BOAZ's DIPLOMATIC CIVILITY: A MODEL FOR HUMAN MEDIATION

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Abstract

This paper examines the biblical figure of Boaz in Ruth 2:4-12 as a case study in diplomatic civility and human mediation, drawing parallels between his interpersonal ethics and foundational principles of diplomacy. Rooted in the theoretical framework of relational diplomacy and moral leadership theory, the paper argues that Boaz's conduct exemplifies form o soft power diplomacy, where courtesy, inclusion, and empathetic leadership operate as tools for peace building and social harmony. Thematically, the research explores three key dimensions: Linguistic civility-Boaz's use of inclusive, affirming language among his workers and toward Ruth; Socio-ethical mediation-his role in bridging cultural and class divides; and Moral diplomacy-his actions as a non-coercive model of influence rooted in compassion, justice, and protection o the vulnerable. Through an interdisciplinary lens combining biblical ethics, diplomatic history, and conflict mediation studies, this research paper foregrounds the enduring relevance of ancient moral exemplars in shaping modern norms of civic and international engagement. This analysis contributes to academic discourse by offering a biblical-humanist model for diplomacy rooted not in power or position, but in character, relational respect, and human dignity. It challenges the current impersonal and interest-driven models of negotiation by proposing an alternative ethic of mediation based on moral persuasion and benevolent authority. The paper concludes by recommending Boazian civility as a pedagogical and diplomatic framework for peace education, inter-group relations, and leadership training, particularly in African and faith-based diplomatic contexts.

1.   Introduction

Throughout history, the art of diplomacy has played a vital role in conflict resolution, reconciliation, and peace-building across cultures. In both ancient and modern contexts, diplomacy is characterized not only by the strategic negotiation but also by the human virtues of civility, empathy, and respect. A profound biblical figure who embodies these traits is Boaz, whose actions in the Book of Ruth represent a paradigm of diplomatic civility that remains relevant for contemporary discussions on human mediation. Thus, this Book of Ruth, though brief and seemingly domestic in focus, offers significant insights into societal dynamics during the time of the Judges, a period Younger (2016) opined was marked by moral and political instability in ancient Israel. However, within this period or context, Boaz emerges as a figure of legal and moral uprightness, whose behavior toward Ruth-a Moabite widow and foreigner-reflects a combination of kindness, justice, and strategic negotiation. His dealings at the city gate with the unnamed kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 4:1-10) particularly illustrate a formal yet peaceful process of mediation, executed with public transparency, mutual respect, and communal involvement (Block, 1999).

Unlike coercive models of negotiation, Boaz's approach is grounded in what can be termed "diplomatic civility"-a principled and compassionate engagement that prioritizes the dignity of all parties involved. He does

not force outcomes but facilitates them within culturally legitimate frameworks. According to Sakenfeld, Boaz's actions demonstrate "a theological ethic of hesed," or loyal love, which fuses social justice with personal morality (Sakenfeld, 1990). Such an approach not only resolves the immediate issues of Ruth's security and inheritance but also restores lineage and honour to the family of Elimelech, thereby strengthening inter-group bonds. The relevance of Boaz's diplomatic civility extends beyond its theological significance. In contemporary global settings where conflict, exclusion, and negotiations over identity persist, his mode offers a narrative-driven framework for human mediation-especially in multi-ethnic environments. Lederach in his words emphasized the need for restorative and narrative-based peace-making models that will combine both truth, empathy, and structure (Lederach, 2005). Thus, Boaz, therefore, stands as a biblical exemplar of such a model.

2.   Conceptual Clarification
Diplomatic Civility

The term diplomatic civility refers to the practice of engaging others with respect, politeness, and tact in contexts where negotiation, dialogue, and interpersonal relations are required. It goes beyond formal diplomacy between states to include interpersonal conduct marked by patience, courtesy, and discretion (Adler-Nissen, 2015). Within the biblical narrative of Boaz, diplomatic civility is expressed through his considerate approach to Ruth, where he balances cultural protocols with empathy and fairness (Ruth 2:8-12). It is thus a framework for mediation that reflects restraint, recognition of others' dignity, and promotion of peaceable co-existence.

