

Conflict and Education in Israel: University Educators and  
Challenging Conflict Narratives

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
The University of Manitoba

In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Winnipeg

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## **Abstract**

This research represents an innovative examination of the role of university educators in protracted ethnic conflict. In this exploratory qualitative case study, Israeli professors from five universities were asked to share their experiences and opinions as educators. They were invited to share their perceptions and perspectives when asked if they chose to challenge conflict narratives in the classroom. Research participants were asked to picture the future and to communicate their fears, worries, hopes and wishes. The educators interviewed in this study felt the atmosphere in Israel was hostile to individuals who teach from a critical standpoint and that there could be repercussions for persons who challenged the Zionist narrative. Educators used a variety of methods regarding contested materials: some spoke freely, many used a comparative approach using examples external to Israel, and some refused to discuss sensitive issues in the classroom. The results of this study point to an escalation in extreme positions in Israel, an inhospitable atmosphere for critical academics and a general pessimism regarding the future. However, this study also revealed the majority of those interviewed used strategies to challenge narratives of conflict in the classroom and most felt it was essential and beneficial to do so. Many respondents felt worried and uncertain about the future, most struggled to imagine a future that encompassed the qualities of ‘positive peace’ including mutual cooperation and equity among individuals and even fewer could imagine the means to manifest such a reality. When asked to imagine the future, responses were conservative, pessimistic and fearful and few educators articulated their professional contributions to social change.

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## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to express her gratitude for the support she received from fellow Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) ‘Mauro-ites’ Stephanie Westlund and Maureen Flaherty. She is indebted to all of the Israeli Educators who volunteered to share their time, contacts and impressions with her despite the time difference, dropped calls, poor connections and crying baby. She thanks her committee members Dr. Tami Jacoby and Dr. Roewan Crowe for their support, insight, input and encouragement. She is overwhelmingly grateful to her husband Corey for incalculable support, encouragement and outright threats! She is thankful for her loving, intelligent and instrumental parents Wendy and Nick and her sisters Nounie and Titi. The author would like to thank Sean Byrne and Jessica Senehi for their vision, and inspiration, and for being role models for what it means to create, share and manifest peace. Finally, the author would like to thank her lovely daughter Madelin for showing up during the author’s candidacy exam and making absolutely everything more difficult, more challenging and worth every second.

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## **Chapter One: Learning Conflict, Learning Peace**

### **Introduction**

This is an exploratory case study of Israeli educators' perceptions, images, opinions hopes and fears. Peace education can play a vital role in delegitimizing cultural intolerance. Schools are "key sites for the promotion of both symbolic and physical violence," but they are also one of the only legitimate avenues available to promote cultural tolerance and human rights (Boulding, 1988, p. 196; Bryan & Vavrus, 2005, p.196). Israel, as a site of protracted ethnic conflict, continues to contest social history through cultural and political constructions of the past that include the institutionalization of the dominant Zionist narrative (Morris, 2001). Zionism refers to the political movement that supported a Jewish homeland in Palestine and is the dominant form of Jewish Nationalism in Israel. "Following segregated schooling until age eighteen, Israeli universities constitute the first instance of an integrated educational system where two national groups meet and interact socially and academically" (Zelniker, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Peretz, Azaiza, & Sharabany, 2009, p. 200). There are few interdisciplinary studies of the role and experience of educators in ethnic conflict zones who teach in post-secondary institutions. This study illuminates the thoughts and perceptions of university educators in the social sciences and humanities from five Israeli institutions of higher learning in order to discover their experiences, perspectives and visions of the future.

This qualitative research study investigates the observations, experiences and attitudes of post-secondary educators in Israel to explore whether it is possible, at the

tertiary level, to challenge group perceptions of history—conflict narratives—in the classroom and what impact, if any doing so has on the role of the educator. Because this research combines scholarship in peace education, protracted ethnic conflict and conflict and education, a variety of sources are used to form the theoretical foundations of this thesis including the role of education in cultural, symbolic and alienating violence. This study represents an inquiry into challenging conflict narratives in post-secondary education by exploring the unique positionality of educators. The role of the teacher in society is explored as is the distinctive place held by educators during conflict. By surveying the perceptions, perspectives and experiences of educators who work in post-secondary institutions, this research explores the interesting positionality of educators as agents wielding “both an instrument for oppression and a tool for liberation” (Friere, 2006; Alzaroo & Lewando Hunt, 2003, p. 165).

### Statement of the Problem: Peace and Conflict and Education

Nationalism is the political ideal that each distinct nation should have a homeland (Eller, 1999). For many ethnic groups, the rise of nation-states and the creation of citizen-based identities, institutionalized certain nationalisms that were in fact ethnic ideologies, which held that their ethnic group should control the state (Eriksen, 2002) and in the extreme implied “the superiority of a people over others and even the moral right or duty to dominate and subordinate them” (Esman, 2004, p. 41). Education systems are intrinsically associated with nation-building, “the curricula taught in schools are one of the most important sources of social legitimacy” thus groups whose histories, life experiences and cultures are not reflected in educational systems can suffer from feelings

of inferiority and low self-esteem (Tamir, 2005, p.502; Tawil & Harley, 2004). Further, education systems as contributors to inter-cultural intolerance can contribute decisively to increases in social/cultural tensions and result in increases in violent ethnic conflict (Seitz, 2004).

Researchers have identified a variety of instances in which inter-cultural tensions can be affected by education (Byrne, 1997) including “education as a weapon in cultural repression; denial of education as a weapon of war; the manipulations of history for political purposes; the manipulation of textbooks; and segregated education that tends to reinforce inequality...and stereotyping” (Tawil & Harley, 2004, p. 5). Conversely, education based on the mutual acknowledgement and recognition of ‘others’ can reduce intercultural as well as interpersonal violence and contribute to a culture of peace (Boulding, 1988; Davies, 2004; Freire, 2006). A culture of peace “implies a richer and more sophisticated sense of belonging that sees one’s immediate community and identity as conjoined to, tolerant of, overlapping with, complementary to, and relationally implicated in other ethno-national communities” (Anastasiou, 2009, p. 40).

Anastasiou contends that a primary goal in the transformation of ethnic conflict involves “getting rival groups to a point of mutually acknowledging, either implicitly or explicitly, the injury they inflicted on one another in the course of their conflict” (2009, p. 36). Essential to the goal of legitimizing the ‘other’ is the ability for a community to release entrenched perceived histories. According to Salomon, “when a community’s collective narrative start becoming questioned and ‘sacred cows’ become candidates for

slaughter, the monolithic grip of collective narrative weakens and an examination of each side's actions can take place" (2004, p. 279).

Davies (2004, p. 7) has identified that "the link between conflict and education is a grossly under-analyzed area" and one in which scholars would do well to explore as education systems act not only as mediums for ethnic mobilization but can also "play a significant role in overcoming the many forms of intolerance that are widespread in society" (cited in Bryan & Vavrus, 2005, p. 196).

As transmitters of social authority educators occupy an essential position in society capable of either supporting or challenging social inequalities. Educators can be seen to legitimize the social order and are the symbolic markers of group identity. Identity refers to "a sense of self, a way individuals know and understand themselves" (Cook-Huffman, 2009, p. 19). This conceptual understanding of identity is significant because it refers to more than intrinsic markers with which one is born with, such as sex, but comprises the way in which identity contributes to how we see the world around us and includes the way in which we see others as well. Group identity becomes an agreed upon standard for conceptualizing the self, the society and importantly, the place of history in making a people distinct. In identity-based conflicts, schooling plays a central role in "the formation and transmission of collective identity, memory, and a sense of citizenship and shared identity" (Tawil & Harley, 2004, p. 6).

Additionally, as "a dominated segment of the dominant class," educators can often feel personally threatened when their cultural identities and employment requirements

affect their economic security (Schubert, 2002, p. 1092). Educators at risk of job loss if they challenge dominant conflict narratives or hold opposing political views or participate in activism that undermines the dominant regime, occupy a perilous position that can result in persecution, dismissal, conflict and interpersonal discord with their cultural communities (Makkawi, 2002).

### Research Question

Education is a direct contributor to ethnic tolerance and intolerance. The aim of this study is to address the impact conflict narratives have on the experience of post-secondary teaching. In addition, if conflict narratives affect the content explored in the classroom do educators, support, challenge or ignore such content? This approach requires investigation of the opportunities that may exist to challenge conflict narratives and furthermore, seeks to determine whether educators use alternative ‘cultural histories’ in the classroom. Significant to these aims is the question of whether or not attempts from educators to engage with such alternative/opposing histories are perceived as desirable and encouraged or discouraged or even forbidden. Moreover, do consequences exist for educators who seek to challenge dominant conflict narratives and does a relationship exist between the ability for educators to approach contested material and a reduction of inter-cultural conflict? Finally, in light of these driving questions, how do educators imagine the future for themselves and their country?

## Chapters Overview

This thesis uses qualitative research methods to investigate the perceptions, images and perspectives of post-secondary educators in Israel. The first half of this thesis addresses theories, concepts and the analytical context of this study while the second half provides the methods and research findings. Chapter 1 has introduced the concept of learning conflict and learning peace and presented the research question. In Chapter 2, the general characteristics of protracted ethnic conflict are identified with specific attention paid to past and current incarnations of the conflicts involving Israel. This chapter seeks to explore the historical context of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and expands the analytical framework using Byrne and Carter's Social Cubism model (1996) to explore the role of culture, gender, religion, politics and social class. A general history of the Arab/Israeli conflict is recounted to provide a solid foundation for understanding ethnic conflict in this region with a specific objective of illuminating how the Israeli/Palestinian conflict has emerged and transformed over time. Chapter 2 also identifies four important roots of conflict narratives in the Israeli-Palestinian cultures including what ideologies have impacted the conflict, how armed struggle/resistance is articulated to the conflict, how religion and in particular the sacred site of Jerusalem plays a part and how the notions of exile and return apply to Israeli and Palestinian conflict narratives. Chapter 3 identifies the theoretical foundations of this study exploring ethnicity and ethnic conflict, the creation and use of narratives in conflict and the connection between education, conflict and peace. This Chapter investigates the role of

the teacher in society, reviews Peace Education in Israel and explores five methods of conflict transformation that tap into the moral imagination (Lederach, 2005).

The second half of this thesis begins with Chapter 4's exploration of the methodology used in this study including, the data collection and research participants, the types of research instruments used, the strengths and weaknesses of this study and any personal biases and limitations. The next three chapters represent the research findings of this study. Chapter 5 explores the place of conflict in education and explores the personal position of educators, any risks involved in that role and the strategies used in addressing conflict narratives. Chapter 6 observes the obstacles and opportunities in educating for peace and Chapter 7 analyses responses from educators asked two questions from the Self-Anchoring Striving Scale (Cantril, 1965) sharing their worries, fears, hopes and dreams for the future. Chapter 8 shares the key findings from this study as well as directives for where the research could progress in the future. In addition, this chapter will identify the successes and challenges of the research model used.

### The Objective of This Evaluation

The goal of this research is to investigate the role of the educator in ethnic conflict to complement similar studies that link peace, conflict and education (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006b; Bar-Tal, 2004; Bekerman, 2007; Byrne, 1997; Davies, 2004; Gallagher, 2004; McGlynn, Zembylas, Bekerman, & Gallagher, 2009). The purpose of this interdisciplinary case study is to survey the perceptions, experiences and perspectives of post-secondary educators working in a region that has suffered from ethnic conflict. The



goals of this study are to gain a perspective on the challenges of educators living in countries undergoing protracted ethnic conflict and assess if the opportunity to challenge conflict narratives is possible, desirable or dangerous.

This study is an attempt to broaden current Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) scholarship into the use of school curriculum in fomenting ethnic tolerance or intolerance by investigating obstacles or opportunities in post-secondary education that may delegitimize cultural discrimination. By interviewing educators this research seeks to recognize the, at times, difficult position of being both a member of an ethnic/cultural community as well as an agent of state legitimacy. Because education plays such a vital role in providing social authority it represents a valuable aperture with which to investigate the potential and possibilities of decreasing inter-cultural discord in countries that have experienced protracted ethnic conflict. This research may provide valuable findings of the perceptions of educators today, struggling with the incarnations, both tangible and symbolic of the distant or not-so-distant past. In nations that suffer from protracted ethnic conflict the switch from war education to peace education is considered critical. Understanding the connection between conflict and education is a significant step toward change.

### Conclusions

The goals of this qualitative research study are to investigate the obstacles and opportunities to challenging conflict narratives at the post-secondary level and to explore the role of the teacher both personally and professionally in a country experiencing

protracted ethnic conflict. Because people attach stories or narratives to history in order to make sense and communicate experiences this research explores whether prospects exist to challenge deeply held national narratives in the classroom and what impact that has for Israeli educators. In addition, this research will look at the role of future visioning as an instrument for conflict transformation by asking educators their worries, fears, hopes and wishes for the future. This research will contribute a new understanding of the experience of educators in conflict.

## Chapter Two: the Israeli/Palestinian conflict

### Introduction

Social conflicts involve struggles between identity groups to meet such basic needs as security, sustainability, spiritual freedom and communality. As a result of population migration and geopolitical forces overtime, it has become increasingly common for two or more identity groups to share the same political space and to compete for economic resources and social power (Esman, 2004). In protracted ethnic conflict, groups are divided by ethnicity, a form of relational identity that does not exist without the existence of an 'other' (Brubaker & Laitin, 1998). Because "since World War II every successful revolution has defined itself in national terms," (Anderson, 2006, p. 2) it is not surprising that ethnic conflict has developed into a "world-wide phenomenon that has become the leading source of lethal violence in international affairs" (Esman, 2004, p. 26).

#### *Protracted-Ethnic Conflict*

Ethnic conflict becomes protracted when it is rooted in a "fear of extinction," a form of anxiety characterised as a deep fear of annihilation either physically or culturally (Horowitz, 2000, p. 175). Protracted ethnic conflicts differ from other forms of conflict in a variety of ways:

They are bloody (the violence often involving paramilitary organizations); they signal the loss of authority and eventual breakdown of governing institutions; and they trigger a fragmentation of public opinion, the growth of radical counterelites, and the evolution of a centrifugal political system. [They] tend to be intractable, since resolving them requires warring ethnic groups to make concessions they cannot contemplate while under threat (Crighton & Mac Iver, 1991, p. 127).

In order to understand protracted ethnic conflict it is essential to recognize that modern conflicts involve the mobilization of, and systematic attacks upon, civilians (Brown, 2001). In the twentieth century, and in the emerging decade of the new millennium, the majority of protracted ethnic conflicts, because they rally group identity, have resulted in the conceptualization that enemy ethnic group members themselves embody antagonism and are viable targets of both resistant and aggressive violence (Ignatieff, 1993).

Because ethnicity writs large and politicizes descent, contestation between ethnic groups has permitted hostility against non-political ethnic members as ‘symbols’ of opposition. In this way, protracted ethnic conflict erases the symbolic boundary between combatants and non-combatants. Such long-term ethnic conflicts provide fertile ground for the intergenerational transmission of hostility and victimhood (Volkan, 2006) creating conflict narratives—stories that relate, obscure and at times invent the past, becoming vehicles for both current and future violent conflicts to erupt (Rotberg, 2006).

### Conflict Analysis One: Historical Analysis

The conflict in Israel/Palestine may be considered the ultimate example of a protracted ethnic conflict—an internationalized armed conflict with antagonistic interactions extended over time, periodic outbreaks of open fighting, erratic in frequency and force, exhibiting cessations of violence but still drawn-out over time with no end in sight (Azar, Jureidini, & McLaurin, 1978). The State of Israel was created in 1948 after a UN declaration called for dual sovereign states in Palestine with separate homelands for

Jews and Arab Palestinians (Morris, 2001). To many, the conflict started in the first decades of the twentieth century when Zionists (Jewish Nationalists) began to settle in the Ottoman controlled land of Palestine and to others still, it began when the Hebrews were sent into exile by the Romans (Dockser Marcus, 2007). Literally thousands of books have been published on the conflict and despite decades of observation, and third-party intervention, the struggle for peace in Israel and Palestine remains elusive.

