American Muslims and American Jews who advocate for issues of common concern.  Focus: Reversing hate crime, highlighting contributions of



		minorities to the USA.
Muslim-Jewish Conference	<a href="http://www.mjconference.org">http://www.mjconference.org</a>	Supports young change-makers. For the past 10 years, the Muslim Jewish Conference has gathered more than 1.000 young change-makers – from over 65 countries – to engage in dialogue and together, create innovative networks of Muslim-Jewish cooperation. Through annual, week-long conferences that provide a safe space for participants to break down barriers and restore trust, the MJC has managed to become a grassroots leader in the field of interfaith dialogue
New Ground	<a href="http://mjnewground.org">http://mjnewground.org</a>	Public Programs: Annual Iftar  Fellowships: Twenty fellows annually are empowered with the skills, resources, and relationships to strengthen Muslim-Jewish relations in America and advance a shared agenda for change in Los Angeles.
Shabbat Salaam, Interfaith Ventures	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/interfaithventures/videos/261775880988107/">https://www.facebook.com/interfaithventures/videos/261775880988107/</a>	Inter-faith Jewish-Muslim social events and dinners
Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom	<a href="https://sosspeace.org">https://sosspeace.org</a>	Grassroots organization, 3rd Prize UN intercultural innovation Award.  We grow relationships between Muslim and Jewish women and teens to build bridges and fight hate, negative stereotyping, and prejudice. We are changing the

		world, one Muslim and one Jewish woman, and a teenage girl at a time! New chapters are forming in California, Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, and Tennessee.
Muslim Jewish organized Relief (MAJOR)	<a href="http://www.themajorfund.org/home.html">http://www.themajorfund.org/home.html</a>	The MAJOR Fund believes that now, more than ever, bridges need to be built not only between the Muslim and Jewish communities in the United States but among all communities of faith. Under no circumstances should decisions regarding immigration or any rights and privileges granted to citizens of or visitors to the United States be based on race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. The MAJOR Fund is committed to its founding principles of creating a meaningful interfaith community and together identifying global humanitarian needs and providing assistance through directed funding.
Jewish/Muslim Studies Initiative	<a href="https://rels.uic.edu/academics/jewish-studies/jewish-muslim-studies-initiative/">https://rels.uic.edu/academics/jewish-studies/jewish-muslim-studies-initiative/</a>	The Jewish-Muslim Initiative was established in 2005 with the aim of providing an academic platform to explore points of contact, encounter, and overlap between the Jewish and Muslim traditions in a wide variety of domains.
Center for	<a href="https://crcc.usc.edu">https://crcc.usc.edu</a>	

Muslim-Jewish Engagement, University of Southern California (USC)	<a href="#">/cmje/</a>	CMJE was the first center of its kind with an audience consisting of Muslim and Jewish religious leaders, community organizers, academics interested in the field of Muslim-Jewish relations, lay leaders, students and congregations. The center is now defunct.
MuJew: Muslim/Jewish Interfaith Dialogue, University of Michigan	<a href="https://maizepages.umich.edu/organization/mujew">https://maizepages.umich.edu/organization/mujew</a>	MuJew seeks to bring Muslim and Jewish students together to create an alliance between the two communities and create a new community in and of itself. Through joint projects, volunteering, discussions, and events about Muslim and Jewish culture, religion, and experience, MuJew hopes to promote understanding and diminish stereotypes between Jews and Muslims, empowering Jews and Muslims to become allies for one another at The University of Michigan and beyond.
Bridges Muslim-Jewish Dialogue at NYU (AJC-American Jewish Committee)	<a href="http://bridgesnyu.weebly.com/">http://bridgesnyu.weebly.com/</a>	New York University based organization conducting interfaith vigils, Jumuah and Shabbath Services.
Building Relationships: Islam & Judaism	<a href="http://www.brijcommunity.org">http://www.brijcommunity.org</a>	A college-based interfaith social organization at Brown University.