Human Mediation

Human mediation is the reflective and contemplative practice whereby individuals engage in deep thought about moral, spiritual, or social realities. It involves a cognitive and ethical dimension, enabling humans to discern meaning and direction for life through reflection (Kornfield, 2004). In the context of Boaz's historical account human mediation serves as a process of engaging his actions not merely as historical acts, but as moral paradigms for cultivating civility and compassion in human interactions.

Theological Ethics

Theological ethics is the discipline that explores moral behavior and decision-making from the perspective of divine revelation, scripture, and faith traditions (Gustafson, 1981). It is not simply about abstract norms but about applying God-centered principles to human conduct. Boaz's actions illustrate theological ethics in practice, as his generosity, fairness, and protective stance toward Ruth embody covenantal obligations grounded in Yahwistic faith traditions. Theological ethics, therefore, provides a framework for interpreting Boaz's civility as a religiously motivated moral action.

Relational Diplomacy

Relational diplomacy highlights the centrality of trust, empathy, and long-term relationships in interactions, rather than transactional or coercive exchanges (Constantinou, 1996). It emphasizes the weaving of social bonds, inclusion, and shared values. Boaz exemplifies relational diplomacy by fostering community ties that integrate Ruth-a Moabite outsider-into Israelite society, thus prioritizing human solidarity over ethnic exclusion. His role demonstrates that diplomacy is not only political but can be relational, founded on interpersonal responsibility and benevolence.

Linguistic Civility

This term entails the careful use of language that promotes respect, avoids offense, and acknowledges the dignity of others (Lakoff, 2005). It is a communicative ethic rooted in politeness theory and moral responsibility in speech. Boaz's use of language toward Ruth is marked by affirmation ("May the Lord repay you for what you have done," Ruth 2:12), which contrasts with the silence or hostility outsiders often faced in Israel. His words reflect linguistic civility as a form of diplomacy that builds bridges instead of walls.

Moabites

Moabites are descended from Lot's son, Moab (Genesis 19:37), and close neighbouring nation of Israel. Historically, they were often portrayed in strained relations with Israel, sometimes hostile and other times cooperative (Younger, 2016). The biblical prohibition against Moabite integration into Israel's assembly (Deut. 23:3) underscores the ethnic tensions of the period. Ruth's Moabite identity thus frames Boaz's diplomatic civility as countercultural, as he extended kindness and acceptance to one considered "the other."

Covenantal Loyalty

Covenant loyalty, often expressed by the Hebrew term hesed, refers to steadfast love, faithfulness, and commitment within the framework of God's covenant with His people (Sakenfeld, 1990). It is not mere obligation but loyalty infused with compassion and mercy. Boaz embodies covenantal loyalty by acting beyond legal expectations-protecting Ruth and ensuring her inheritance within Israelite society. His actions are a model of covenantal faithfulness that integrates divine ethics with social responsibility.

Inclusive Justice

The term inclusive justice simple explain the act of fairness and equity that transcend ethnic, social, or gender boundaries, ensuring that marginalized individuals are not excluded from the benefits of justice (Rawls, 1999). It is justice widened by compassion, addressing historical exclusions. Boaz's treatment of Ruth manifests inclusive justice, as he ensures her dignity and access to resources despite her identity as a Moabite widow. His actions suggest a theological vision of justice that integrates outsiders into the communal life of Israel.

3. Theoretical Framework

Suitable theories to underpin Boaz's Diplomatic Civility as foundations are the Relational Diplomacy and Moral Leadership Theories. Thus, to adequately interpret Boaz's diplomatic civility in the Book of Ruth as a model for human mediation and interactions can be viewed not merely as individual acts of kindness, but as deliberate, ethical, and socially embedded forms of peace-oriented diplomacy. Relational diplomacy according to Kerr & Wiseman (2013) is a form of diplomacy that prioritizes the cultivation and maintenance of interpersonal and inter-cultural relationships over transactional or coercive strategies. Accordingly, the theory is rooted in the broader discipline of peace and conflict studies, considering diplomacy not merely as negotiation between power blocs, but as a people-centered and value-driven process (Kerr and Wiseman 38). The theory emphasizes trust, mutual respect, cultural sensitivity, and emotional intelligence-qualities that are explicitly demonstrated in Boaz's engagements with Ruth, Naomi, and the broader Bethlehem community.