At its most fundamental level, the conflict between Jewish/Zionist/Israelis and Christian and Muslim/Arab Palestinians is over land. The territory in dispute spans from the river Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea and from the Gulf of Aqaba to the Sea of Galilee. Historically, control of the land has changed hundreds of times and until the twentieth century, was never conceived of as a political unit.

Before the end of World War I and the institution of the British Mandate... there was never an official political entity known as Palestine during Ottoman rule... political power in Palestine... was in the hands of local tribal *shaykhs* and Islamic religious leaders (Lesch, 2008, p. 7).

As part of the Ottoman Empire for over four-hundred years, and as a protectorate under the Post WWI British Mandate (later the United Nations), Palestine embarked on the twentieth century amidst a wave of state creation resulting in the modern map of the Middle East. In a way, the rise of nation states in the region is part politics, and part fiction. Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia were by no means enduring historical entities; rather, they were colonial creations that resulted from the demise of the Imperial age (Mitchell, 2003). Culturally, the Arab people at this time were

the demographic majority in all these countries, spoke Arabic, practiced Islam or Christianity and performed traditional Arab cultural practices (apart from the Lebanese, who claimed to be descended from the Phoenicians, though they speak Arabic). Culturally, the Jews of Palestine had migrated to the holy land from North Africa, Europe, other territories under Ottoman rule and increasingly, under the cloak of Zionism, the new world. “Zionist immigration to Palestine began in the 1880s. Zionism’s call to bring together Jews from all parts of the world meant that immigrants arrived in Israel with little in common other than their religious identity” (Ross, 2007, p. 51). In the first decades of the twentieth century, both the Arabs and Jews of Palestine were perched on the periphery of a new era of political identity, one in which a people could aspire to statehood. In both communities, groups began to mobilize support for Palestinian and Jewish Nationalism harnessing faith, history and their co-ethnics in other lands to support them.

Zionism is the goal to create a Jewish homeland in *Eretz Israel* (where the Jewish Nation was founded). Palestinian Nationalism claims uninterrupted residency in Palestine for centuries, previous to the rise of the Jewish Nation. Nevertheless, despite claims to timeless inhabitancy neither the modern day Israelis nor contemporary Palestinians can assert indisputable, uninterrupted, indigenous occupation of the land, or for that matter a continuous or even infrequent experience of sovereign or political power. Claims by Jews to have been given the land in a holy covenant (Morris, 2001) or assertions by Palestinians that they are the descendants of the Pre-Hebrew Canaanites (Ross, 2007) are neither demonstrable nor relevant to the machinations of twentieth century state building.

However, the nature of these declarations, these narratives of conflict, speaks to one of the most entrenched components of the struggle for modern sovereignty. Namely, that the quest for nationhood to be both valid and actionable, requires that a distinct people not only exist but that their unique way of life is inextricably tied to the land in which they live.

The nature of identity politics in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict involves two cultural pillars. The first is the validity of theological doctrine—God’s covenant with the Jews, Palestine as an Islamic *waqf* held in trust for all Muslims. The second is the validity of international law—whether the United Nations (UN) had a right to award to a Jewish immigrant population 56 percent of the land (Bose, 2007). Although some fundamentalists would disagree, the creation of modern Israel is not a divine event. The plan to partition Palestine into two homelands was passed in the UN, war broke out between Zionists and Arabs and the Zionists ended up the victors. The next sixty years would create the modern conflict today, one in which the original 700,000 Palestinian refugees from 1948 now have grand children in neighboring Arab countries, refugee settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and in the ever increasing Palestinian Diaspora throughout the world.

#### Conflict Analysis Two: Social Cubism (Byrne & Carter 1996)

Protracted ethnic conflicts are rarely explained using one theory alone and strict adherence to one view or another necessarily obscures vital information required to truly understand both the distal and proximal roots of ethnic conflict. Using the analytical

model of Social Cubism (Byrne & Carter, 1996) to more deeply articulate culture, gender, religion, politics and social class allows one to more fully understand the composition, goals and strategies of ethnic movements. Social Cubism investigates intergroup behaviour from a multidimensional perspective that allows for social dynamics to be seen as the interaction of both material and psychological mechanisms (Byrne & Carter, 1996).

The term culture commonly refers to a “shared system of meaning...expressed in a wide variety of symbolic [and physical] forms,” such as, religion, language, rituals, apparel and territoriality (Ross, 2007, p. 2). In ethnic conflict, cultural groups mobilize their shared traditions, cultural histories and myths to solidify group identity and distinguish themselves from others. “The principal cultural issues that generate ethnic conflicts are language and religion” (Esman, 2004, p. 82) and ethnic identity groups often struggle against threats to cultural freedom whether genuine or illusory (Eriksen, 2002).

Gender refers to the social norms that proscribe behaviour and expectations for the sexes (Enloe, 2000). While notions of masculinity and femininity are not absolute or essential but exist along a continuum relative to other social conditions such as class, ethnicity, religion and education levels, under certain circumstances the expressions of gender are either supported or delegitimized (Yuval Davis, 1997). In ethnic conflict, gender imagery tends to “reproduce a patriarchal view of the family” (Eriksen, 2002, p. 172) and ethno nationalism, because it places the needs of the group over the needs of individuals and relies “on gender inequality” and notions of militarized masculinity



(Caprioli, 2005, p. 166). Ethnic conflicts force women “to carry [the] ‘burden of representation’, as they are constructed as the symbolic bearers of the collectivity’s identity and honour, both personally and collectively” (Yuval Davis, 1997, p. 45).

Gender also affects the tactics of ethnic movements who use gendered “elimination strategies” such as ethnic cleansing (Wolff, 2006, p. 140). Gendercide, the deliberate targeting of one gender in ethnic conflicts, affects both men and women. “The most vulnerable and consistently targeted population group, throughout time and around the world today, is noncombatant men of ‘battle-age’, roughly fifteen to fifty-five years old” and gendercide against women includes rape, killing and acts that not only harm women but present the possibility of AIDS (Jones, 2004, p. 10).

Religions are “systems of belief about the basic nature and destiny of human kind, of their place in the universe and the institutions that embody and defend these beliefs” (Esman, 2004, p. 84). As a facet of culture, religion serves as a potential organizer of an ethnic group’s collective identity, and, similar to ethnicity, is almost always an ascriptive identity of birth rather than personal choice. Religion is a powerful motivator in intractable ethnic conflicts; “if your heritage and ancestry, pride and sense of worth as a member of a religion or nation are threatened, then war becomes an obligatory, even sacred mission” (Steinhart, 2005, p. 9). In this way, religion “sacralizes the quest for political autonomy” (Appleby, 2003, p. 60) and such “sacred causes” tap into primordial experiences extending a group’s legitimacy through both time and space (Burleigh, 2006).

Histories function as oral or textual interpretations of the past turned “by the historian into that narrative we call history” (Munslow, 2001, p. 1). In ethnic conflict, narratives generate “people’s symbolically constructed shared identity” (Rotberg, 2006, p. 3). Narratives are specific social and cultural frames that link past events. In protracted ethnic conflicts, narratives define positions, actions and events and act to establish authority, encoding certain actions with significance. However, ethnic histories are not objective truths of past events but rather equal parts imagination and amnesia that nevertheless function to cohere ethnic identity through relating, “a past glory and honor...or humiliation and...military defeat and the desire for revenge” (Eller, 1999, p. 31). Of particular strength, are historical religious narratives, where “sacred spaces function in part as territorial markers” and lend apocalyptic airs to modern cultural contestations (Appleby, 2003, p. 61).

Politics is the study of relationships between people and groups and issues such as power, participation and conflict (Joyce, 2006). Most political systems are based on cultural values that create avenues of both collective decision making and regulations regarding the exercise of power. Political systems are predictive of ethnic conflict. Civic nationalism is an inclusionary political system that defines membership in a nation in territorial terms, including all members within the geographical boundaries of the state (Esman, 2004). Ethnonationalism is an exclusionary political system that defines membership along ethnic lines, institutionalizing the dominant ethnic group’s culture, and marginalizing ethnic minorities (Esman, 2004). Nationalism, the promotion of in-group political power involving “groups willing to challenge the traditional system of ethnic

dominance” (Crighton & MacIver, 1991, p. 128), is a common conflict narrative that disputes the exercise of, and access to, political power.

Social class, like gender and religion, also relates to a person’s “social position” in society relative to both socioeconomic and educational status (Steinhart, 2005). Because political discrimination and exclusionary policies tend to accompany economic discrimination and resource scarcity, the tendency to ‘link’ ethnic conflict to conditions such as poverty and disenfranchisement naturally arises. However, the role of “more accomplished citizens,” so-called cultural elite’s, are instrumental in defining the goals and strategies of ethnic movements (Steinhart, 2005, p. 11) as well as accessing the resources necessary to finance opposition movements. Revolutionary politics is often the result of ‘manipulating elites’ who use ethnic membership to gain power and it cannot be ignored that ethnic mobilization is associated with higher, not lower, levels of education (Eller, 1999). That said, it should be remembered that class lines, like other social factors, commonly cut across ethnic groups to “demonstrate a multiclass base” (Connor, 1994, p. 158).

Because the previous section (conflict analysis one) employed an historical analysis of the conflict the following section explores the other five sides of the social cubism ‘cube’, culture, social class, gender, religion and politics.

### *Culture and Social Class*

In order to explore how culture and social class have affected the goals, composition and strategies of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict it is useful to remember that

both ethnic groups contain a wide array of ideological differentiation and both groups are culturally heterogeneous. The old adage that ‘for every two Jews you have three opinions’ holds well in this regard because there is not now, nor has there ever been a singular vision of Israel held by a majority of Jews (the term ‘ethnic conflict’ to Israelis refers to inter-ethnic discord amongst Israelis while the term ‘national conflict’ refers to discord with Palestinians). The Jewish cultural community in Israel is separated by levels of religious observance, secularism, interethnic diversity, class divisions, language, and territorial occupancy. The most important cultural facet today is ‘Israeli’ identity, a sort of meta-identity that successfully indoctrinates new arrivals (*Olim*) into Israeli society creating her social and political elite (Smith, 1988). With rapid Hebrew instruction, Zionist indoctrination and mandatory service in the military new recruits quickly learn the state culture of Israel. Despite such unifying cultural processes there remains a wide divergence in Israel between ethnic Ashkenazim (mostly the descendants of Eastern Europeans) and ethnic Mizrahi-Sephardim (mostly the descendants of Spanish and North African Jews). Borderline hostility to new immigrants from Russia and discord with Ultra-Orthodox Jews who claim that the State of Israel is a foreign occupation of the land preventing the coming of the Messiah foment intra-group conflict (Rotberg, 2006). Further, settler populations in the West Bank are becoming increasingly militant towards Palestinian neighbours and increasingly more resistant to calls from Israeli Peaceniks to dismantle their settlements. Settler/pioneer populations believe they are reclaiming the ancient biblical lands of Judea and Samaria; they appear to be uninterested in the political negotiations seeking peace and claimed responsibility for the assassination of Yitzhak

Rabin, the Israeli leader who historically shook hands with Yasser Arafat, ushering in a new, though brief, wave of both recognition and non-violent negotiation (Lesch, 2008).

Palestinian culture is also divided. Mostly Arab, Palestinians include Bedouins, Christians, Muslims, Islamists, Marxists and Palestinian Israelis. Palestinians may all agree that they are Palestinian but they do not agree on what the state of Palestine is. This point is aptly put by Esman who claims,

[Palestinians] are united in wanting Israeli settlements and Israeli military out of the West Bank and Gaza; they differ on whether a future Palestinian state should be a secular democracy or an Islamic polity; and whether it should be achieved by armed violence, including terrorist tactics, or by negotiation and compromise; and whether what is now the territory of the state of Israel should remain a Jewish state, or eventually be incorporated into a united, Arab-controlled Palestine (2004, pp. 45-46).

Traditional Arab/Palestinian culture still exists in some sections of the West Bank, involving agriculture or trade, wholly patriarchal and clan based, but today, Palestinians are also the bitter inheritors of the shame and humiliation of their forefather's defeat in 1948, called *Al-Nakba*—the catastrophe—and echoed endlessly in Israeli checkpoints, collective punishment and lack of progress toward final status negotiations (Khalidi, 1997). Increasingly, Palestinians have embraced martyrdom operations, internecine murder, honour killings of both men and women and a culture of misery (Khalili, 2007).

Palestinians have been nurtured on accounts of abuse, despair, and injustice. Families tell and retell stories of being thrown off their land and of relatives killed or exiled. All can tick off the names of martyrs within their own clan who died for the elusive Palestinian state. The only framed paper in many Palestinians' homes is a sepia land deed from the time of the British mandate...from infancy, Palestinians

are inculcated with myopic nationalism and the burden of revenge (Hedges, 2002, pp. 67-68).

The failure of pan-Arab nationalism in the region in the 1970s has also led to the increase of pan-Islamic doctrines, resulting in a return to Arab Islamic cultural mores, not seen in Palestine in decades. According to Islamists—the proponents of Political Islam—human beings “have no right to choose their systems or laws because God has done so for them” (Rubin, 2007, p. 4). While political Islam can be seen to function in the political rather than spiritual realm of social activity, and supports the return to a society governed by the rule of God alone, it still represents a modern ideology and one whose message can be interpreted as a response to the failure of the Muslim world to reconcile modernization with fundamentalist Islam (Rubin, 2007). Current political Islam is a response to the failure of various revolutionary, “secular, national and leftist political projects” (Beinin & Stork, 1997, p. 8) to maintain power since the 1970s in the Middle-East and is largely, pending developments after the Arab Spring, a movement of opposition.

In this way, Islamic culture can be seen to impact the national struggle for Palestinians by dividing power groups into either religious— Hamas, Islamic Jihad—or secular—Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). More and more however, distinctions of ideology are erasing operational choices as Jihadist (Holy War) sentiments and strategies seep into socialist mandates in order to compete for both international and internal political support (Bloom,

2005). Even non-Islamic groups began conducting martyrdom operations since 2000, sending not just male but also female suicide bombers into Israel, a practice supported by many Palestinians who view asymmetric warfare—suicide bombing—as often the only option to fight Israeli oppression despite the death of civilians (Standish, 2006). The conclusion that those chosen for martyrdom are largely poor, uneducated Palestinians is debatable with some scholars positing that “most suicide bombers are not undereducated religious zealots who blindly follow the commands of the religious leadership; rather they come from a middle or upper class background and have comparatively high levels of education” (Bloom, 2005, p.35). In general however, there is evidence of a social divide in political movements, “though the leadership of the Palestinian independence movement comes mainly from elite families, most of the fighters and suicide bombers are recruited from young inmates of squalid refugee settlements with no discernible future prospects” (Esman, 2004, p. 8).

### *Religion*

Religion in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is at times a hindrance to peaceful coexistence. While historically there was minimal discord between followers of the three Abrahamic faiths under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire’s millet system (millet systems divided citizens by religious groups) there are now increasing cleavages amongst and between ethnic groups based on theological incompatibility.

Islamic, Jewish, and Christian extremist groups [are] characterized by arrogant intolerance; they monopolize what they believe to be the truth (or the path), leaving very little, if any, room for compromise with such profound moral absolutism. They

often utilize events and religious symbols from the remote past to sanction a particular ideology or plan of action (Lesch, 2008, p. 3).