Inter Jewish Muslim Alliance	<a href="https://www.ijma-alliance.org/post/robert-silverman">https://www.ijma-alliance.org/post/robert-silverman</a>	Ijma is an independent alliance of American Muslims and Jews brought together for a common purpose: to replace stereotypes and distortion about each other and other ethnic groups with knowledge and understanding.
Muslim-Jewish Solidarity Committee	<a href="https://muslimjewishsolidarity.org/">https://muslimjewishsolidarity.org/</a>	The Muslim-Jewish Solidarity Committee is a grassroots organization guided by Muslim and Jewish values of peace שלום נְשׁוּלָם, learning יְדַע עִלְמָא, and charity צְדָקָה زكاة. We build meaningful relationships among all faiths to stand against hate through shared values and social action.
The Jewish-Muslim Research Network (JMRN)	<a href="https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jmrn">https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jmrn</a>	The Jewish-Muslim Research Network (JMRN) claims to be an interdisciplinary and international initiative at the University of Michigan bringing together researchers studying Jews, Muslims, Judaism, and Islam in any time period and region. The initiative, is excellent, however, it appears to have anti-Zionist tendencies and is often focused on Muslim-Jewish relations in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the holy land instead of a comparative analysis of theology and history.
Apart from the above, several unstructured and uncoordinated dialogues on various university campuses across the USA have been taking place. The following are a list of Jewish-Muslim related organizations outside of North America:		
Shalom	<a href="https://www.hartma">https://www.hartma</a>	The program invites North

Hartman Institute's Muslim Leadership Initiative	<a href="http://www.hartmaninstitute.org/program/muslim-leadership-initiative/">n.org.il/program/muslim-leadership-initiative/</a>	American Muslims to explore how Jews understand Judaism, Israel, and Jewish peoplehood. It is not, per se, an interfaith organization.
Scriptural Reasoning.	<a href="http://www.scripturalreasoning.org">http://www.scripturalreasoning.org</a>	An organization promoting scriptural dialogue among the Abrahamic faiths, including Jews and Muslims.
King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue	<a href="https://www.kaiciid.org">https://www.kaiciid.org</a>	An organization promoting dialogue among the Abrahamic faiths, including Jews and Muslims.
Bridging the Great Divide: the Jewish-Muslim Encounter	<a href="https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/online-courses/bridging-the-great-divide-the-jewish-muslim-encounter">https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/online-courses/bridging-the-great-divide-the-jewish-muslim-encounter</a>	A course offered on Muslim-Jewish relations.
Amana	<a href="https://www.amana.se/">https://www.amana.se/</a>	A Swedish based organization designed to combat anti-Semitism and Islamophobia
Mosaica (Adam Center)	<a href="http://religiouspeaceinitiative.org/en/about/#_mosaica">http://religiouspeaceinitiative.org/en/about/#_mosaica</a>	An Israeli organization designed to encourage dialogue between Jews and Muslims in the holyland.
European Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council	<a href="https://mjlc-europe.org/">https://mjlc-europe.org/</a>	The European Muslim and Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) regards it as her prime obligation to renew in Europe a culture of respect and appreciation of religious identities, specifically Judaism

		and Islam, beginning with the awareness of the essential patrimony which religious Traditions represent for every society and civilization.
--	--	---

**APPENDIX B – FURTHER DETAILS ON THE JMSP**

The task of achieving the goals of the Center is difficult without developing a renewed understanding of the core scriptures, traditions, and canonical literature of both faiths. The first step in this process is to form a Jewish-Muslim Sourcebook to help define the conversation. Indeed, the sourcebook will be the basis upon which the Center's programming—such as publications, videos, and knowledge exchange seminars—will be based and from which all of its activities will derive. Therefore, the sourcebook is one of the most crucial aspects of the Center and will pave the way for the creation of a larger repository of information on Jewish-Muslim understanding.

The JMSP is contemplated to be a collaborative effort by a team of respected international theologians, academics, and community leaders of both the Jewish and Islamic faiths. The project will be housed at the Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement and will partner with a Jewish and Islamic academic and theological institution.

