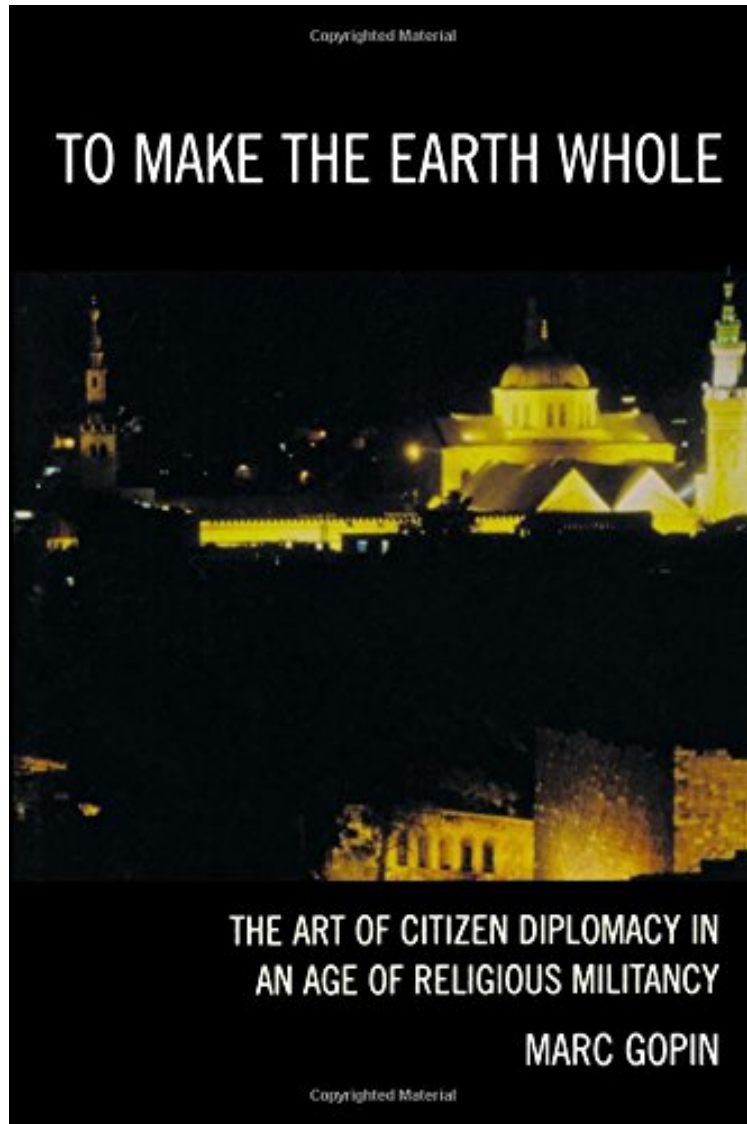


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To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy

Marc Gopin

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Marc Gopin : To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Rethinking the Role of Religion "To Make the Earth Whole"By Ross AdenIn this thoughtful and earnest book, an activist rabbi shares his vision for peace and his methods of

peacemaking. *TO MAKE THE EARTH WHOLE* is filled with practical wisdom about the critical role of religion in the politics of war and peace in our time. Books on theory of religious violence abound. But this book integrates the theory of religious violence with the practice of peacemaking in a realistic but inspiring vision of "citizen diplomacy." The writer, Marc Gopin, is an ordained rabbi, a professor at George Mason University, and the director of George Mason's Center on Religion, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution. In his latest book, he reflects on his extensive experience as a global peacemaker. The 252-page book draws especially on the case of the volatile relationships of Syria, Israel, and the United States from 2003 to the present. The strength of *TO MAKE THE EARTH WHOLE* lies in Gopin's candor about his motives and methods. Along with religious texts and rituals, Gopin makes use of leaders he calls "religious exemplars" to build social networks across lines of hostility. Instead of writing off religion as inherently violent, he enlists it in the cause of peace. Gopin's positive vision for our planet combines secular social contract theory with religious covenant theology. He calls for the building of a new global social contract that centers of human rights. But Gopin is no naive idealist. This book proves how realistic, even calculating, Gopin is in practice. Gopin has his ethical limits. But within them, he will not let ideology get in the way of a good deal. Above all, he is guided by the virtue of compassion that extends even to the love of one's enemy. If you have made up your mind that religion is hopelessly violent, you may not have patience with this book. But if you are open to consider the possibilities of using religion in the cause of peace, then you will find that this is a book of exceptional wisdom.