Indeed religion in Israel and Palestine is one of the strongest legitimizers of cultural and political rights. Jerusalem, home to sacred places for all three faiths is contested historically, archeologically, spatially and politically. Considered the holiest site to Jews and Christians and the third holiest site to Muslims each rock and grain of sand holds the potential to prove provenance. According to the Jewish holy book, the Talmud, “God gave ten measures of beauty to the world and nine of them went to Jerusalem” (Laqueur, 2006, p. 210). In the *Koran*, the holy book for Muslims, Jerusalem is considered the site where the prophet Mohammed made his night journey. The night journey:

Positioned Islam in the pantheon of the Judeo-Christian experience and tradition, where Muhammad is seen by Muslims as the seal of the Prophets, the last in the line of Old and New Testament prophets who received revelations from God. In fact, Jerusalem was the *qibla* or direction of prayer for Muslims in years immediately after Muhammad began receiving revelations from Allah through the arch angel Gabriel (Lesch, 2008, p. 103).

The Temple Mount (*al-Quds*, the holy, in Arabic) is a site where the last Jewish temple, destroyed by Herod, was built. On it lays an enormous rock enshrined in the Dome of the Rock Mosque and believed by many to be the rock where Abraham was to sacrifice his son Isaac to God. This rock represents a vital and contested sacred space for all three religions. Today, access is controlled by the Muslim community and the external wall of the Temple, called in Hebrew, *ha Kotel* or the Wailing or Western Wall is a site of pilgrimage for Jews (Rotberg, 2006). The second Palestinian uprising (*Intifada*) began



after Ariel Sharon, future Israeli Prime Minister, violated the Noble Sanctuary (*Haram al-Sharif*) or Temple Mount with Israeli soldiers in tow.

Some Jewish and Christian extremists have threatened to blow up the Muslim sacred spaces to build a new Jewish Temple in its place (Christians believe that this will usher in the second coming of Jesus) (Morris, 2001). This is important to Jews as many of the Jewish laws can only be observed in Israel and several Jewish rites have not been performed in two millennium because there is no Jewish Temple in which to execute them. For Jews who see the modern state of Israel as an opportunity to take back the sites sacred to Jews, the thought of religious tolerance is unthinkable (Smith, 1988).

Despite such religious obstruction there does exist an interreligious peacebuilding training that has been responsible for efforts to build peace between religious groups (Abu-Nimer, 2001). In relations between Israeli Jews and Arab Palestinians, some religious leaders from each side hold particularly hostile views of the other side. But, even in this case, some Jewish and Islamic religious leaders have engaged in dialogue and in developing shared ideas (Kriesberg, 2001). Such initiatives have led to the 'Jerusalem Religious Peace Agreement,' a mandate for increasing understanding and compassion between all the children of Abraham. For many, the strength of religious conviction in the region presents one of the only avenues toward a future co-existence between the faithful.

## *Gender*

The role of gender in ethno-political conflict is similar in Israel/Palestine to other such conflicts worldwide where movements to challenge patriarchal relations are largely seen as threats to the unity of the nation (Enloe, 2000; Kandiyoti, 1996). Though Jewish and Palestinian nationalisms support the patriarchal construct of the nation as the kinship group writ large, space has always existed for female agency (Yuval Davis, 1997).

National liberation movements have been portrayed as the least hospitable places for women, despite the fact that women in national liberation movements—compared to women in the military or state politics—seem to have had more space to raise questions about gender inequalities (Sharoni, 2001, p. 2).

In Israel, early Jewish settlers embraced an egalitarian view of society that was sadly transformed through successive waves of immigration into a “glorification of physical labour, militarism, and the masculine qualities of strength and power...physical labour tended to enhance the significance of biological difference between the sexes as women’s bodies became regarded as less productive and thus less valuable” (Jacoby, 2005, pp. 34-35). Despite socialist calls for equal citizenship for both genders, a prime example of the institutionalization of gendered nationalism can be seen in the nature of reserve work for Israelis. It is mandatory for all Israelis (except several religious minorities and Arabs) to serve in the military. For men, “reserve duty is lifelong...but only to age 24 or motherhood, whichever comes first, for women” (Goldstein, 2006, p. 86). The contribution to the nation for women in Israel here can be seen to go from the military to the maternal (Herzog, 1995).

For Jewish and Zionist women, their gender contributed to social and political barriers for advancement and after the state of Israel was established, left them hostage to draconian personal status laws that ensured that religious courts, controlled by senior males, held power over women in regard to marriage, divorce and family planning (Werczberger, 2002). With no civic option to such concerns, women's rights continue to be observed through the kaleidoscope of patriarchal religion.

For later generations of Israeli women, the struggle for equal rights continues in both secular and religious feminisms and can be seen in the increasing concurrence of women's rights and peacebuilding (Sharoni, 2001). However, the emerging research in the new millennium shows a decrease in 1970s style feminism and a rise in religious feminism (WZO, 2004).

For Palestinians, nationalist pursuits have both opened doors to female agency and resoundingly halted Palestinian emancipatory feminisms. In Palestine, "women in national liberation movements tend to become politically active through the struggle of colonized men to overcome their subjection and regain their virility" (Jacoby, 1997, p. 3). However, women's political involvement in the struggle for liberation allowed some dissonance in the typical relegation of women to the private sphere, particularly during the late 1980s.

The intifada provided women who had participated in literacy programs and skill-training courses operated by the women's committees with both an opportunity and an excuse to join the women's movement and to put what they had learned to use. The experience, social legitimacy and institutional base of the women's committees enabled mass participation of women in the intifada... [Where] large-scale political

mobilization of Palestinian women was not perceived as a challenge to social stability but rather as a necessary and valuable contribution to the national struggle (Sharoni, 1998, p. 2).

In addition, socialists, espousing an end of both class and gendered oppressions, mobilized many Palestinian women to support calls for Palestinian independence (Sharoni, 1995). Despite such assemblies, Palestinian leaderships have remained almost entirely male and their policies overwhelmingly ignore the rights of Palestinian women until after the creation of a Palestinian state (Ottaway, 2004).

Gender plays a significant role in Palestinian culture and can be seen as a major mechanism contributing toward violence in the Palestinian territories and between Palestinians and Israelis. Masculinity is something achieved in Arab society through honourable acts and self-sacrifice. Because Arab culture is an honour society, strict codes of behaviour for men and women either serve to increase male prestige or irreparably damage it (Lindner, 2004). Since 1967, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza “has seriously diminished those realms of practice that allow one to engage in, display, and affirm masculinity” (Peteet, 1994, p. 34). Because the “Muslim religion, combined with the institutions of the state and the family form the three main avenues of Palestinian nationalism” Palestinians utilize the myth of Islamic masculinity to permit violence and to verify both personal and collective identity (Enloe, 2000; Peteet, 1994, Jacoby, 1996, p. 7). For emerging Islamic groups, the association between Arab masculinity and Islam further strengthens the role of gender. Islam is a patriarchal religion that supports “social organization based on men’s control of power” (Goldstein, 2006, p. 2) and enshrines a

social, political and legal subordination of women (Taraki, 2000). That said, women are used instrumentally in resistance operations (most recently in martyr operations) because they are better able to navigate Israeli checkpoints (Bloom, 2005) and as the reproducers of the Palestinian nation, they are instrumental in raising the next generation of Palestinian fighters. Despite gendered divisions, under the occupation “violence has become *the* source of honor among Palestinians [emphasis in the original]” (Bloom, 2005, p. 29).

### *Politics*

Exploring the role of politics in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict involves an investigation into what constitutes power in Israel and what constitutes power for Palestinians. Palestinians have not achieved statehood, and so, political power in Palestine remains a site of contestation between rival Palestinian groups, most notably *Fatah* and *Hamas*. While the role of external power groups (other Arab countries and militant groups therein) has been significant in the duration and scale of the conflict, space does not permit an exploration of their affect here. Instead, the relatively recent roles of the PLO and *Hamas*, as the two dominant political groups will be briefly explored.

The historic hallmark of Palestinian resistance was the PLO, an ethnonationalist group, emerging from the camps for displaced Palestinians and headed by the charismatic leader Yasser Arafat (Lesch, 2008; Richardson, 2006). Considered the godfather of Palestinian nationalism, he was also instrumental in the use of terror tactics to draw

attention to the suffering of Palestinians. Initially a socialist outfit, the PLO charter demanded armed struggle against Israel, a mandate softened in the 1990s when Arafat agreed to finally accept Israel's right to exist (Lesch, 2008). Politically, the PLO held the majority of Palestinian support in the occupied territories, especially the West Bank until Arafat's support of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. The PLO, represented by the *Fatah* political party, was responsible for the first formation called the Palestinian Authority (PA), a bridging organization set up to administer the future state, in both the West Bank and Gaza, of Palestine.

Hamis, an Islamic movement that emerged out of Gaza, and an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, began to gain space in the hearts and minds of Palestinians through dramatic martyrdom operations in Israel. Hamis has several goals to destroy Israel, to enhance its prestige among the Palestinians vis-à-vis the PA or other groups, increase its appearance as a legitimate opposition, promote ties with the Islamic world, derail the peace process when it exists, and defy the 'Zionist entity' (Bloom, 2005, p. 33).

When *Hamis* won the second Palestinian democratic election in the newly formed PA the peace process began to seriously derail when outside governments refused to recognize the election results from a group still listed as terrorist in most western democracies. *Hamis* highlights the relevance of the collective history of the Arab people in the land of Palestine. *Hamis'* charter "deals at some length with the fate of the Crusaders who held Jerusalem for two hundred years before being expelled by the Muslim warrior Saladin. Hamis regards the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem today along the same lines" (Richardson, 2006, p. 194). For Palestinian political parties today, their struggle continues to be coloured by historical/cultural events and "differing

interpretations and definitions of Palestinian nationality and destiny, compete openly and often violently with the ‘official’ party” and have made limited strides to counter the numerous paramilitary wings of their political parties” (Eller, 1999, p. 47).

Israel has been a nation-state for over sixty years. In that time, there have been multiple armed conflicts both within and exterior to the fluctuating borders of Israel and repeated generations of Israelis have needed to navigate the identity politics of their citizenship. Twenty-percent of Israeli citizens are Arab Palestinians. There are currently over ten million Palestinians in the Diaspora. Israel is both a Jewish and a democratic state but for Israelis their cultural superiority depends upon two factors: secondary citizenship for Palestinians, and a refusal to allow Palestinians a right to return in Israel (Morris, 2001). Israel and Germany are the only two nations worldwide with a right of return. Israel allows unfettered immigration to any Jew who wishes to return to the land of their ancestors (Ignatieff, 1993). This right does not extend to Palestinians, who are seen as threats to the demographic majority of the Jewish people. Outside of Israel this translates into an almost total block on Palestinian immigration to Israel (though not the Palestinian territories) and inside Israel translates into second-class citizenship for Palestinian Israelis.

Israel is a Jewish state, but its founding charter conferred citizenship on its Arab-Palestinian minority now numbering 20 percent; Arabic was recognized as an official language, and religious freedom was confirmed for all faiths. Palestinian voters elect members to the Knesset, the national parliament; they have access to the Israeli courts, its universities, its world-class medical and health service, and the network of social services provided by the Israeli government. There is a separate school system in the Arabic language, though it is closely supervised by Israeli authorities. While they enjoy the right to vote and hold office, and their

representatives can voice their grievance, they have little influence on government and no Palestinian has ever been invited to serve as a Cabinet member or allowed to exercise executive authority. Though citizens, they are exempt from the military service that is obligatory for young Jewish men and women. In effect, Palestinians are second-class citizens, leading separate but unequal lives (Esman, 2004, p.130).

Politics in Israel involves competition between Israeli political factions, some espousing support for the peace process, others simply gesturing toward change without implementing new policies. Israel is a politically plural system that commonly requires coalitions to form governments. And, Israel contains many powerful religious lobby groups that hinder progress toward more progressive resolution of the conflict (Lesch, 2008). While there have been many oscillations from one side of the political spectrum to another in Israeli history—until the late 1970s most governments were leftist—there has been a demonstrable increase in right-wing political extremism.

In the last decades Israeli governments have included ministers who represented openly racist parties...whose platforms specifically called for ‘transfer’ (read ethnic cleansing) of Palestinians...the move to the right is also demonstrated by the reversal of policies that culminated in the Oslo accords—drastic changes in policies directed at Palestinian citizens in Israel and the reawakening of dormant antidemocratic political ideas (Rouhana, 2006, p. 131).

For Israelis and Palestinians the current political climate is moving towards an unprecedented level of extremism. In the near future the political spectrum may exacerbate hostilities despite having some of the only tools to remedy them. In Israel and Palestine “one people’s quest for emancipation has generated the other’s unending oppression” (Bose, 2007, p. 214) and in such a political climate, for future citizens of both nations, the path away from violence may be quite a bit further away. Moreover,



recent external political events in the ‘Arab Spring,’ in Egypt, Syria, Libya, Yemen and Jordan, show not only an awakening of revolutionary spirit among Arabs in the Middle-East but also could possibly destabilize the region and be considered a threat to Israel as, “a more democratic Arab world is also likely to be less tolerant of the benign neglect with which the international community has often addressed the Israel-Palestine and the Israeli-Arab conflicts since 2000” (Guéhenno, 2011, p. 1).

For both the Israelis and the Palestinians the construction of symbolic nationalism has required both a re-imagination of history and a characteristic amnesia about the past. “Jews may remember that they had a homeland and a state in Palestine twenty-five hundred years ago but forget or deny that they lost it subsequently and that the land has been occupied by other groups since then” (Eller, 1999, p. 41). Similarly, Palestinians may deny conclusions that the emergence of a Palestinian identity was a purely post-Zionist entity and that Palestinians are no different from Arabs in Jordan or Syria or Egypt. The quest for a homeland for these two peoples is one that has occupied hundreds of scholars in countries all over the world. For scholars of conflict and peace it is essential that they ground their analysis in not only the historical battlegrounds and partisan factions but also the perceptions of identity and its connection to the past.

The goals of Israeli and Palestinian nationalists have not changed since the beginning decades of the twentieth century but the responsible groups and the strategies used to achieve such ends are impacted by social factors, and the historical and cultural

past. Though firmly rooted in the modern day, the conflict in Israel and Palestine continues to be articulated to historical entities.

### Conflict Analysis Three: the narrative roots of the conflict

In the Israeli/Palestinian conflict both sides harness cultural and historical symbols of identity that contribute to a continuation of the conflict and the following section explores the origins of four narrative themes: ideology, religion, armed struggle/resistance, and, exile and return. This analysis does not exhaust the sources of discord and disharmony between Israelis and Palestinians, in many cases it is the experience of each individual or his or her relations or friends that makes the deepest impression and holds the greatest sway when acquiring and holding onto an entrenched perspective. For the purposes of this analysis a variety of sources have been used and while every attempt has been made to balance Israeli and Palestinian voices it must be noted that there is a deluge of materials that isolate and identify the roots of Zionism (whether supportive or critical) and far less in English that reveals the narrative origins of Palestinian positions. In every possible instance this research has sought out Arab and Palestinian scholars. In some instances this research has relied upon the work of western historians. Rather than present a historical highlight of the events, individuals or circumstances that have given rise to the strength of each sides conflict narratives this section analyses and presents four themes that contribute to an understanding of the genesis and continuation of the Israeli/Palestinian narratives of conflict.

