






Roadmap to Peace, How Can Boyarin Help?

If you have not heard about the conflict in the Middle East, you have probably been living under a rock for a few years. The fighting that has been going on between Israelis and Palestinians has been a very violent, on-going battle, which is seemingly endless. There is new hope however. A new plan for peace, titled The Roadmap to Peace, shows some promise that it may end sooner than everybody has anticipated. The roadmap was drawn up by the Quartet: the United States, European Union, United Nations, and Russia. This roadmap is made up of phases that will gradually put an end to the violence. Although the Roadmap has some great ideas, it will take a little more to put them into use. The Quartet, Israelis, and Palestinians should look for fresh ideas in other places. Taking a look at ideas expressed by Jonathan Boyarin in his essay "Waiting for a Jew" would be an excellent start. In his essay, Boyarin talks about how difficult it can be to bring two different communities together and what actions could be taken to make the process easier. Looking at Boyarin's ideas for mediating communities could do a lot to speed up the peace process. It's just a matter of applying Boyrain's ideas to the Roadmap.

 **A tool that Boyarin shows us to help mediate communities is the ability to forget the past and focus on what is needed, rather than what is wanted. "We cannot regain what is lost, if only because it never existed as we remember it" (Boyarin 163). Boyarin makes an** 
excellent point here, who cares what happened in the past, it has no bearing on how things should work out now. The biggest thing that is needed by both parties is trust: trust in one 
another, and trust in themselves. Each side needs to be able to trust the other that attacks will end. Both parties also need to be able to trust that their own people will not make any attacks against the other side, as that will surely bring retaliation. It's obvious to see that each side needs to trust one another if there is ever going to be any kind of peace, but what steps are necessary for each side to obtain trust? 

 **While reading Boyarin's essay, it's obvious that he never really feels as comfortable as when he did when he lived in Farmingdale. "Farmingdale is no longer home, and though**

our new house is only ten miles away, it is another world" (Boyarin 149). As Boyarin continues his travels, he tries to find a Jewish community that reminds him of his days in Farmingdale. When Boyarin is trying to find a new congregation in New York one reason he decides to join is because it reminds him of Farmingdale. "The first is the pull of Farmingdale: the Ashkenazic accents and melodies; the smell of herring on the old men's breath and hands; the burning sensation of whiskey, which I must have tasted surreptitiously at the conclusion of Yom Kippur one year in Farmingdale" (Boyarin 157).

Boyarin's experiences are a perfect way to show that being comfortable will lead to happiness. Boyarin isn't truly happy living in Manhattan until he finds a congregation that he feels comfortable in. The Quartet needs to do all they can do to make the transition

from violence to peace as easy as possible. Making sure that both sides are comfortable is a very necessary step. The biggest reason that neither side is comfortable is because of all

the attacks that are taking place. It seems like everyday there is a suicide bombing or a gunfight that leaves soldiers and innocent civilians dead. People living in fear will not be comfortable doing everyday things unless they feel a sense of security. Palestinians will never be comfortable if they have to fear for their lives every time they step outside. The fact that human rights are thrown to the side by both parties is a major issue. Providing access to necessities such as drinking water and medical help should be given to everybody that is in need. "...respecting the life of the civilian population, access to drinking water or emergency medical services, for example – must be observed and cannot be used as bargaining chips" (Human 2). Even though innocent people are hurt everyday, they are not getting the treatment they deserve and many perish when they should not. It is bad enough to purposely go after civilians, but to take it a step further and deny them medical help is pathetic. Having a sense of security will go a long way to ensure peace and to help that peace last for generations. Until both sides change these actions, I do not see how they ever hope to attain peace.

Sacrifice is something that will definitely make a huge difference in the Middle East. Boyarin says that a very important tool for mediating two communities is sacrifice and understanding. While doing what is necessary to learn Jewish law, Boyarin must make a sacrifice and part with his "girl" Elissa for the summer. "Before parting for the summer – she to study Yiddish at Oxford, I to Jerusalem, to acquire the Hebrew that I will need to learn about Jewish law..." (Boyarin 162). Boyarin is making a big sacrifice here. He is not going to be able to see Elissa for at least two months. Giving up somebody that you love is never easy, but sometimes it is something that must be done. The willingness to accept others, give up a part of yourself and compromise will go a long way to settle differences. Although Israel thinks that need all of their land, what good is it if they have no more people to live on it. They must sacrifice a little of what they have to help make Palestine and independent state. The biggest sacrifice that must be made though, is Jerusalem. Neither side needs to fully give up their beloved city, but they must learn to share. Only when Jerusalem becomes a city of all faiths, can people of every religion co-exist. "...a negotiated resolution on the status of Jerusalem that takes into account the political and religious concerns of both sides, and protects the religious interests of Jews, Christians, and Muslims worldwide, and fulfills the vision of two states, Israel and sovereign, independent, democratic, and viable Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security" (Roadmap 2). Both parties need to realize that in order to get something they want, they must also give up something. Israel and Palestine must give a little to get a little.

New ways of communication is also a tool that Boyarin states as a way to mediate communities. What if Israelis and Palestinians did not communicate with only violence? That would bring peace talks so much further. Instead of saying I want it this way with a pointless bombing attack on civilians, both sides need to get together and actually talk to each other face to face. Any sort of face-to-face meeting can be mediated by the Quartet to help make sure things go smoothly. Another way that communication can be used to help

mediate, would be to teach both Arabic and Hebrew at school. This would make any argument go a lot smoother if both parties knew what each other was saying.

The conflict in the Middle East is something that may not get resolved for years and years, but hopefully with the Roadmap to Peace and a little outside help from authors like Boyarin it will end shortly. If the fighting in Northern Ireland eventually ended, then it must be possible for the fighting in the Middle East to come to an end. The Quartet should take a look at what steps were taken to end the conflict there, and see if they can incorporate those ideas into the Roadmap to Peace.