To Make the Earth Whole studies the art of citizen diplomacy—a process that can address clashes of religion and culture across regional lines even when traditional negotiations between governments can fail. While faith and regional differences have been sources of division around the world in recent decades, millions of citizens are also creating bonds of friendship and collaboration that are forming the basis of a global community. Drawing on the experiences gleaned from years practicing citizen diplomacy in some of the world's most politically charged climates, scholar-practitioner of conflict resolution and rabbi Marc Gopin describes his work in Syria as a central case study of the book. The author outlines the strategic basis for creating community across lines of enmity, the social network theory to explain how this happens, and the long term vision required for a progressive but inclusive global community that respects religious communities even as it limits their coercive power over others. This powerful and practical book outlines an incremental and evolutionary strategy of positive change that stands a strong chance of success, even in today's most conservative and repressive religious and political contexts. *To Make the Earth Whole* also examines the ethical challenges of citizen diplomacy from the perspectives of both Western and Eastern philosophies and religions. The world's wisdom traditions are essential in devising a way for citizens to develop the foundations for global community.

Marc Gopin, a veteran and seasoned practitioner of citizen diplomacy, has written an important book, that reminds policymakers and non-policymakers alike of the critical role that ordinary people can and do play in helping to resolve conflicts. By setting in motion, in his words, a 'constellation of relationships, cultural gestures and communications', citizen diplomats literally can bring walls of mistrust and hatred tumbling down. Gopin's book focuses on the most challenging arena of all, religious militancy, and brings forth lessons learned that are well worth assimilating in our current diplomacy. (Daniel Kurtzer, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University; former U.S. ambassador to Egypt and Israel) Rabbi Marc Gopin heartens peacemakers by showing how relationships forged across the fault lines of religion emphasize faith's power to be part of the solution when it is part of the problem, and create bonds of hope against the divisive demon of despair. (Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, American Society for Muslim Advancement) When Mark Gopin, a peacemaker and a rabbi, found himself speaking to 3,000 congregants at the great mosque in Aleppo with the Grand Mufti of Syria by his side, he knew that something very special was happening. *To Make the Earth Whole* is a profoundly moving and gripping account of one man's attempt to practice citizen diplomacy in an unlikely and dangerous environment. More than that, it is a brilliant brief for peacemaking by inspired practitioners able to heal shattered relationships by building new social and spiritual networks. Gopin's tone is wise and personal: the voice of a modern sage. His book makes one understand that there is no real conflict between worldly realism and radical hope. (Richard E. Rubenstein, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University) Gopin's effort to bring his religious work into conflict resolution makes an interesting read. . . . Recommended. (CHOICE, March 2010) To say this is a case-study of 'citizen diplomacy' itself a far too bland description of what is going on here is to miss the other virtues of this work. It is at once a study of the role of militant religion in intractable conflicts, a look inside the complexity of contemporary Syria and Syrian-U.S. and Israeli relations, a primer on social network theory, a sophisticated discussion of the ethics of third parties who are outsiders to other peoples' deadly conflicts and, like so much of Gopin's work, a deeply felt account of his life's journey in peacemaking and peacebuilding. Margaret Mead once wrote, 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.' In describing his own efforts and those of a remarkable group of individuals in the Middle East and elsewhere, Marc Gopin has written a book that shows both the truth of that statement and offers insight into how it is done. (Kevin Avruch, George Mason University) This is a case study in citizen diplomacy, defined as the

attempt by private citizens to develop relationships with people in countries that are hostile toward one's own country.....It can in time help to humanize an enemy. Gopin writes out his own five-year experiment in bridge building with religious extremists in Syria. (The Christian Century 2011-06-14)About the AuthorMarc Gopin is the James H. Laue Professor of Religion, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution, and the director of the Center on Religion, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. He is also an ordained rabbi. His website is www.marcgopin.com.