## *Ideology*

Ideology refers to the worldview of a group of people and the actions and beliefs supported in that worldview (Johnston, 2002). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries there was a growing affection and international support for national self-determination (Mitchell, 2003). The world in the 1880s was largely divided into cultural empires whose territorial dominance encompassed dozens of other ethno/religious groups. ‘Nations’ were groups of culturally homogenous individuals who could be identified by language, attire, religious practices or territoriality (Esman, 2004). Self-determination referred in the Arab world to “the complete and definite emancipation of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks and the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 386.). Self-determination was an ideology that espoused autonomous democratic governments but its advocates did not define what unit of humanity deserved such independence. The ideology of self-determination implied each race, each nation, each community or territorial grouping could consider autonomy a tangible political ideal (Mitchell, 2003). The rise of nationalism, the political autonomy of distinct peoples, emerged out of the concept of self-determination. The following section examines the ideologies responsible for the creation of the state of Israel—Zionism and the ideologies that emerged in opposition to Zionism; secular and religious Palestinian nationalism.

## Israel

Zionism is often separated into ‘political’ and ‘practical’ Zionism and ‘spiritual’ and ‘secular’ Zionism. All refer to the advocacy of a Jewish homeland. ‘Political’ Zionism refers to the internationalized efforts of early Zionists to obtain a political charter that would award sovereignty to a Jewish nation (Cohn-Sherbok & El-Awami, 2008). The impetus for such an award proposed to solve the dilemma faced by Jews in the diaspora, in particular the ‘Pale’ settlement (Belarus, Ukraine and Eastern Poland) of Eastern Europe. In the ‘Pale’ Jews were constantly faced with violence and insecurity and faced daily discrimination. Created by Catherine II of Russia in 1791, it housed 90% of Russia’s Jews (Cohn-Sherbok & El. Awami, 2008). Its inhabitants were denied the right to own land, paid exorbitant taxes and in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century lived with daily fears of anti-Semitic *pogroms*, (Russian riots) organized massacres of Jews (Pappé & Jamil, 2010).



**Figure 1 Jewish Pogrom Victims in Yekaterinoslav (Public Domain)**

The 1881 assassination of Russian Czar Alexander II was blamed on the Jews of the ‘Pale’ and erupted into anti-Semitic violence—during attacks, “Russian military and

constabulary forces would more often than not just cast a blind eye toward the perpetrators; if not participate in the pogroms themselves” (Lesch, 2008, P. 27). Support for the return to Jerusalem emerged from the ‘Pale’ settlements after the violence against the Jews led to mass emigration to western countries and to the Holy Land.

When ‘political’ Zionism proved unfruitful in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century many turned to its practical form.

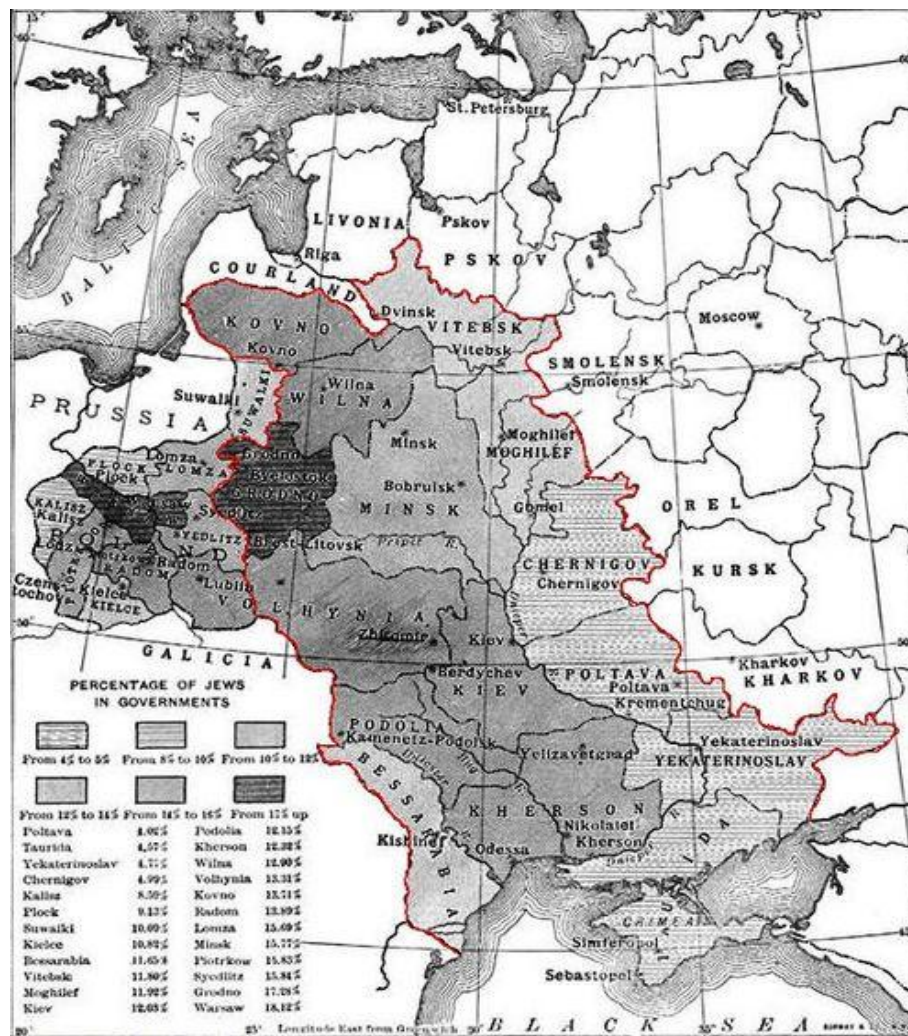


Figure 2 the Pale Settlement (Public Domain)

‘Practical’ Zionism refers to the methods Jews used to settle the land (without political sovereignty) and includes immigration to Palestine, the purchase, cultivation and management of the land by Jews for Jews and the creation of centres that provided education and socialization for newcomers (Cohn-Sherbok & El. Awami, 2006). This was considered practical because the goals of Zionism could be contributed to by pioneering immigrants who could set up Jewish colonies of enterprise, in first rural and then urban settings.



**Figure 3 Members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Aliyah (Public Domain).**

The first immigrants (*Olim*) who managed the trek to Palestine from the ‘Pale’ are referred to as the 1<sup>st</sup> *Aliyah* (from 1882 to 1903). Subsequent waves included: the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Aliyah* (from 1904-1918), the 3<sup>rd</sup> (1919-1923), the 4<sup>th</sup> (1924-1929), the 5<sup>th</sup> (1929-1939)

and the 6<sup>th</sup> *Aliyah* (from 1945-1949) that brought to Palestine the survivors of the Jewish Holocaust.

Proponents of ‘spiritual’ Zionism saw the resettlement of the land of Israel as a necessary step for the Jew returning from exile to *Zion* (a term for Jerusalem and the root of the word Zionism) and an active method of ushering in the coming of the Jewish messiah—to “gather the scattered of Israel into the Holy Land” (Cohn-Sherbok and El-Awami, 2008, p. 4). ‘Spiritual’ Zionists saw the conditions of the Jew in the West as imperfect and hazardous and envisioned God’s chosen peoples returning to their religious roots in *Zion*. Supporters perceived that,

A Jewish person in the diaspora is able to observe all commandments of the Law and live as a devout Jew. Yet, because he lives outside the Jewish homeland, an essential dimension of Jewishness is missing from his life. Life in the diaspora involves one in unholiness whereas by settling in Palestine it is possible to live a spiritually unsullied life. Return to Zion is thus imperative for an authentic existence (Cohn- Sherbok and El-Awami, 2008, p. 6).

While the majority of the supporters of ‘spiritual’ Zionism were Orthodox Jews the end of the Imperial age also gave rise to ‘secular’ Zionists that saw socialism in Palestine as a remedy to European and Russian anti-Semitism. Because ‘secular’ Zionists believed that hatred against Jews would continue and that it was inevitable as long as Jews were forced to live in the Diaspora, ‘secular’ Zionists believed that if the Jews secured a national homeland their rights could no longer be curtailed; once Jews were no longer minorities in alien nations their oppression would end (Berry & Philo, 2006). The Marxist leanings of the ‘secular’ Zionists imagined a new Jew, one that could purify his or herself through

work, through labour, and it was along these lines that many *Kibbutzim* (communal colonies) were created. *Kibbutzim* were egalitarian, self-sufficient and utopian; they rejected the weakened Jew of the diaspora in favour of the new Jew, the farmer and importantly, the soldier (Cohn-Sherbok & El. Awami, 2006).

## Palestine

The rise of nationalist sentiments for Palestinians is necessarily articulated to the emergence during the waning decades of the Ottoman empire of the ideology of Arab nationalism. Arab nationalism sought liberation from Ottoman overlords and sovereignty over areas that Arabs had lived in for centuries (Kayyali, 1978).

Its basic premise was that the Arabs were a single people with a single language, history, and culture, divided not by centuries of separate development of widely separated countries, but by the recent machinations of Imperialism, and that all they had in common was more powerful than whatever separated them (Khalidi, 1997, P. 181.)

The Ottoman response to calls for Arab independence was swift and violent and included imprisonment, banishment and execution (Cohn-Sherbok and El-Awami, 2008). The majority of Arabs in Palestine did not view themselves as separate from their co-ethnics in the region until the growing social/political impact of the Zionists gained ground (Khalidi, 1997). The eventual partition of the Ottoman Empire relegated the Arabs of Palestine to underlings of the British Empire, who held the mandate in the region after WWI.



While it may be argued that Palestinian nationalism did not truly emerge until the 1960s, there were calls from prominent Palestinians in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for independence and both political and military actions to that end (Khalidi, 1997). In addition, the educational system in Palestine was beginning to introduce notions of Arab nationalism into the curricula and importantly, distinguish Palestine from the greater Arab world. A geography textbook published in 1923 already delineated the boundaries between Syria and Palestine for Palestinian children (almost half of whom were in school by 1947).

This is an otherwise unremarkable text, which discusses the natural features, agriculture, communications routes, demography, and administrative divisions of Syria and Palestine. Its importance lies in the fact that all over Palestine, students were already in 1923 learning that Palestine was a separate entity, a unit whose geography required separate treatment (Khalidi, 1997, P, 174).

In May 1948, the first Arab-Israeli war started after David Ben-Gurion declared the birth of the state of Israel (Lesch, 2008). The armies of five Arab nations, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and Lebanon entered Palestine and met Israeli military forces. The Israeli victory resulted—for many Palestinian Arabs—in displacement and retreat and is called by many Palestinians, *Al-Nakba*—the catastrophe, and resulted in the dissolution of Palestinian society and the exile of well over half a million Palestinian Arabs from their homes. Before 1948, Arab life in Palestine was largely feudal; society was divided into landowners and tenant farmers (Lybarger, 2007; Nadan, 2006). After 1948, Palestinian life had no tether, neither to the land of their ancestors, or to a political unit of any significance.

Since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Palestinian Arabs had agitated for political sovereignty and practiced both diplomacy with and resistance against the Ottomans, the British, and the Zionists. In 1948, all of a sudden, many Palestinians became displaced peoples; living in UN controlled wards or United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA). Any coordinated and organized Palestinian leadership was destroyed and for decades the inhabitants of these UNWRA settlements were simply referred to as “*Arab refugees*” (*emphasis in original* Caplan, 2010, p. 113).



**Figure 4 Refugees after *Al Nakba* (Public Domain)**

Khalidi (1986) maintains that the Palestinian national movement faced two influential periods: first, the three decades of the British mandate and the subsequent Arab-Israeli war that resulted in the Palestinian catastrophe—*Al-Nakba*; and second, the

“lost years” between 1948 and 1964 when Yasser Arafat’s PLO emerged (p. 178). In order to understand the disruption in the Palestinian nationalist narrative it may be helpful to briefly explore the plight of those Palestinians who fled or were displaced by the 1<sup>st</sup> Arab-Israeli war in 1948.

The largest single group of Palestinians, those in Jordan, to which the region of central Palestine, which came to be called the West Bank was annexed in 1949, received Jordanian nationality...Less than 200,000 Palestinians remained in those parts of Palestine, which were incorporated into the new state of Israel. These obtained Israeli citizenship...Other Palestinians, in the Gaza Strip under Egyptian military administration, in Syria, in Lebanon and elsewhere, obtained differing categories of refugee status and faced different barriers to political organization, free expression, and manifestations of their identity (Khalidi, 1997, p. 179).

Despite the fragmentation of the Palestinian population, plans for a reconstitution of the movement to win back Palestine for Palestinians were taking place almost immediately. By the 1950s and 60s a network of young Palestinian nationalists was forming in Gaza and Egypt characterized by a hatred of Zionism and similar symbols that spoke to the connection between Palestine the land, to Palestine, her people. “In no case did the new movements include members of the leadership drawn from the old Palestinian elite, which was considered in some measure as being responsible for having ‘lost’ Palestine” (Khalidi, 1997, p. 180). While some groups embraced the Arab nationalist themes one in particular was explicitly concerned with Palestinian nationalism: *Fatah*.

*Fatah* is in general considered one of the secular movements toward the liberation of Palestine but for Palestinians secularism does not imply a divorce from religion and

tradition, rather a pluralistic ideal encompassing all Palestinians regardless of their religion.

For secular nationalists, the nation includes adherents of multiple religions: Muslims and Christians, primarily, but even Jews. Secular nationalism...bases itself not so much on the repression or restriction of religion...but rather on its integration within a multiconfessional framework (Lybarger, 2007, p.1).

Composing a large position within the PLO, *Fatah* was created by university educated Palestinian exiles who chose to position themselves as native Arabs of Palestinian descent donning Arab headdress and calling themselves *fedayeen*—self-sacrificers—the term used to describe Palestinian commandos (Lesch, 2008).



**Figure 5 Yasser Arafat (Public Domain)**

Fatah's founders... adopted stylized forms of peasant costume (Arafat's k'ufiyya scarf, e.g.); invoked the ties of family and religion, Muslim and Christian, as the foundation of national solidarity; and apotheosized the peasant-as-heroic-guerrilla who rose up to avenge and reclaim the land (Lybarger, 2007, p.22).

In comparison, the second secular Palestinian group, the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN) occupied a far more Leftist position than Fatah and saw the struggle for Palestinian nationalism as a class-based struggle against imperialism (Khalidi, 1997). Revolutionary, Marxist and Pan-Arab, MAN devotees later known as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) sought not only Palestinian liberation but the liberation of all Arabs currently under western puppet regimes—Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Both *Fatah* and MAN were original members of the blanket organization set up as a Palestinian government in exile: the PLO. The ideology of liberation, to create a Palestine for all Palestinians, regardless of religion and for the benefit of all is characteristic of both secular Palestinian nationalisms.

The competing ideology of Palestinian liberation is that of Islamism. For Islamists, religious nationalists, Palestine is a part of the *Umma*—the collectivity of all Islam—and therefore belongs always and completely to all Muslims (Khalidi, 1997). The Palestinian limb of the Muslim Brotherhood (later known as *Hamas*) exemplified this position—that Palestinian uniqueness and statehood is subsumed into Islamic identity (Khalidi, 1997). Religious nationalists,

...explicitly rejected participation in the P.L.O., insisting that nationalism was contrary to Islam and that Palestinian suffering would end only with a return to religion. Accordingly, they emphasized missionary outreach and charity in an effort to reorient the wider culture (Lybarger, 2007, p.24).

Religious nationalists were interested in serving the Muslim community through social services and religious instruction and viewed the *Koran* and the *Sunna*—words of the

Prophet Mohammed—as the only reference point for Islamic society (Sayigh, 1999). The liberation of Palestine began, for religious nationalists, with the mosque and the *Imam*; indeed for Islamists the Palestinian liberation movements were seen as illegitimate, offshoots of empire and weaker than the greater Islamic/Arab identities (Khalidi, 1997). The Islamist ideology sees Palestine as belonging to all Muslims, and her liberation as a holy duty.

For both secular and religious Palestinian nationalisms revolutionary ideology emerged from the humiliation and hopelessness of the plight of the Palestinian Arabs. Sayigh (1999) posits that the ideological and philosophical foundation of the strongest Palestinian movement—*Fatah*—were the result of two profound sensibilities: humiliation and suppression.