The project seeks to compile relevant portions of primary religious texts and other classical sources of both religious communities written before 1881. Thus, all the instances of reference to the other faith, which have a strong bearing upon Muslim-Jewish relations, are transformed into a single, usable primary source and reference book. The sourcebook will be compiled in stages through the release of individual source sheets. Initially, it will be made available online on a website that uses state-of-the-art technology and is openly available to those interested in the material.

Excluded from the sourcebook are all sources authored after 1881, since that year marks the dawn of a new era of Muslim-Jewish relations due to historical events which fall outside the purview of this article. Also excluded from the sourcebook are works that are heretical to mainstream Jews and Muslims (i.e. Kharijites and Karaite sources), secular and historical (i.e. Josephus), and modern secondary sources (i.e. Imam Khomeini and Rabbi Moshe Feinstein). Two different sections within the sourcebook will exist to account for Sunni and Shia' distinctions in its perceptions of Jews and Judaism.

Each source will be accompanied by a brief commentary not to exceed two paragraphs, unless an exception is made with the express permission of the Editor-in-Chief. The commentary will: (1) cross-reference other texts related to the topic and (2) provide a brief

list of secondary and modern academic sources for the reader to refer to should they desire to learn more about the topic. The source list portion will not be included in the two-paragraph commentary.

The following is a general proposed outline of the topics to be included in the sourcebook:

### **PART I. JEWISH VIEW OF ISLAM**

1. Primary Jewish Sources on Islam
  - a. Ishmael, Ishmaelites and Ishmaelism in Biblical and Rabbinic Sources
  - b. Jewish Sources on Islam and Muhammad
    - i. Maimonides
      1. (Iggeret Taiman or Epistle of Yemen)
      2. Collection of Responsa
    - ii. Other Medieval Jewish Rabbis
  - c. Islam in Halacha
    - i. Muslim Wine
    - ii. Is Islam Idolatry?
2. Jewish Views on Sunni Islam
3. Jewish Views on Shia Islam
4. The Holy Land and Jerusalem in Jewish Sources
  - a. Boundaries of the Holy Land
  - b. Select Biblical References to Jerusalem and the Holy Land
  - c. Select Talmudic References to Jerusalem and the Holy Land
5. General Topics: Source Study Sheets
  - a. Gender & Modesty
  - b. Dietary Laws
  - c. The Laws of Interest
  - d. Marriage and Divorce Family Purity
  - e. Other Topics

### **PART II. ISLAMIC VIEW OF JUDAISM**

1. Pre-Hijra References to Jewish and Israelite History in Quran, Hadith, and Sirah
  - a. References to Post-Biblical Events and Characters



- i. Jewish Expulsion From The Holy Land
  - ii. The Jews of Hijaz
    - 1. The Jews of Yathrib
    - 2. The Jews of Khaybar
  - iii. The Jews of Himyar
  - iv. The People of Eilat: Desecration of Shabbat and The Children of Apes and Pigs
- 2. References to Jewish Community in the Constitution of Medina
- 3. References to Early Muslim-Jewish Encounters & Jewish Conversion
  - a. Mukhayriq
  - b. Abdullah Ibn Salam
  - c. Ka`b al-Ahbar
- 4. Muhammad's Treatment of the Israelites and Jews of Medina/Yathrib
  - a. The Expulsion of the Banu Qaynuka
  - b. The Battle of the Bani Nadir
  - c. The Killing of The Banu Qurayza
- 5. The Battle of Khaybar
  - a. Zaynab bint al-Harith
  - b. Safiya Bint Huyay: Muhammad's Jewish Wife
  - c. Rihanna: Muhammad's Jewish concubine
- 6. Caliph Umar & The Jews
  - a. The Conquest of Jerusalem
  - b. Shurut Umar (Edict of Umar)
- 7. References to Jerusalem as the Holy Land
  - a. Bayt-Al-Maqdis
  - b. Al-Buraq "Western" Wall
  - c. Haram Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa
  - d. Boundaries of the Holy Land
- 8. General Comparative Topics: Source Study Sheets
  - a. Gender
  - b. Dietary Laws
  - c. The Laws of Interest
  - d. Marriage and Divorce
  - e. Other Laws
- 9. Specific Shia' References Within Shia Islam to Judaism