Boaz the kinsman redeemer's conduct fits within this model in several key ways. First, his interaction with Ruth is characterized by empathy and cross-cultural openness, despite her status as a Moabite-an ethnic-group historically viewed with suspicion by Israelites (Ruth 2:10-13). His communication is non-aggressive and affirming, showing attentiveness to her dignity and needs. Secondly, at the city gate (Ruth 4:1-10), Boaz engages in a relationally sensitive form of legal diplomacy, offering the nearer kinsman the chance to redeem the land and Ruth before claiming the right himself. Thus, this form of public and procedural diplomacy, grounded in community structures, avoids conflict and preserves social cohesion. As Sharp notes, "Relational diplomacy hinges on sustained attentiveness to the other," a virtue central to Boaz's behavior (Sharp, 2023). Moreover, relational diplomacy values symbolic gestures and the moral imagination-a willingness to envision reconcile futures (Lederach, 2005). Boaz's actions not only resolve personal matters but also contribute to the continuity of Elimelech's lineage and restore Naomi's social standing, further supporting the idea that relational diplomacy can be transformative at both personal and communal levels.

For Ciulla moral leadership refers to leadership practices that are driven by ethical convictions, a sense of justice, and a commitment to the common good. For him it extends beyond organizational efficiency or strategic vision to include the leader's character, integrity, and mora responsibility (Ciulla, 2014). Boaz exemplifies this form of leadership through his decisions, public transparency, and concern for the vulnerable. Thus, he was not a king or priest, yet he exercises authority grounded in moral credibility and social influence. Boaz leadership is marked by hesed-a Hebrew term often translated as "loving-kindness" or "covenantal loyalty"-which scholars like Sakenfeld interpret as central to the theological and ethical message of Ruth (Sakenfeld, 1985). Boaz does not act out of obligation alone but goes beyond legal requirements to ensure the well-being of Ruth and Naomi. His leadership is quietly influential, rooted in consistency, fairness, and a sense of responsibility to others.

Furthermore, moral leadership theory as well involves modeling behavior for others, thereby shaping collective ethical norms (Burns, 1978). In this way, Boaz becomes a model not only for Ruth and Naomi but for the community of Bethlehem and future generations. His inclusion in the genealogy of David (Ruth 4:21-22) and ultimately Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5-6) underscores the long-term societal impact of moral leadership grounded in diplomacy and civility. Accordingly, by integrating Relational Diplomacy and Moral Leadership Theories, this framework positions Boaz's actions as a viable biblical model of human mediation. His conduct is not merely personal righteousness but is embedded in a relational ethic that privileges community peace, personal dignity, and moral responsibility. These frameworks help to translate the ancient narrative into a contemporary model for conflict transformation, dialogue facilitation, and peace-building in multicultural and religiously diverse societies.

This study contributes to academic discourse in the following ways:
It repositions Boaz not merely as a benevolent biblical character, but as a case study in ancient diplomatic ethics, contributing to the expansion of political and diplomatic theory into biblical narratives.
It offers a textual and theoretical integration of relational diplomacy, moral leadership theory, and speech ethics, creating a multidisciplinary approach useful for theology, leadership studies, and peace and conflict research.

The research broadens understanding of non-coercive leadership models in sacred texts, demonstrating that peaceful mediation and inclusive justice were not absent from ancient patriarchal societies but were embodied through moral agents like Boaz.

Furthermore, it adds to the growing scholarship on biblical models of inter-cultural reconciliation, gender-sensitive diplomacy, and ethical leadership, offering practical implications for faith-based diplomacy, conflict-sensitive communication, and community building in divided societies.

Appraisal of Related Literature

The reviewed works present a rebust of scholarly foundation for examining Boaz's actions in Ruth through the lenses of civility, diplomacy, and theological ethics. Collectively, they highlight key themes of hospitality, covenantal loyalty, inclusion of outsiders, and the ethics of speech, which resonate with the conceptual framework of the present study.