The driving force...of Fateh...was profoundly existential...it derived overwhelmingly from the physical circumstances and deep alienation of the majority of uprooted and exiled refugees...Fateh insisted above all on two cardinal principles: the absolute independence of Palestinian organization and decision-making from Arab governments, and the primacy of armed struggle as the sole means of liberating Palestine. The belief that the Arab governments sought deliberately to suppress Palestinian identity was central in the thinking of Fateh (Sayigh, 1999, pp. 88-9).

The opportunity to solidify their existence as a people with a homeland who had a right to fight the powers of colonialism meant that for many Palestinians the revolutionary way was the only way (Sayigh, 1999). Palestinian identity was diluted into the greater Arab population and in the eyes of the international community their self-determination was unsupported, unnecessary and disposable (Lesch, 2008). Nationhood for Palestinians, in

the eyes of many, would come, only as a result of armed struggle, resistance and revolution.

### *Armed Struggle/Resistance*

Freedom fighters, guerrillas, commandos, soldiers, holy warriors, revolutionaries, terrorists, and martyrs are just some of the terms used to describe the individuals, both Zionist and Palestinian, who chose to utilize violence in the quest for nationhood. Some roots of the Zionist narrative lie in the deeds and duties of *Hashomer*, *Hagana*, the *Palmach*, the *Irgun*, the Stern Gang and later, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Palestinian agitators, militants and revolutionaries of the PLO, the PFLP, the Palestine Liberation Army, Black September, *Islamic Jihad*, *Hamas* and the *Al-Aqsa* Martyrs Brigade (to name only the most well-known) conducted operations, attacks and actions; exploits becoming tales of heroism and sacrifice. Armed struggle has been a hallmark of the modern conflict and many seeds of the collective story were planted by small groups of armed fighters willing to sacrifice everything for their brethren. Armed struggle refers to paramilitary (or military) operations conducted in hostile or enemy territory between armed groups (Shaw, 2003).

### Israel

Biblical Jewish resistance relates the courageous revolt against the Romans led by Simon Bar Kochba to free Judea and return Israel to Jewish rule. In the modern age Jewish resistance and armed struggle began when Zionist settlers in Palestine encountered Arab hostility and aggression and decided to defend their small settlements

with armed watchmen. The defense forces of Israel emerged in organized Jewish security forces created to protect Jewish collectivities from outside assault. In 1908 *Hashomer* was one of the first organized, national defensive organizations and its motto was “In blood and fire Judea fell; in blood and fire shall Judea rise” (Morris, 2001, p.53). The formation of *Hashomer* was a response to increasingly aggressive militancy by Palestinian Arabs. *Hashomer* was illegal, clandestine and adapted to the cultural landscape by using Arabic and adopting Arab and Bedouin customs. While *Hashomer* was one of the first paramilitary organizations there were dozens of others who participated in the evolution of the immigrant from settler to soldier. Other organizations included *Bar Giora*, *Etzel*, *Palmach*, the Stern Group, the Jewish Brigade Group, and the *Lehi* (Jewish Freedom Fighters) (Morris, 2001). These organizations were committed to the protection of Jews, Jewish enterprise and later, the defense of the state of Israel through the IDF.

During the Second World War the defense forces became Jewish militants who began to target both the British Administration in Palestine and Palestinian Arabs. Feeling abandoned, desperate and vulnerable during the last years of World War II, Jewish groups were struggling to satisfy the need for a safe haven for Jews escaping Nazi aggression in Europe—Jews who were being denied the right to immigrate to western countries such as the US or the UK (Caplan, 2010). Jewish underground resistance in Israel was echoed in Holocaust rescue groups, composed of *Haganah* volunteers who infiltrated Europe in order to keep the flow of Jewish immigrants coming toward Palestine and away from Hitler’s ovens (Cohn-Sherbok & El-Alami, 2002). Indeed, in



1945 members of *Haganah*, *Irgun* and *Lehi* began collaborating in order to instigate armed resistance to the British in Palestine, when the British government refused to alter immigration restrictions for Jews trying to come to Palestine. In this Jewish uprising, also known as the Jewish Revolt, armed Jewish guerrillas transformed their policy of restraint into outright attacks culminating in dramatic violence such as railway bombings and the bombing of the King David Hotel in 1946 (Caplan, 2010).

After the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 the *Haganah* was officially transformed into the national military, the IDF. The character of the new Jew was further forged in the military campaigns of the War for Independence, the Six-Day War and various other Israeli military successes including covert actions by the Israeli secret service the *Mossad* (Lesch, 2008). For many of the Jews of Palestine, the quest for security and statehood is intricately connected to the right and obligations of armed struggle/resistance and national military service has become a duty of almost every Israeli since 1948. The fighter/soldier for Israelis represents strength, freedom and security and armed struggle/resistance signifies self-reliance and independence.

## Palestine

Palestinian Arab armed struggle against the Ottomans, the British and Jewish Settlers existed prior to the creation of the state of Israel. Armed resistance involved both Palestinians and grassroots Arabs. The rebirth of modern Palestinian nationalism occurred in the formation of the Palestinian entity *Fatah* which was created to restore the pre-1948 borders of Palestine for Palestinians. In a sea of Pan-Arab sensibilities, it had an

ideology of “Palestine First” and its ultimate objective was the total obliteration of the Zionist enterprise (Sayigh, 1999. P. 87).

First written in 1964, the PLO charter was developed to encapsulate the attitudes and agenda of Palestinians. The Charter was amended in 1968 (after the Israeli’s success in the 1967 war) to include Article 9 and intoned that the only way to liberate Palestine from the Zionists was the use of armed struggle.

Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. This is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase. The Palestinian Arab people assert their absolute determination and firm resolution to continue their armed struggle and to work for an armed popular revolution for the liberation of their country and their return to it (N.A. 1968).

The campaign for armed resistance began in the 60s and involved Palestinian exiles and commandos from all over the Arab world. Resistance began with small raids into Israel which were by most assessments a complete disaster (Morris, 2001). Though actual military success for *Fatah* was limited—most operations were unsuccessful—the propaganda that emerged from the actions permitted the ranks of the revolutionaries to swell. Unlike clandestine attacks from other organizations *Fatah*, “publicized its activity and glorified its dead in order to attract new recruits” (Sayigh, 1999, p. 111). Even in defeat *Fatah* could harness little victories. The most significant of this time being the battle of *al-Karama*.

Considered *the* source ‘myth’ of the modern Palestinian fighter, *Karama* was a Palestinian refugee camp inside the Jordanian border that first allowed the Palestinians to

attain a victory from defeat. Attacks from the camp had invited Israeli retaliation and both soldiers and civilians were killed. Jordan responded by encircling the camp and warning the guerrillas that any activity that would expose the Jordanian people to harm would not be tolerated (Sayigh, 1999). The Palestinian commandos in the camp chose to stand and fight instead of flee and while the consequences of their actions did not provide a crushing defeat their enemies did withdraw with casualties. *Al-Karama* became a symbol of self-worth for Palestinians, a case “of a failure against overwhelming odds brilliantly narrated as heroic triumph” (Khalidi, 1997, p.197).

Later actions from bases in Jordan, Lebanon and in Europe solidified the Palestinian tactic of using propaganda to forward their objectives rather than actual military successes against Israel. In the 1970s, Palestinian armed struggle included spectacular “publicity terrorism” plane hijacking and hostage taking with each action raising the morale of Palestinian refugees and leading to new recruits to the movement (Chaliand & Blin, 2007, p. 226). The attacks in Munich that resulted in the death of 11 Israeli Olympic athletes, assassinations of prominent Jews and the Jordanian Prime Minister and letter bomb campaigns were viewed as triumphs—sources of dignity and pride. Many “Palestinians...viewed violence as a perfectly legitimate tool for resisting the occupation of lands they lost in 1948 and again in 1967, as well as for drawing the world’s urgent attention to their neglected cause” (Caplan, 2010, pp. 164-5).

In the 1990s armed struggle transformed into martyrdom operations of suicide bombers—Palestinians sacrificed their lives in order to kill Israelis (Bloom, 2005).

Armed struggle/resistance is considered an honourable activity for Palestinians whose decades of agitation have not resulted in a Palestinian state and for young men and women growing up in refugee camps armed struggle is a way to contribute to a future of dignity and self-determination for Palestine.

### *Religion*

Religion is a doctrine and exploration of the human connection to the divine. Religion has personal and communal aspects that function to socially unite a people, and religion, “offers a world-view within which people’s commitments are reinforced, their conflicts justified, their suffering valued and their ultimate questions, both personal and social, answered” (Nazir-Ali, 200, p.18). For Jews and Muslims they are God’s chosen people, for Christians the major events of the life and death of Jesus occurred in Jerusalem. The land of Israel/Palestine is a place of historical, biblical and Koranic importance—a sacred space where the divine has touched down on earth (Armstrong, 2005). Sacred spaces can be constructed buildings such as temples or churches, they can be edifices that house ‘holy’ relics they can be part of the natural world or they can be modern locations of sites interpreted to be places of spiritual significance (Hassner, 2009). Eliade, one of the first religious sociologists, maintained that sacred spaces have three overarching characteristics: they are places that the observant can physically, spiritually and emotionally connect with the divine, they embody a permanent manifestation of the divine and, believers consider them meaningful (1974).

The ‘holy’ lands of Israel/Palestine are considered sacred spaces “sites of infinite beauty... supreme serenity and majesty, overwhelming the visitor [but with] a history of extreme violence and bloodshed” they occupy a contested space where valuable religious resources become something to live, die and kill for (Hassner, 2009, p.1). Central to the role of religion in Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict is the notion of a ‘chosen people’ a group of individuals chosen by God to fulfill some divine order as God’s terrestrial representatives. In order to understand how religion contributes to the conflict narratives of Israelis and Palestinians the following section briefly explores the relevance of being members of a ‘chosen’ people in Judaism, Christianity and Islam—and the significance of the city of Jerusalem.

### Judaism

The Jews trace their ancestry back to Abraham the Hebrew Patriarch who is believed to be the forefather to the Israelites (Jews) the Ishmaelite’s (Muslims) and Jesus of Nazareth. In the four books of the Hebrew *Tanakh*, (the first four books of the Old Testament) the revelation of God’s covenant with the Hebrews is narrated and in return for a solemn promise to obey God’s commandments and observe the practice of male circumcision Abraham is awarded the Promised lands, the land of Israel (Barker, 1995).

Genesis 12: the Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you (Barker, 1995, p. 24).

Genesis 13: So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev...from the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel...there Abram called on the name of the Lord...the Lord said to Abram... “Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever (Barker, 1995, p. 25).

Genesis 17: Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God (Barker, 1995, p. 24-30).

God’s covenant with the Hebrews is expanded and repeated for the descendants of Abraham and then codified and explored in the *Torah* (Jewish written law) and the *Talmud* (Rabbinic discussion). For Jews, their identity begins with the Abrahamic covenant with God and continues to this day in the lands awarded him, the land of Israel (Arberry, 2009). Judaism is both a religion and an ethnicity with varying levels of observance, mysticism and militancy. For some Jews the covenant is a promise to live a moral and ethical life according to the Laws of Noah and the Ten Commandments, for others it has become the physical occupation of the sacred spaces of the land of Israel (Murphy, 2002; Arberry, 2009).

### Christianity

Christians ascribe to the belief that God’s covenant with the Jews to send a *Messiah* was satisfied in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The arrival of a *Messiah* was prophesized in the Old Testament by a variety of voices.

Isaiah 9: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom,

establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever (Barker, 1995, p. 1023).

Jeremiah 31: “The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant...this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people (Barker, 1995, p. 1170).

Zachariah 9: Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey (Barker, 1995, p. 1409).

The New Testament is a revelation of the deeds and travails of Jesus from his birth in Bethlehem to his death in Jerusalem. Christians view the land of Israel as the chosen location for God to send his only son and make pilgrimages to the places Jesus visited as described in the bible (Armstrong, 2005). The place names still exist today in the modern land and there are literally hundreds of such sacred sites for modern believers to visit. Some biblical passages from the Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John relating to Jesus in the Holy Land include:

Mathew 2: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?” (Barker, 1995, p. 1437).

Mark 1: At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan (Barker, 1995, p. 1491).

Luke 19: Jesus...went ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it there. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it’” (Barker, 1995, p. 1575).

John 2: On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone... Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine... This the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee (Barker, 1995, p. 1593-4).

For Christian believers the scriptural sources are irrefutable evidence of the importance of the land of Israel/Palestine within the Christian tradition because that is where the teachings of Jesus were given to his disciples and where the life, death and resurrection of the Son of God occurred (Armstrong, 2005). While the religion became westernized, largely transcribed in the Greek and Latin language and centered in the cities of Alexandria, Constantinople, Rome and Antioch the roots of the story of Jesus remain in the land of Israel/Palestine (Arberry, 2009).

## Islam

Muslims trace their ancestry to Ibrahim (Abraham of the Old Testament) and believe they are the inheritors of God's final message on earth. Beginning in 610 CE and continuing for twenty-two years the Prophet Mohammed began receiving revelations from God and these disclosures were eventually transcribed by his followers in the Koran, "the Recitation" (Armstrong, 2005, p. 217). The Prophet Mohammed is said to have received the final and most perfect revelation from God, one that began with Abraham and continued with Jesus of Nazareth (Armstrong, 2005). A major connection between the land of Israel/Palestine and Islam is the belief by Muslims that the Prophet



Mohammed travelled to Jerusalem, prayed on a large rock and then made his ascension to heaven (Hassner, 2009). The Koran relates this in ‘The Night Journey’:

Glory be to Him who made His servant go by night from the Sacred Temple to the farther Temple (Dawood, 1999, p.197).

The second religious connection between Islam and Jerusalem relates to the first *qibla*—direction of prayer. The Prophet Mohammed’s first *qibla* was to Jerusalem, later changed to Mecca (Reiter, 2008). Despite the fact that the actual place name of ‘Jerusalem’ is not used in the Koran Muslims believe and have always believed that the ‘farther Temple’ refers to the *Haram al-Sharif* (the noble sanctuary) in Jerusalem’s Old City. Muslims believe Jerusalem to be the third holiest shrine in Islam, the rock in the Dome of the Rock Mosque to be the place where the Prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven from a counterpart to the *Ka’aba*, the rock around which Muslims pray in Mecca (Reiter, 2008).

Muslims believe that the Prophet Mohammed imparted a vision of spiritual unity; political realities after Mohammed’s death resulted in an Islamic occupation of all three of the Muslim holy sites—Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem—for hundreds of years (Reiter, 2008). The Zionist enterprise and Israeli occupation of Jerusalem since 1967 are seen as a fragmentation of the Muslim relationship to the sacred and for this reason the Palestinian narrative encompasses not only the terrestrial exile of the Palestinian people but a threatened spiritual exile as well.

## *Jerusalem*

For Jews, Christians and Muslims, the city of Jerusalem has been host to spiritual, cultural and political events of profound importance. The Koran's nameless city in 'the Night Journey' is considered to be Jerusalem. Jerusalem's Temple Mount was the site of the destroyed first and second Jewish Temples and the City was the final venue of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. While the scope of this thesis does not allow for an exhaustive exploration of the connection between the conflict and the city there is no doubt that Jerusalem is a unique repository of narrative meaning and mythological importance.

