

Review of **Ronald Kronish, *The Other Peace Process: Interreligious Dialogue, a View from Jerusalem*. Lanham, MD, Hamilton Books, 2017. Pp. Xviii + 179 in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Winter 2018, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp. 141-143.**

Rabbi Kronish is the recently retired Founding Director of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel, which he lead for a quarter of a century. His book details his personal involvement in what is one of the most significant interreligious dialogues in the world, the relations between the Jewish and Muslim communities in Israel and the surrounding areas, and relations with the small Christian minority and its contacts with the larger Christian communities around the world. The difference between the dialogues and programs described by Kronish and those of the other two books reviewed here is that, as the author states repeatedly, the dialogues in the Middle East can have and in many cases do have a positive influence on the ongoing, crucial and difficult peace process between Israel and Palestine. Lives are quite literally at stake. While not political in nature, these religious “peacebuilding” dialogues can help bring about better understanding of the needs of the “other” communities and help indirectly the “peacemaking” efforts of diplomats and political leaders of their respective communities.

Kronish begins with a brief autobiography, narrating how he became a “humanistic/progressive/liberal/Zionist” rabbi and how, and why, he and his wife made *aliyah*, moving “up” to live in Israel and devoted their lives to interreligious dialogue as a way of building relationships between Jews, Muslims and Christians in the land all three traditions consider to be holy. He

narrates quite well the ups and downs of the efforts to bring peace between Israel and its neighboring Muslim countries. He describes in helpful detail the religious, ethnic, and political diversity within the Arab/Muslim communities and their areas of internal agreement, including the Christian communities as well. Through his many dialogues he has come to understand these communities as they understand themselves, and portrays them with accuracy and empathy, noting the shortcomings of Israeli Jews no less than those of other communities.

In chapter three, Kronish details his involvement in the international dialogues between the Holy See and the worldwide Jewish people, narrating the significance of Pope St. John Paul's personal involvement in the dialogue and of his pilgrimage to Jordan and Israel, highlighting the pope's placing a prayer of repentance in the Western Wall for Christian sins and violence against Jews over the centuries and for reconciliation between the Catholic Church and the Jewish People.

The “new model” of dialogue that he presents in the next chapter is not entirely new and has precedents and parallels in the dialogues in the United States and Europe. But implementing such dialogues in Israel and Palestine was and is a uniquely difficult context for developing such relations. Kronish concludes with the lessons he has learned and some important thoughts on where Jewish/Christian/Muslim dialogue can go in the future. This is a “must read” book for anyone interesting in the Abrahamic dialogue.

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