Chapman (2023) offers a socio-anthropological reading of Boaz's field, showing how labour, food, and land-sharing generate kinship. This situates Boaz's civility in concrete social practices, thereby grounding the study's theoretical orientation in material realities of survival and solidarity. Similarly, Kugler & Magori (2023) problematize hesed as a moral tool limited by rigid structures, reminding us that civility and loyalty do not exist in a vacuum but operate within systemic constraints. Their analysis adds nuance to understanding Boaz's choice as both ethical and structurally embedded. The theological trajectory of hesed is further emphasized in Mawikere et al. (2024), who underscore its transformative dimension. Their focus strengthens the argument that Boaz's actions can be read as paradigms for "human mediation," where individuals discern moral pathways for contemporary contexts. Ejima (2025), meanwhile, introduces a psycho-theological lens, underscoring how Ruth's narrative reframes community acceptance of outsiders. This directly informs the current study's concern with inclusive justice and the integration of marginalize voices.

Adamo (2024) advances the discussion by engaging Ruth's Moabite identity through African hermeneutics, foregrounding cross-cultural dynamics of exclusion and hospitality. His contribution enriches the inter-cultural dimension of "diplomatic civility," making the study relevant beyond biblical Israel. Accordingly, Thambyraah (2021; 2023) provides a critical exploration of Ruth's Moabite ethnicity and its geo-political echoes in ancient Near Eastern inscriptions. His work underlines the enduring "otherness" of Ruth. Thereby framing Boaz's civility as a counter-cultural and diplomatic act. Gatti (2022) contributes a literary-theological reading that tracks Ruth's transformation "from alien to neighbor." This narrative trajectory closely parallels the current study's concern with relational diplomacy, where civility mediates between exclusion and belonging. Thus, taken together, these studies illuminate the ethical, theological, and inter-cultural dimensions of the Ruth narrative but rarely synthesized under the rubric of "diplomatic civility." While they address hesed, ethnicity, hospitality, and inclusion, none explicitly theorize civility as diplomacy or as a model for human meditation. Thus, the present study fills this scholarly hiatus by systematizing these insights into a framework that connects Boaz's actions with contemporary moral reflection and inter-cultural dialogue.

Boaz's Use of Inclusive Affirmative Linguistic Civility among His Staff and Ruth

One of the often-overlooked dimensions of Boaz's diplomatic civility in the Book of Ruth is his use of inclusive and affirming language, which fosters a climate of respect, trust, and belonging. Boaz's speech, particularly in Ruth 2, reveals a model of linguistic civility-a strategic and ethical use of words that not only affirms the humanity of others but also dissolves hierarchical and cultural boundaries. In these interactions with both his field workers and with Ruth, a Moabite outsider, Boaz demonstrates a language of welcome, peace, and blessing, which serves as a microcosm of how civil discourse can build social cohesion and support mediation processes. In Ruth 2:4, Boaz greets his reapers with the words, "The LORD be with you," to which they respond, "The LORD bless you." This reciprocal blessing, though brief, is significant. It shows a work environment where hierarchy does not suppress dignity but is tempered by mutual respect and spiritual affirmation (Younger, 1990). Boaz, as a landowner, does not command with harshness or detachment; instead, his tone suggests relational equity and moral leadership. According to Sakenfeld, Boaz's linguistic choices exhibit "covenantal loyalty in speech," creating a community dynamic that reflects theological and ethical coherence (Sakenfeld, 1990).

Thus, his first words to Ruth are equally affirming. In Ruth 2:8-9, Boaz says, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field…. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you." This address, "my daughter," is both inclusive and protective, signaling familial acceptance despite Ruth's Moabite identity. It repositions her from an ethnic outsider to a socially integrated individual. The language used here is what communication theorists call "affirmative civility"-a communicative style that merges compassion with boundaries to foster belonging (Clark, 1998). By addressing her in familial terms, Boaz reframes Ruth's status without denying her identity. His speech, therefore, is both a bridge of peace and a tool of empowerment. This use of affirming

language is even more critical in light of the hostile socio-political atmosphere toward Moabites in Israelite tradition (Deut. 23:3). That Boaz publicly engages Ruth with such verbal dignity serves not only as interpersonal kindness but as social mediation-defusing ethnic suspicion and reordering perceptions within his community or ethnic group. Again, his language does not merely express goodwill; it strategically reorients social dynamics. As Lederach observes, peace-builders must "use language that affirms identity while transforming relationships" (Lederach, 2005). Boaz does precisely this-through both blessing and instruction, he communicates solidarity without superiority.