Jerusalem is at once an ancient place and a modern incarnation of the Sacred (Kollek & Pearlman, 1968). While the city has been built up and destroyed a multitude of times the timeless quality of the landscape contributes to deeply embedded cultural beliefs and religious rivalries (Bose, 2007; Emmett, 1996; Kollek & Pearlman, 1968). However, Jerusalem differs from many other ancient cities in that the same sacred space, the same ancient terrain has different meaning for three religions (Abu El-Haj, 1998). At times in control of Jews, at times Crusader Christians, the Muslim Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate and most recently the Israelis, the City of Jerusalem is a microcosm of contested space where group rivalries and jockeying for privileges nonetheless has resulted in a juxtaposition of faiths, languages, cultures, and sacred spaces (Dumper, 2003).

Of primary religious concern has been the right for believers to visit the holy sites (Reiter, 2008). Historically, members of all three faiths have travelled to Jerusalem in

religious pilgrimage and political realities have at times been tolerant, repressive or outright murderous to visiting pilgrims (Armstrong, 2005). The assaults on Christian pilgrims by Muslims spurred the many Crusades that sought to wrestle the sacred sites from the hands of the ‘infidel’ Muslims (Reiter, 2008). Today, the incursion and successes of the crusading armies are echoed in calls to end the Zionist ‘crusades’ of Israel and restore the Muslim sites to the community of Islam, the *Umma*.

Jerusalem is described as a “complex, fascinating city of exquisite treasures and numerous historical and religious sites...enhanced by the qualities of its magnificent physical setting” (Breger & Ahimeir, 2002, p. 17) but the city is not merely a repository of past culture and antiquities, it is a national capital to one group (Israelis), an imagined capital to another (Palestinians) and a holy city to thousands who will likely never set foot on her stone streets (Lesch, 2008; Smith, 1988).

Jewish historians call Jerusalem the “City of David” (the first Jewish King to make Jerusalem his capital) and trace the name *Yerushalim* from the Hebrew words *Ir* and *Shalom* meaning ‘city of peace’ (Kollek & Pearlman, 1968). Arab scholars say the name is of Arabic origin from the word *Jebus* (the Jebusites are considered one of the native Semitic populations of what is now called Israel/Palestine) and *Salem* which in Arabic means ‘safe’(Aamiry, 1978). Israeli scholars see Jerusalem as the only holy city to the Jews making their connection with that city “unshakeable” (Kollek & Pearlman, 1968, p. 11) while Arab scholars maintain that “despite Israeli propaganda, there are in fact no important Jewish monuments or religious sanctuaries in Jerusalem” (Aamiry, 1978, p.

10). For Christians the streets of the Old City are tangible remnants of the fate of Jesus of Nazareth regardless of the fact that within 100 years after the death of Jesus the entire city was razed and rebuilt by Emperor Hadrian and renamed *Aelia Capitolina* (Murphy, 2002).

### Holy Jerusalem

Jews considered Jerusalem their only capital city having housed the Temple of Solomon (1<sup>st</sup> Temple) destroyed in 586 BCE and the Herodian Temple (2<sup>nd</sup> Temple) destroyed in 70 CE. Described by the Prophet Ezekiel (33-48) it was to be a permanent dwelling place for the God of Israel on earth (Armstrong, 2005). The Temple was a place where Jewish priests could offer sacrifices, recite the daily prayers and was the centre of Jewish religious life (Murphy, 2002). The destruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple changed the practice of Judaism forever turning it inward and making the home the new temple (Armstrong, 2005).

Movements exist to this day to reclaim the sacred Temple Mount and build a 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple. One Rabbi articulates the creation of the modern Jewish state of Israel to that end, “We should not forget that the supreme purpose of the ingathering of the exile, and the establishment of our state is the building of the Temple” (Aviner, 1987, p15). The role of Jerusalem as a sacred space and location of both the past temples and possible ‘future’ temple makes primary the religious significance of Jerusalem to Jews.

The occupation of the whole of Jerusalem by the Israelis in 1967 was the first time since 597 BCE that a Jewish administration had control of the terrain termed the ‘Holy of

Holies.’ While Jews could finally access the grounds of the Temple Mount most did not as most honoured the Rabbinical decree that access to the Temple Mount is forbidden lest they step foot on the sacred resting place of God—a space forbidden to all but the highest Jewish priest on the Jewish New Year, *Yom Kippur* (Armstrong, 2005).

Jerusalem in the eyes of Christianity is both a physical site of the sacred and a symbolic and spiritual connection to their Messiah (Armstrong, 2005). The Christians of the first millennia were less interested in the geography of the actual Jerusalem as committed as they were to the vision of a *New Jerusalem*, a heavenly city and spiritual recreation of the city that had rejected their messiah—Jesus of Nazareth (Murphy, 2005). According to Armstrong,

Jesus had said that in future people would not gather in such holy places as Jerusalem but would worship him in spirit and truth. Devotion to shrines and holy mountains was characteristic of paganism and Judaism, both of which Christians were anxious to transcend [although] local Christians...liked to visit sites outside the city connected with Jesus (Armstrong, 2005, p. 171).

When the Emperor Constantine attributed his military success to the Christian God in 313 CE, he began supporting the Christians of Jerusalem and arranged for multiple archaeological projects to reclaim the city’s Christian heritage. The discovery took years but eventually yielded both the site where Jesus was crucified and the place where he was entombed and then resurrected (Armstrong, 2005). Both locations are now within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter of the Old City and Christian pilgrims from all over the world come to the city to see the places their Lord Jesus Christ sacrificed his life and was entombed (Dumper, 2002).

The Koran repeatedly states that its message does not abandon the teachings of the Bible Prophets but that it seeks to restate and remind people of the singular vision of God (Dawood, 1999). Islam seeks to transcend all social systems that contribute to the separateness of people from God; the unity of all humanity under God is the goal of Islam (Armstrong, 2005). While Muslims are taught that all things have sacred potential they nevertheless revere most highly the cities of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. Jerusalem is said to hold twelve facets of the sacred including:

1. The ascension of the Prophet Mohammed to heaven
2. The worship of Muslims in Jerusalem
3. Jerusalem as the 1<sup>st</sup> *quibla*
4. Prayer is more powerful in Jerusalem (500 times more powerful)
5. The Prophet Mohammed encouraged Muslims to travel to Jerusalem
6. Muslim residents of Jerusalem are considered protectors of the faith
7. The sanctity of the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque (13 centuries old)
8. The Islamic *waqf*: an endowment agency that protects the sites
9. The multitude of Islamic schools throughout the city
10. The Pact of Umar supporting religious tolerance between Muslims and Christians
11. Long-term Muslim control of the city
12. The original inhabitants of the city were Jebusites, Arab proto-Muslims (Reiter, 2008).

Importantly, for Muslims, any action undertaken in Jerusalem is echoed in Mecca. Any action that demeans Jerusalem is considered a humiliation of Mecca, the interconnectivity of both sites is expounded upon by Muslim writers, who contend that,

Arabs were the first inhabitants of both Mecca and Jerusalem; both shrines were chosen as a direction of prayer...both shrines are mentioned in one verse in the Qur'an...a single prayer at both is equivalent to many prayers in other mosques; any harm to one of them is much more injurious than a malaction in any other mosque...both have holy springs... [And] both have a rock that was blessed by God (Reiter, 2008, pp.28-9).

Similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Temples the Shrine in Mecca hosts a rock upon which one is capable of accessing the divine “the *Ka'aba* was thought to stand at the center of the world: the gate of heaven was positioned directly above it, so it was a place where the divine world had made itself accessible to the mundane” (Armstrong, 2005, p. 221).

Jerusalem, as an echo of Mecca and favoured city of the Prophet Mohammed is sacred to Muslims and must be preserved, protected and defended.

#### Political Jerusalem

There has been no greater obstacle to the progress of a peaceful resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict than the status of Jerusalem (Reiter, 2008). Jerusalem is a spiritual and terrestrial capital city; Palestinians profess that the city is an Islamic endowment that belongs to the entire Muslim nation and Israelis see their occupation victory in 1967 as a re-unification; joining (Jewish) West Jerusalem and (Arab) East Jerusalem and allowing Jews access to holy sites in the West Bank (called by many Israelis the biblical place names Judea and Samaria) (Cohen, 2011). The political significance of Jerusalem is explored in three processes in the next section (although there are many others): settler Zionism, the *Intifadas*, and Political Islam. All three of

these social processes contribute to the strength of conflict narratives and all three continue to be both concrete and symbolic stumbling blocks on the path to peace.

Since 1967, the Israeli occupation of the Old City and East Jerusalem (the location of her most holy sites) has greatly diminished the Arab qualities of East Jerusalem; Israelis have usurped, evicted, urbanized, ‘Judaized’ and fragmented the ability for Palestinians to live, work and worship in Jerusalem. According to Klein,

In the wake of the June 1967 war Israel sought to Judaize East Jerusalem and turn it into an integral part of the state of Israel. Immediately after the conquest of the Old City, the government had the Mughrabi neighbourhood razed. That same month came legal annexation, in the form of imposition of Israeli law and administration on a territory twice as large as the western city—6.5 sq km of Jordanian Jerusalem, as well as an additional 64.4 sq km of adjacent West Bank territory, were added to the 38.1 sq km of the Israeli city. Israel unilaterally declared this new entity to be “United Jerusalem, the Eternal Capital of Israel” (2008, p. 55).

To a large degree the Israeli settlement strategy has embraced a politics of demographics; more Jewish bodies in more places to secure and maintain a Jewish majority in Israel and the military spaces Israel occupies (Dumper. 2002). The last forty years have seen the increase of Israeli settlement of East Jerusalem (Arab and West Bank) neighbourhoods including *Gilo*, *East Talpiot*, *Ramot*, *Neve Ya’akov*, *Pisgat Ze’ev*, *Ramot Shlomo*, *Har Homa*, *Ma’aleh Adumim*, *Pesagot*, *Giv’at Ze’ev*, *Beitar Ilit* and *Gush Etzion* and these new neighbourhoods “were built to render impossible the return of the city to Arab control” (Klein, 2008, p. 56). Indeed, in September 2011, Israeli president Benjamin Netanyahu announced the construction of 1100 additional housing units in East Jerusalem indicating that while the peace process remains at a standstill Israel will carry



on contributing to an increased Jewish presence in previously Arab East Jerusalem (Greenberg, 2011). Settler Zionism has emerged as one of the most powerful instruments weakening the quest for Palestinian statehood. The more settlements built, the less likely that the enmeshment of Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank could be dismantled to make way for an independent Palestine. The majority of those new settlers represent a radical and extremist Israeli political position, orthodox and unwavering, these religious pioneers view their settlement of these areas as a sacred duty to reclaim ancient, biblical Judea and Samaria and many articulate their occupancy as a continuation of the settler Zionism of the 1<sup>st</sup> and later *Aliyahs* with the same goals: secure Israeli sovereignty and fulfill Judaism's sacred duty (Taub, 2010).

A powerful example of the strength of settler Zionism and its mandate of fragmentation, and control is the separation barrier. The wall is a concrete occupation of land awarded to a future Palestinian state in 1948; its existence has resulted in fewer armed attacks on civilian Israelis but it has also contributed to the continued fragmentation of Palestinian life and weakening of Palestinian political power (Taub, 2010).

The human rights organization *B'tselem* maintains that the creation and administration of the settlements and separation wall achieve the dual goals of disenfranchising Palestinians from politically participating in their own territories and allocating valuable resources, status and power to settler Jews. They maintain that,

Israel created in the Occupied Territories a regime of separation and discrimination, with two separate systems of law in the same territory. One system, for the settlers, de facto annexes the settlements to Israel and grants settlers the rights of citizens of a democratic state. The other is a system of military law that systematically deprives Palestinians of their rights and denies them the ability to have any real effect on shaping the policy regarding the land space in which they live and with respect to their rights. These separate systems reinforce a regime in which rights depend on the national identity of the individual (B'tselem, 2011, ¶2).



**Figure 6 Separation Wall in East Jerusalem (Author's collection, 2005)**

Jerusalem is intrinsically linked to the people who live in her environs, the separation wall, deportation and expulsion of Palestinian residents and the influx of new Zionist settlers have altered the political possibilities of a peaceful separation between the conflicting groups. For settlers, their contribution is seen as intractable, for Palestinians, they suffer daily reminders that Palestine the nation is still a dream.

The city of Jerusalem is a contested space where ethnic and religious boundaries are consistently challenged and ignored. Immediately following the war in 1948, the Palestinian people were dispersed and disorganized, the failure to hold onto Palestine delivered an existential blow to Palestinian dreams of statehood and subsequent decades of Palestinian political organization and armed struggle had yielded few results. In the 1980s a new form of Palestinian resistance emerged, largely disorganized and mostly nonviolent. It started haphazardly, from a group of uncoordinated individuals but its methods and meaning have had a great impact on Palestinian solidarity with and connection to Jerusalem: the *Intifada* (Cohen, 2011).

The first *Intifada*, or ‘shaking off’, began in 1987 as a protest against Israel and was comprised of strikes, stone throwing, civil resistance and demonstrations (Morris, 2001). Israeli control of Palestinian lives had reached an intolerable level and the social, economic and political status of Palestinians living in Israeli controlled sectors had given rise to grass-roots actions of resistance and counterattacks (Caplan, 2010).

The main energizing force of the Intifada was the frustration of the national aspirations of the 650,000 inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, 900,000 of the West Bank, and the 130,000 of East Jerusalem, who wanted to live in a Palestinian state and not as stateless inhabitants under a brutal, foreign military occupation (Morris, 2001, p.562).

The *Intifada* pitted David against Goliath, and imagery showcased Palestinian youth armed with rocks and Molotov cocktails against Israeli military rubber bullets, tear gas and live ammunition (Morris, 2001). Young Palestinians, working independently of the PLO or other established Palestinian political entities harnessed the frustration and

determination of their brethren and their protests returned the Israeli/Palestinian conflict to the forefront of the international community culminating in the Peace Accords of 1993 (Caplan, 2010).

The relevance of the first *Intifada* to Palestinians lies in the fact that the uprising strengthened Palestinian nationalism and addressed the annexation of the future Palestine in ways that the Palestinian authorities had not. Historian Benny Morris posits that after decades of occupation Palestinians were losing hope and had little to lose, they had been ignored by Arab summits in Egypt and Jordan and Israel refused to negotiate with the PLO (Morris, 2001). The *Intifada* brought the struggle for statehood back home; the Palestinian leadership, living in exile in Tunis, seemed distant and ineffectual, the uprising re-established the struggle ‘inside’ of Palestine when Palestinian politics had remained in the diaspora since 1948 (Khalidi, 1997). The first *Intifada* lasted until 1993 and ended when Palestinian nationalism earned a symbolic victory, the Oslo Accords.

The *Al-Aqsa Intifada* was also a popular uprising of resistance and a symbolic return to the strength of opposition first gained in 1987. The visit of Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount in 2000 outraged Palestinians and led to the first open expression of armed struggle between Israelis and Palestinians since 1948—it also introduced to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict the use of suicide bombing (Cohen, 2011). The armed conflict escalated rapidly and both sides responded with heavy hands; Israel arrested hundreds and military responses intensified. Israelis (mostly Jerusalemites) suffered the bulk of the suicide attacks that targeted, killed and injured dozens of Israeli citizens (Cohen, 2011).

The violence of the second *Intifada* (*Al-Aqsa*) yielded no peace talks or agreements and the results hardened the positions of both Israelis and Palestinians. Indeed the Israeli position became more extreme and even racist after the second uprising, “the intifada was the impetus that exposed a trend which in fact had started years earlier [bringing] to the fore manifestations of extremism [that] had not been fully invoked since the establishment of Israel” (Rouhana, 2006, p. 131). The Israeli right wing articulated political capitulation with Palestinians as a religious misdeed. The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1994 by an extremist Jew was supported by many Israelis who viewed the machinations of the peace accord with the destruction of the state of Israel extremists believe that “nobody—from the individual Jew up to the most powerful government you could imagine—has the moral right to give up any significant territory making up part of the land of Israel” (Stern, 2003, p. 88). The violence of the second *intifada* supported a rise in fundamentalism on both sides of the conflict. The fervent religiosity of the settler Zionism is echoed in the Islamicization of the Palestinian position.