In a modern context, such inclusive affirmative linguistic civility can serve as a blueprint for interpersonal diplomacy and restorative dialogue, especially in multi-cultural and conflict-prone environments. It supports the idea that language is a primary tool for peace-building-capable of healing divides, affirming dignity, and creating safe spaces for negotiation (Boulding, 2000). Boaz's conduct reveals that diplomacy need not be restricted to formal political arenas; it can be enacted in the everyday, especially through ethical speech.

Boaz's Role in the Socio-Ethical Bridging of Cultural and Class Divides
The narrative of Boaz in the Book of Ruth offers a compelling case study of diplomatic civility expressed through socio-ethical bridging of cultural and class divisions. In a historical context marked by tribal identity, patriarchal hierarchies, and ethnic exclusivity, Boaz's engagement with Ruth-a poor, foreign, widowed gleaner-demonstrates an intentional departure from social norms that excluded and marginalized. His actions provide a model for human mediation that transcends transactional charity by integrating relational diplomacy, moral responsibility, and inclusive justice. Thus, Ruth's position in Israelite society was doubly vulnerable: as a Moabite, she carried the stigma of national enmity (Deut. 23:3), and as a widow, she occupied the lowest rungs of social and economic life. Yet Boaz, a wealthy Israelite landowner and member of the covenant community, deliberate reconfigures these divides through public and personal actions that bridge Ruth's outsider status. He ensures her access to gleaning rights (Ruth 2:8-9), instructs his male workers to treat her with respect (Ruth 2:15), and ultimately elevates her status through marriage and legal redemption (Ruth 4:9-10). As noted by Block, Boaz's behavior reflects a "conscious effort to embody covenantal royalty in both legal and moral dimensions" (Block, 1999).

Boaz does not merely provide aid; he acts as a social mediator, reconciling the structural divide between Israelite privilege and Moabite marginality. His example illustrates what social ethicists refer to as "transformational hospitality," where ethical engagement results in lasting reorientation of social relationships (Pohl, 1999). His decisions are not isolated acts of generosity but part of a broader civic ethic that recognizes the moral weight of inclusion. In this sense, Boaz performs what Lederach calls "moral imagination"-the capacity to perceive the humanity of the other and build relationships across entrenched boundaries (Lederach, 2005). Moreover, Boaz's social standing magnifies the diplomatic weight of his actions. As a landowner and a respected man in Bethlehem, Boaz uses his structural privilege not to reinforce inequality but to redistribute dignity. Thus, his decision to redeem Ruth before the elders at the city gate (Ruth 4:1-10) is both a legal transaction and a public act of restorative justice. This is essential in ancient contexts, where legal and social status were tightly bound to ethnic and class identity. Boaz demonstrates what scholar's like Burns calls moral leadership, which:
Arises not from authority alone but from a commitment to shared values and common humanity (Burns, 1978).

By merging ethical conduct with social influence, Boaz serves as a diplomatic bridge-builder-not in a geo-political arena, but in a microcosmic, communal setting that mirrors contemporary divided societies. His role underscores that human mediation is most effective when it addresses not only interpersonal conflicts but deep-rooted structural exclusions. As modern societies struggle with growing gaps between classes, races, and cultures, Boaz's example provides a biblically grounded, ethically informed model for socio-cultural diplomacy in everyday life.