The image of Palestinian resistance was no longer the revolutionary movements of the 1970s or the youthful resister of the 1980s. It would become the Islamic Martyr, strapped with explosives and killing him or herself for Palestine and Islam (Khalili, 2007). Seen as a slight against the Islamic community (Sharon was seen to have treaded upon ground sacred to Muslims), the champion of the second *Intifada* transformed from a stone-throwing youth into a Muslim self-sacrificer performing the Islamic right of *Jihad*, holy war (Bloom, 2005).

Palestinians leaders had always articulated their struggle for nationhood to the universal importance of the city of Jerusalem within the greater Islamic *Umma*. Similar to extremist Jews who link politics to religion, Palestinians cannot condone Israeli control of the Islamic holy places. Muslims have claimed (for decades) that any Palestinian leader does not have the right to participate in any negotiation that relinquishes the Arab/Muslim qualities of Jerusalem and her role in Palestinian solidarity (Cohen, 2011). This position was weakened by those who considered turning Jerusalem into an international city administered by neither Arab nor Israeli and strengthened by Islamist oratory that relates the relinquishment of Jerusalem to any non-Muslim entity as punishable by death (Rubin, 2007).

The rise of Islamist politics in the region (Palestinian Islamic *Jihad* and *Hamas*) relates to the harsh living conditions that Palestinians suffered under in the occupied territories and even after 2005, when Israel completely withdrew from the Gaza Strip, the territory was already well on its way to radical Islam. By the late 1970s in many Gaza towns,

Fundamentalists imposed new norms of behaviour. Movie houses were shut down; shop windows displaying models of women in dresses were vandalized; cafes selling alcoholic beverages were set alight; people who used the left hand in eating (contrary to the tradition of the Prophet) were beaten. Women increasingly took the veil, and young men began sporting beards (Morris, 2001, p. 564).

Gaza, considered an Islamic territory by most is ruled by *Hamas* and adheres to strict Political Islam, an ideology that places the allegiance of Muslims first to God and later to Palestine (Rubin, 2007). *Hamas* was an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood

and its popularity has risen in the most economically deprived areas. *Hamas* offered a new worldview for Palestinians, they provided valuable religious “social, educational, and health services” and importantly, distinguished themselves from other Palestinian groups by defining their main goal as the destruction and removal of Israel “by whatever means necessary” (Caplan, 2010, p. 198).

Islamists introduced a new rhetoric of revolution to the Palestinian people, one that replaced the weakened and ineffectual nationalisms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that of holy war. The quest for Palestinian statehood would no longer be a political exercise in sovereignty and recognition but a divine pursuit, sanctioned by God and beloved of the entire Islamic *Umma*. Political Islam is a reawakening of Muslim identity and a symbolic proclamation of both unity and differentiation. If the secular nationalisms failed Islam was seen as the solution (Hammami, 1997).

The image of the Martyr in Palestinian society is very strong and is seen as a symbol of both the asymmetry of life in the territories and a selfless act of resistance (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006, p. 209). It is also a strategic ‘remarketing’ of Palestinian politics—martyrdom operations become valuable propaganda to elicit support and money (Davis, 2003). For Palestinians disillusioned with the strength and effectiveness of the Palestinian Authority (PA) under Yasser Arafat, martyrdom operations became symbolic reminders that nothing had changed for Palestinians since the Oslo Accords. Annexation of Palestinian territory continued and the international community was no closer to forcing Israel to adhere to the countless UN resolutions and international legal tenets that

supported an independent Palestine (Cohen, 2011). Martyrdom operations, as a response to illegitimate and feeble governance created celebrity bombers whose sacrifices of life for the greater good increased the honour of Palestinian families and gave a tangible voice to the thousands of suffering Palestinians.

Jerusalem is considered an Islamic *Waqf*, a “property that may not be sold or changed in any way” (Reiter, 2008, p. 84). This sentiment originated in the *Hamas* charter, which believes the city of Jerusalem and the land of Palestine belongs to the entire Muslim nation as a result of the Muslim conquest of the land and until the day of Resurrection (Reiter, 2008). The strength of this position (and those of the Israeli right-wing) has made negotiations regarding the status of Jerusalem impossible. Jerusalem as both a real and an imagined political capital remains a contested space, one side’s myth of origin necessarily erasing the validity and worth of the other.

### *Exile and Return*

A people in exile have been removed from or endured a long absence from their native land. Israeli and Palestinian conflict narratives are two examples of how a tragedy of exile becomes intimately connected to collective identity and the struggle for statehood (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004). The creation of Israel led to the end of Jewish exile and the safety of thousands of Jews fleeing anti-Semitism, post-Holocaust Europe, Arab countries and the West (Caplan, 2010). These survivors became the first Israelis and their triumph simultaneously created the Palestinian catastrophe—*Al-Nakba*—and the exile of thousands of Palestinians from their homes.



In this protracted ethnic conflict, both sides consider themselves the target of a great historical injustice and both rely on cultural myths that simultaneously erase and recreate the past to proclaim their suffering (Anderson, 2006). The perception that Israelis and Palestinians are one another's victim's means they remember separately they commemorate independently and they mourn alone. Bar-On and Sarsar consider this important reality an obstacle to peace because "the deeper both people descend into the abyss of dehumanization and victimization, the farther they move from the possibility of mutual acceptance, healing and hope" (2004, p. 63). What follows is an exploration of the importance of exile in Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict and the juxtaposition of Israel's Law of Return with the Palestinian's belief in their Right of Return.

#### The Holocaust (*Shoah*) and the Catastrophe (*Al-Nakba*)

During WWII, from 1939-1945, there was a systematic and almost total annihilation of European Jewry that occurred called the Holocaust (*Shoah* in Hebrew) (Niewyk, 1992). In 1948 roughly 750,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled their homes and forced into refugee camps outside of the new borders of independent Israel (Khalidi, 1997). These two cultural devastations have greatly diminished the respective collectivities from acknowledging one another's tragedy lest recognizing the pain of the 'other' in some fashion diminishes the victimhood of the self. The Holocaust was "genocide of innocents" (Niewyk, 1992, p.1). *Al-Nakba* was waves of "expulsions and massacres" (Khalili, 2007, p. 43). For Jews, the experience of hundreds of years of anti-Semitism culminated in the extermination camps of Nazi Europe. For Palestinians the fragmentation of their cultural, religious, social, economic and political lives as

refugees—and the children and grandchildren of refugees—continues to this day with a disabled Israeli/Palestinian peace process and limited international support (Morris, 2001).

National Socialism (Nazism) was an ideology of racism and violence that considered the Aryan race superior and the Jews “the disease that threatens the body of humanity from within” (Patterson, 2011). The Nazi perpetrated Holocaust was a progression of abuses that began with disenfranchisement of Jews in employment, discrimination against Jews in law, direct violence against Jews and expulsion of Jews to concentration camps. It advanced and culminated in the systematic and comprehensive murder of roughly six million men, women and children killed in *pogroms*, forced marches, deportation, ‘liquidation’ squads and death camps (Niewyk, 1992).

The targeting of Jews during the Nazi Holocaust is the most recent and most horrific experience of anti-Semitism and the calamity has emerged as one of the defining cultural narratives of Jewry and the State of Israel tied up, as it is, with immigration to Palestine during the war and the emergence of the new State of Israel as a welcome repository for the dispossessed and traumatized survivors (Caplan, 2010). The importance of the Holocaust and the hundreds of years of anti-Semitism to the Israeli narrative hinges on the sense that the Jew, in exile from the biblical land of Israel and living in the diaspora for so long became Hitler’s refugees in the modern age, denied access to other, safer countries and left without a country of their own.

Ofer suggests “for most Israelis the Holocaust is not part of their living memory [but] an experience acquired through learning” (2009, p. 3). The institutionalization of the Holocaust in Israel in education and commemorations plays an important role in the continued collective memory of Israelis. The imagery and co-memory of the Holocaust are also used as a “political tool” that likens any softening of the Israeli position to inviting another Jewish extermination (Gutwein, 2009; Ofer, 2009). The rhetoric of Islamic Jihadists espousing the eradication of Israel and the hatred of Jews forms an echo of the Nazis ideology of hatred (Patterson, 2011). ‘Never again!’ refers to the survivors pledge to fight the next Jewish Holocaust. For Israeli’s the Holocaust represents a tragic collective atrocity as well as a contemporary cultural imperative.

Roughly 350 Arab villages were eradicated during the first Arab-Israeli war in what was either a deliberate ‘population transfer’ (Plan Dalet) or the result of Palestinians fleeing for the borders to escape Zionist aggression (Morris, 2001). *Al-Nakba* is considered the ultimate wellspring of Palestinian cultural identity as the lives of over half of the Palestinian population were forever truncated, fragmented or lost in 1948 (Khalidi, 1997). For Palestinians the collective memory of *Al-Nakba* represents the systematic removal and massacre of thousands of Palestinians by Zionist forces, the weakness and illegitimacy of the Arab commitment to Palestinian nationalism, the humiliation of exile and the loss of dignity living as refugees on the borders of land occupied for generations by their ancestors unable to support their families without handouts from the UN (Caplan, 2010).

The victimization and despair of Palestinian refugees became a fundamental building block of Palestinian identity. Refugee camps were disorganized and haphazard and the bulk of the Palestinian population at the time was illiterate (80%) and destitute (Morris, 2001). Fear that they would never return to their homes was compounded by decades of political stalemates between Arab countries and Israel and the refusal by the IDF to allow any refugees to return (Morris, 2001). Those who were reluctant to leave their homes during the war were motivated by tales of rape and murder in the Western Jerusalem Arab village *Deir Yassin* when the village was attacked by the Jews and hundreds were killed:

Whole families were riddled with bullets and grenade fragments and buried when houses were blown up on top of them; men, women, and children were mowed down as they emerged from houses; individuals were taken aside and shot. At the end of the battle, groups of old men, women, and children were trucked through West Jerusalem's streets in a kind of 'victory parade' and then dumped in (Arab) East Jerusalem (Morris, 2001, p. 208).

'*Deir Yassin!*' became a slogan of resistance and the symbol of the Jewish atrocity and news of the massacre made a decisive impression on Arabs considering whether or not to leave their homes hoping to avoid a similar fate (Caplan, 2010). Later tragedies compounded the fear of aggression against Palestinian civilians. In 1982, Christian Maronites entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Southern Lebanon—under Israeli control at the time—and massacred hundreds. On September 16<sup>th</sup>,

Virtually without letup, for the next thirty-eight hours they massacred men, women, and children—even horses dogs, and cats—in cold blood. Almost all the

victims were unarmed civilians. Grenades, knives, hatchets, revolvers, and assault rifles as well as occasional artillery were used in the butchery. In some cases, breasts and penises were hacked off, crosses carved into the flesh as a Christian signature, pregnant women's bellies ripped open, and, in one instance, the members of a baby cut off and disposed on an ironing board in a circle around his head" (Randal, 1990, p.15).

The Palestinian narrative of conflict is intimately linked to the disenfranchisement and insecurity of the exiled Palestinian refugees. Their lack of political status after decades, their continued social and economic fragmentation living in refugee camps, other Arab states and two dislocated occupied territories since 1967—the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—has resulted in poverty, crippling Israeli over lordship and a deep seeded hatred of Jews and Zionists (Caplan, 2010).

*Al-Nakba* resulted in the tragic dislocation and dissolution of Palestinian society. Palestinians add Arab collusion to their suffering as those dispossessed by the conflict in 1948 were forced to stay in the camps as political pawns "they wanted to 'go home' and the Arab states...did little to absorb them, seeing in them and their misery a useful tool against Israel" (Morris, 2001, p. 258). The tragedy of the Palestinians remains unresolved after decades and functions as the foundation myth of the Palestinian national narrative (Khalidi 1997). It also "serves as a tool for mobilizing the population for action [transforming] the Nakba memory from an object of grief and longing into an instrument for activism and combativeness" (Litvak, 2009, p.57).

Israel and Palestine constitute two communities of memory, each group's victimization reinforcing and negating the others. Many Palestinians feel they are being

held accountable for the world's inaction in the face of Nazi aggression and many Israeli's feel they are being asked to 'absorb' the Palestinian problem (when other Arab states could have accommodated those who fled during the wars) and that to do so would demographically cripple the Jewish qualities of Israel; were Palestinians permitted to return many Israelis fear the eventual evaporation of the Jewish State (Morris, 2001).

For the Palestinians, accepting the Jewish pain around the Holocaust means accepting the moral ground for the creation of the State of Israel. For the Israeli Jews, accepting the pain of the 1948 Palestinian refugees means sharing responsibility for their plight and their right of return (Bar-On & Sarsar, 2004, p. 65).

The dual tragedies of the Holocaust and *Al-Nakba* feed the perception of victimhood and the right to violence. In order to understand the strength of Israeli and Palestinian conflict narratives it is important to comprehend the suffering and survival of both peoples in exile and the importance to both of coming home. The next section juxtaposes the subject or return in each group's narrative by examining the Palestinian insistence on the Right of Return and the symbolism of the Israeli Law of Return.

### Right of Return

The Right of Return is a central component of the Palestinian narrative. Their exile from and eventual return to their ancestral homelands is considered a fundamental part of Palestinian identity and culture (Khalidi, 1992). The events of 1948 and the displacement of the Palestinian population then and later in 1967 have resulted in the continued displacement of now millions who consider Palestine their home. Because the

Palestinians see themselves as victims of Zionist aggression their retribution includes the right to return to the homes they fled from or were ‘transferred’ from as a result of the armed conflict with Israel. The fact they have largely been denied citizenship in neighbouring Arab countries and remain ‘stateless’ to this day solidify their sense of connection to the land of their ancestors. For Palestinians the Right of Return is a moral obligation of recognition and retribution and one that distinguishes their national connection to their homeland—Palestine (Khalidi, 1992).

While Palestinian resistance has taken many forms,

one of the most effective and least evident forms of resistance was the preservation of memories and the national narrative, at the core of which was a clinging to a right to the homeland—expressed now in the form of insisting on the principle of the right of return: Israel must be held responsible for the Palestinian exile, and the Jewish state in the Palestinian homeland must be denied legitimacy. The narrative is shared by all segments of the Palestinian society, including Palestinians in Israel (Rouhana, 2006, pp. 124-5).

The Right of Return possesses several gray areas that may bear exploration here; there is no consensus whether the ‘right’ extends to those exiled in 1948 alone and whether it encompasses those who left voluntarily, those who left later or those who lived outside of Mandatory Palestine in neighbouring Arab countries. Does the right include their descendants and where does the right permit resettlement within Israel (Gans, 2004)?

The most ambitious interpretation of the right of return and of the assumption of Jewish responsibility for the Palestinian refugee situation is that Jews in Israel are responsible for all of the past and present suffering of all members of the Palestinian diaspora resulting from Zionism and the establishment of the state of Israel. Under this interpretation, responsibility for the Palestinian plight can only be properly discharged...[by] allowing the return of all members of the Palestinian

diaspora to their places of origin in a state that is entirely Palestinian and expelling all the Jews living in those places or at least those who live there as a consequence of Zionism (Gans, 2004, p271).

Palestinians see the right of return as inalienable and intimately connected to their national and cultural identity. Respecting the Palestinian right of return amounts to respecting the humanity and moral rights of the Palestinian people (Harel, 2004). The historical injustice suffered by Palestinians requires not simply the recognition of the national narrative of exile and resistance but restitution: returning to them the things they had taken away from them (Peled & Rouhana, 2004). For Palestinians their identities hinge upon the landscape, the olive trees, and their childhood stories from their elders of where they come from. For the displaced the imagery of ‘home’ even a home built of imagination and memory serves a purpose and makes life meaningful. The dream of Palestinian statehood is intimately connected to Palestinians’ hopes of recognition and wishes for justice.