Moral Diplomacy: Boaz's Actions of Non-Coercive Model
In the study of ancient Near Eastern societies, authority was often enacted through coercion, particularly the patriarchal dominance, and socio-political stratification. However, the biblical figure of Boaz in the Book of Ruth provides an instructive alternative model of moral diplomacy grounded in non-coercive action, civil discourse, and ethical responsibility. His relational conduct demonstrates a model of diplomacy that prioritizes persuasion over force, consent over domination, and community-based justice over self-interest, thus embodying the very spirit of human mediation grounded in civility and moral clarity. Boaz's pivotal act of diplomacy takes place in Ruth 4, where he negotiates the legal redemption of Ruth and the property of her deceased husband, Mahlon. Although Boaz had the personal and social capital to assert his claim directly, he instead demonstrates non-coercive diplomacy by first acknowledging the nearer kinsman's legal right and presenting him with the option to redeem the land and Ruth (Ruth 4:3-5). Only when the man declines those Boaz proceed with the

redemption himself (Ruth 4:6-10). This decision not only upholds the legal integrity of the process but also preserves community trust and avoids unnecessary conflict. As noted by Block, Boaz respects the rights and agency of others while navigating the legal system with transparency and grace (Block 1999).

This non-coercive model resonates with what modern theorists describe as moral diplomacy-the use of influence, respect, and ethical reasoning in place of authoritarian or manipulative tactics. According to Joseph Nye, "soft power" is most effective when it stems from credibility, ethical leadership, and attraction rather than compulsion (Nye 2004). Boaz exemplifies this soft power by earning the community's admiration not through force, but through acts of integrity, provision, and inclusion. His role at the city gate was not only legal but symbolic-a form of public moral leadership that shape communal perception and policy. Boaz's diplomacy is also distinguished by his respect or individual agency, particularly in his treatment of Ruth. He does not exploit her vulnerability as a foreign, widowed woman in a patriarchal socio-cultural society like the nation of Israel. Instead, he protects her dignity, provides her access to resources, and ultimately elevates her status through lawful marriage (Ruth 2:8-12; 4:13). His actions also align with what Ciulla calls ethical leadership, which "does not manipulate followers, but instead invites them into a shared moral vision" (Ciulla 2014). Boaz does not demand loyalty or obedience; rather, he earns trust through a lived example of justice and compassion.

Moreover, Boaz's non-coercive diplomacy fosters long-term peace and reconciliation, not only for Ruth and Naomi but also for the community of Bethlehem and the Moabite socio-ethnic group. Thus, the blessed decision table of the elders and people on Boaz, linked his marriage to Ruth with Israel's ancestral lineage. That singular action underscored reconciliation between Israel and Moab into God's salvific plan, loosening or altering a long time historically strained relations between the Israelites and Moabites during Israel's wilderness journey (Ruth 4:11; Matthew 1:5; Deuteronomy 23:3-6). Accordingly, the narrative of the existing tensions between Israel and Moab, Ruth a Moabitess breaks that circle of enmity by portraying a Moabite woman not as an adversary but as a faithful covenant partner. This act anticipates what modern scholars term a micro-diplomacy of reconciliation through marriage and kinship ties (Eskenazi, 1992).

For Daniel Block, Ruth's integration demonstrates Yahweh's inclusive purpose, suggesting that divine providence transcends ethnic hostilities (Block, 1999). The genealogy in Matthew reflects a long-term theological reconciliation, integrating Moab into the Messianic line. However, in as much as scriptural theology presents reconciliation, socio-political and historical reality reveals periodic hostility that was only resolved in the redemptive plan through Christ.

Furthermore, the elders affirm Boaz's decision, and the blessing upon Ruth-signifies a communal validation of moral leadership rooted in consent and righteousness. His moral diplomacy thus not only resolves a private dilemma but contributes to the covenantal narrative that leads to the Davidic line (Ruth 4:17), illustrating how ethical negotiation can have generational impact. However, in today's fragmented societies, Boaz's approach of non-coercive diplomacy toward Ruth embodies or offers a model for peace-building, peaceful inter-ethnic engagement, and leadership that relies not on coercion or manipulation nor corrupt attitudinal life style, but on moral conviction, civil discourse, and inclusive process. His diplomacy-embedded in justice, transparency, and respect-provides a rich biblical paradigm for scholars and practitioners of conflict resolution, ethical governance, and human mediation. Despite that his creative model for reconciliation was unable to sustain stable peace historically and politically, yet his diplomatic civility demonstrates how covenantal diplomacy through marriage, kindness, and faith produced long-term spiritual peace between related ethnic groups (Matthews, 2002).

A Comparative Table of Theological Reconciliation versus Historical Hostility between Israelites and Moabites

Dimension	Theological Reconciliation	Historical Hostility
Scriptural Basis	Ruth's inclusion in Israel (Ruth 1:16-17; 4:11) and genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:5).	Moabites oppose Israel in wilderness journey (Deut. 23:3-6; Num. 22-24).
Boaz's Diplomatic Role	Boaz engages Ruth with kindness, legal fairness, and covenantal respect (Ruth 2:8-12; 4:9=10).	Moabite hostility persisted in military confrontations with Israel under King Saul the son of Kish and King David the son of Jesse (1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:2).
Family and Covenant	Inter-marriage produced lineage leading to King David and ultimately our Lord Jesus Christ, symbolizing spiritual peace (Ps. 128:3).	Moabites remained excluded from assembly of the Lord for ten generations (Deut. 23:3).

| Divine Providence | God's redemptive plan integrates Moabites into covenant history, signaling inclusivity and peace (Eskenazi 1992). | Politically, Moab remained a rival state; enmity continued into prophetic times (Isaiah 15-16; Amos 2:1). |
| Long-term Outcome | Theologically, reconciliation is fulfilled in Christ through Ruth's legacy (Matt. 1:5-6). | Historically, hostility lingered until Moab disappeared as a nation after Babylonian conquest (6th century BCE). |

Sources: (The Holy Bible, Block, 1999; Eskennazi, 1992; Matthews, 2002; Sweeney, 2005; and Smith, 2002). Theologically, Ruth and Boaz's episode models peaceful reconciliation, culminating in the Messianic lineage, but on the other hand, historically Israel and Moab maintained cycles of hostility, never achieving enduring political stability and peace.

4.   Conclusion

Reflecting on the examined figure, Boaz in the Book of Ruth as a compelling model of diplomatic civility, with emphasis on his non-coercive moral leadership, relational diplomacy, and inclusive linguistic ethics. Through a socio-ethical reading of Ruth 2-4, it is evident that Boaz's actions were deeply rooted in values of justice, compassion, and covenantal responsibility. He operated not through dominance or manipulation, but through moral influence, respectful negotiation, and public transparency-hallmarks of what contemporary scholars describe as relational diplomacy and ethical leadership (Lederach, 2005; Ciulla, 2014).

Boaz bridged deep-seated cultural and class divides, treating Ruth-a foreign, widowed, and economically vulnerable woman-with dignity, protection, and legal affirmation. His use of affirmative and inclusive language, both with his workers and with Ruth, exemplified a diplomacy grounded in speech ethics and social harmony. He respected communal customs while advancing equity, thereby serving as a micro-cosmic reflection of how ancient diplomacy could operate through moral civility rather than coercive power (Block, 1999; Pohl, 1999). In modern discussions on conflict resolution, peace-building, and leadership, Boaz's conduct offers a biblically grounded, socially transformative paradigm for human mediation. Boaz's hagiographical life history challenges both sacred and secular spaces to reconsider leadership as a practice rooted not in authority or political leverage, but in ethical responsiveness, relational trust, and covenantal responsibility (Burns, 1978; Nye, 2004).

5.   Recommendations

The account of Boaz's hagiographical life history that showcases a high level of moral diplomatic life style and relational leadership, highlighted reveals its relevance to contemporary ethical challenges and inter-cultural engagement. Thus, these can be incorporated into the following areas:

Boaz's moral diplomacy and relational leadership style should be incorporated as a curricular in seminaries and conventional universities under a suggested academic course of study, titled theological and ethical moral diplomacy of leadership style.

Faith-based and grass-root organizational training programmes should be encouraged so as to institute peace-building and mediation training outfit and encourage non-coercive strategies modeled in line with Boaz's design of conflict transformative tools that are both contextually grounded and morally rich.

Comparing Boaz's diplomatic civility with other ancient Near Eastern figures and with modern ethical leadership models, we opined that interdisciplinary research should be conducted so as to build an enriched comparative diplomacy and biblical leadership course curricula.

Scholars and practitioners of biblical narrative theology should further explore the intersection of speech ethics, socio-economic justice, and covenantal loyalty in other biblical accounts, to widen the framework of scriptural contributions to human mediation.

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