#### Law of Return

The Law of Return (1950) is a social right of Jews the world over to immigrate (make *Aliyah*) to the Land of Israel. This Law offers citizenship to any member of the Jewish collective—it also supplies entrance to labour migrants, the descendants of Jews and their spouses (Raijman, 2010). This exploration of the Law of Return attempts to discover the symbolic meaning of return to the Israeli/Jewish people and how this symbolism impacts Israeli narratives of conflict.



The Law of Return is considered by many to be a form of institutionalized racism, preferencing, as it does, the ethnic Jew over other ethnicities i.e. should the spouse of a Jew who wishes to immigrate to Israel be Palestinian or Arab, the Law of Return does not apply (Rouhana, 2006). Israel's unwillingness to permit an ingathering of Palestinian exiles is considered obligatory in order to satisfy Israeli immigration goals of maintaining a Jewish majority. It is also a deliberate observance of the Jewish act of *Tzedakah*—caring for the needy, in this case, other Jews (Caplan, 2010). The Law of Return symbolizes an unfettered option for Jews in the Diaspora to join the State of Israel many of whom see the existence of Israel as essential to Jewish survival. For the thousands of Jews in the Diaspora and the millions of Jews who hold citizenship Israel exists as a symbolic buttress against future forms of anti-Semitism, which in the past exists as a tragic legacy of scapegoatism and suffering. Anti-Semitism, “has very little to do with the actual behavior of Jews or the strictures of their highly ethical religion...but is rooted in delusionary perceptions that are accepted as authoritative and passed on and embellished from generation to generation” (Perry & Schweitzer, 2002, p.3).

A brief exploration of anti-Semitism may contribute to a comprehension of why Israel's founders felt it necessary to enact the Law of Return. There are several benchmarks of anti-Semitism that have become intimately connected with the narrative of Jewish life, suffering and survival and as such have become important mobilization tools for Jewish/Israeli society. The biblical story of the life of Jesus of Nazareth is considered by many members of the Christian faith to be evidence that their messiah was killed by the Jews. The myth that Jews were ‘Christ killers’ is a legacy that Jews suffer

from to this day and the historical or biblical evidence is not considered as Jews are said to have known that Jesus was the son of God and acted anyway i.e. they killed the Christian God (Armstrong, 2005). In the Middle-Ages Jews were said to have used children in savage rituals involving bloodletting and murder and superstitious Christians guarded their young ones lest the 'evil Jew' catch them and kill them. Such allegations trickled down to modern societies in Europe and North America and grotesque images of folkloric Jews still exist in anti-Semitic circles today (Perry & Schweitzer, 2002). The refusal of Jews to convert to hegemonic Christianity left dogmatic believers free to imagine them as devils and agents of evil living among 'good' Christians with ill intent and the economic progress of Jews let those jealous of their prosperity call them parasites harkening back to the biblical passages where Jesus expelled the (Jewish) 'money-changers' from the Jewish Temple (Armstrong, 2005.)

The Holocaust sought the total extermination of European Jewry and at its end thousands of Jews, left in displaced persons camps, begged to come to Palestine (Morris, 2001). There are suggestions that the gross inhumanity suffered by the Jews at the hands of Nazi Germany contributed to the creation of and international support for the State of Israel. Similar to other anti-Semitic actions, the experience of the Nazi Holocaust for Jews made the creation of the State of Israel essential.

After 1,900 years of exile, persecution, and slaughter in other lands, Jews have returned to the Holy Land in the realization that, as long as they are a guest in someone else's house, their lives are in peril. The Nazis' extermination of European Jewry and the expulsion of almost a million Jews from Arab Muslim lands in the years following the Holocaust make this truth self-evident. Now the Jews living in

the land of Israel face a worldwide, systematic effort to remove them not just from the land but from existence (Patterson, 2011, p.259).

The experience of anti-Semitism and the sense of impending insecurity should Israel, a country with roughly eight million people, 76% of whom identify as Jewish, allow the almost four million Palestinians in the Diaspora to return is prescient, should Israelis allow Palestinians to return Israel would no longer be a Jewish State (Raijman, 2010).

### Conclusions

The relevance of ethnic identity and how such identity is cultivated and mobilized is central to the ongoing conflict between the Israelis and Arabs. As facets of identity, gender, social class, politics, culture, religion and history are not only organizing principles of group formation but valuable clues to the manifestation of group conflict. Without such investigations, understanding conflict remains a play-by-play of elite functionaries and powerful stakeholders. To understand conflict, it is necessary to not only investigate the 'who' and 'how' in conflict but the 'why'. Being "descriptive before we can be prescriptive" (Lederach, 2006, p. 137) is essential to transforming conflict and fostering peace.

Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict have many sources and a variety of roots. While the ideological foundations of some have greatly impacted the conflict for many others the experience of violence and armed struggle holds greater sway. The importance of religion and the sacred sites of Judaism, Christianity and Islam may contribute to the story of why the conflict continues or become signposts that point the

way to tolerance and forgiveness. The Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict are infused with notions of exodus, exile and return. The contestation over the land called 'Israel' by one people and 'Palestine' to the other has meant that, for many, the conflict can only be considered zero-sum or win-lose—the conflict will continue until one side wins. The nature of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict may be considered intractable but many scholars and activists articulate the status of Palestinians in Lebanon, the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and inside Israel proper to the Israeli existential dilemma that Jews will become an ethnic minority in the land they conquered should they allow Palestinians to return (Morris, 2001). The notion that Israel will not welcome Palestinian individuals and their descendants to 'come home' is contrasted to the *carte blanche* offer of Israel to allow immigration from any Jew, regardless of citizenship under the Law of Return. For Israelis and Palestinians the narrative roots of their conflict have become cultural markers of allegiance and identity and as such form a formidable obstacle to the creation of peace.

## Chapter Three: Theoretical Foundations of the Study

### Introduction

Ethnic conflict is an identity-based struggle that occurs in pluralistic societies and is often related to competition over resources and recognition. Conflict narratives are integral parts of mobilized ethnic identity and are directly related to defensive and offensive ethnic violence. During ethnic conflict,

If change occurs in the identities of at least one of the parties, the chances for long-term change are greatly increased, particularly if the change involves core aspects of identity that are directly related to the conflict...if the nature of the parties' interpretations...is significantly altered...there is then an investment in de-escalating the conflict and in increasing cooperation (Northrup, 1989, p. 78).

During protracted ethnic conflict education can act as both an instrument of negative ethnic relations (propaganda, historical omission) and a contributor to peace-ability (co-existence and multi-cultural and peace education). If education can become a contributor to a change of identity then challenging narratives of conflict becomes instrumental in transforming ethnic conflict.

This study is informed by three research themes: (1) conflict and the importance of conflict narratives in protracted ethnic conflict, (2) education in conflict and peace and, (3) the role of the imagination in conflict transformation. In order to understand ethnic conflict this chapter begins by exploring the theories and causes of ethnic conflict and the role of collective narratives in framing and mobilization. Secondly, in order to comprehend the role of schools and conflict this chapter explores the connection between

conflict and education, the role of the teacher in society, types of violence in education, the conflict of teaching, and education for peace. Finally, in order to explore the power of future visioning in building peace this section investigates conflict transformation using the moral imagination.

### *Ethnicity, Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnic Conflict*

Several states created in the postcolonial world have experienced protracted ethnic conflict affecting generations of ethnic groups in their struggle for self-determination (Bose, 2007). The following section investigates the nature of ethnicity, ethnic pluralism and ethnic conflict.

Ethnicity is a form of social solidarity based on a mutual culture, religion and territoriality (Eller, 1999). Although ethnicity is inherited, it is transmitted socially, rooted historically and only tangible as a modern expression of group affiliation. Today, “ethnic groups are composed of people who share more in common with one another, on average, than with other ethnic groups and the population at large” (Oberschall, 2007, p. 5). While it is normal for a single individual to possess more than one identity, including gender, social class, occupational status and sexual orientation, (Enloe, 2000) in identity politics, social agents will commonly choose one or more shared characteristics—religion, geographical origin or language—when seeking to mobilize a consciousness of difference between peoples that results in support for group goals (Brubaker & Laitin, 1998).

Ethnicity is not a form of cultural identity; rather, it refers to “relationships between groups whose members consider themselves distinctive” (Eriksen, 2002, p. 7). Cultural differences only become ethnicity “if and when a group takes it up and uses it in certain specific and modern ways” (Eller, 1999, p. 11). In culturally homogenous societies ethnicity does not exist because there is no basis for culturally composed opposition groups (Esman, 2004) but, as “most states in the world today are in fact plural,” (Eller, 1999, p. 2) and can include several ethnic minorities, ethnic solidarity in identity politics has come to express,

A profound human need to belong, a source of physical and psychological security, [and] fictive kinship that expands the boundaries of family relationships to an extended network of individuals that share the same culture and the same historical myths and collective memories (Esman, 2004, p. 7).

Modern ethnic groups can be categorized into five social categories: (1) Indigenous peoples, the aboriginal inhabitants of a territory; (2) immigrants, including settlers and labour migrants; (3) proto-nations (Ethnonationalists) such as the Kurds, Palestinians and Tamils; (4) post-colonial groups in plural societies such as Kenya, Canada and Indonesia; and, (5) post-slavery minorities—descendants of slaves whose identity is based on their shared history of uprooting and suffering (Eriksen, 2002). In identity politics, such ethnic groups strive for self-determination, a doctrine, that “in its pristine form...makes ethnicity the ultimate measure of political legitimacy by holding that any self-differentiating people, simply because it is a people, has the right, should it so desire, to rule itself” (Connor, 1994, p. 38). The urge for self-determination is the result of the social

marginalization experienced by many ethnic minorities in pluralist societies whose state institutions are infused with the cultural signifiers of the dominant ethnic majority. Ethnic majorities and minorities generally result from “conquest and colonization...the diffusion of religions, war and forced population movements, the formation of states, and the drawing and redrawing of international boundaries” (Oberschall, 2007, p. 7).

Previous to the modern age, citizens of imperial empires were largely separated into religious groups and personal status laws permitted group members some measure of institutionalized support for their cultural traditions (Dockser Marcus, 2007).

The end of empires led to a territorial identity that often instilled one dominant language in educational institutions agitating ethnic groups threatened by what they saw as linguistic intolerance. [In order] for Nationhood to cohere it was necessary for a multitude of ethnic groups to lose ethnic rights (Oberschall, 2007, p. 8).

Nationalism is the political ideal that each distinct nation should have a homeland and a nation “is a fully mobilized or institutionalized ethnic group,” (Eller, 1999, p. 17) and “imagined political community” (Anderson, 2006, pp. 5-6) that has “grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the prerevolutionary past” (Anderson, 2006, p. 2). Nationalism “is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist” (Gellner, 1965, p. 169) and for the over five thousand ethnic groups in existence today, the quest for nationhood, whether limited or sovereign, the label of ethnicity is used to suggest both a demonstrable different-ness and an uninterrupted continuity with the past (Eller, 1999). When ethnic



pluralism becomes a struggle for group interests it can lead to ethnic conflict: the competition between ethnic groups for social and political power (Ross, 2007).

*Perspectives, Theories and Causes of Ethnic Conflict*

Scholars of ethnic conflict can normally be divided into three perspectives: the primordialists, the instrumentalists and the social constructionists (Esman, 2004).

Primordialists see ethnic identity as deeply embedded in the cultural past, perpetuated by cultural myths passed down to children and tangible through the day to day beliefs and traditions of the ethnic group. Primordialists hold that “the collective memory of ethnic communities may convert historical triumphs or rankling victimhood into living realities from generation to generation” (Esman, 2004, p. 3) and to primordialists it matters little whether the past is objectively true so long as the mythic past acts to cohere group solidarity (Eller, 1999).

Instrumentalists see ethnic identity as a product of modern competition for resources involving a conscious and multifaceted rediscovery and at times reinvention of social-cultural identity (Eller, 1999). In this school of ethnic conflict, ethnic identity is created by persons “with self-serving objectives to exploit mass publics in pursuit of their political or economic ambitions” (Esman, 2004, p. 32). Such political entrepreneurs use ethnicity as a surrogate for other forms of social organization in order to acquire political power. Instrumentalists challenge the validity of ethnic sentiment, argue that ethnic claims are modern inventions, and, reject “ethnicity as an authentic category for political or social association” (Esman, 2004, p. 33).

Social constructionists, the third perspective, do not disagree that ethnic consciousness is a recent phenomenon. They see “ethnic solidarity as an invention of the human imagination” (Esman, 2004, p. 34) and contend that at the core of all ethnic conflicts are identity issues. For social constructionists, ethnic identity is not created by ‘ethnic’ entrepreneurs but an evidence of a symbolic landscape that links an individual to his or her group. This feeling of connectivity is often articulated in every day cultural expressions such as dress, national/ethnic symbols, language, religion and public spectacles of commemoration (Ross, 2007). Social constructionists argue that ethnic solidarity is “seldom based on rational calculations of benefits and costs, but on intrinsic values such as dignity and collective self-esteem” (Esman, 2004, p. 33).

While it is not possible to make generalizations from one theatre of ethnic conflict to another—every conflict has different roots and different goals—several theories of ethnic conflict have emerged seeking to explain the reasons why ethnic conflict occurs. While the scope of this thesis does not allow for an in-depth investigation of each theory a brief exploration of each perspective is useful toward later investigations into the interconnections of social factors in ethnic conflict.

The ‘ancient hatred’ theory of ethnic conflict sees ethnic solidarity as something ancient, primordial and historically distinct (Kaplan, 1994). In this view, ethnic identity is infused with collective fears and hostility that “highlight past conflicts and threats from other groups” (Oberschall, 2007, p. 11). This theory sees the mixing of ethnic groups as

an invitation to recurring violence and views modern conflicts as continuations of a historical contestation.

The 'manipulating elites' theory maintains that ethnic elites use manipulation with both fear and misinformation to belligerently mobilize ethnic solidarity (Gagnon, 1994). In this theory leaders "demonize ethnic rivals," present them as a threat that must be "dominated or defeated" (Oberschall, 2007, p. 11) and consolidate ethnic differences, forcing ethnic members to risk ostracization if they do not support their elite interests.

The 'identity politics' theory states that divisive ethnic consciousness pre-exists conflict, and are rooted in cultural folktales and ethnic myths (Kaufman, 2006). Such ethnic consciousness includes divisive stereotypes and cultural insecurities entrenched in social institutions in divided societies. As ethnic groups are socialized these markers of identity can become mobilized at the first discernment of aggression from other ethnic groups (Oberschall, 2007).

The 'security dilemma' theory is also called a 'spiral of insecurity,' and posits that in times of state breakdown the escalation of ethnic tensions relates to a group's fear that their property, livelihoods and very lives will not be adequately protected by law enforcement (Posen, 1993). In such a situation, a group will arm themselves in defence and their actions will signal to other groups a perceived possible aggression which in turns leads secondary groups to recognize a threat and then counter-mobilize. In this theory, past insecurities and hostilities become justifications for pre-emptive strikes and rationalization for both mistrust and aggression.

The final theory relates to a materialist viewpoint of ethnic conflict wherein ethnic groups are mobilized by economic insecurity, poverty, unemployment and political corruption (Collier, 2003). This theory imagines that economic underdevelopment is at the root of all conflict and can be exacerbated or improved with economic aid and investment (Oberschall, 2007). Supporters of this “Eco-Nationalism” (Connor, 1994, p. 145) theory also hold the belief that criminal aggression, violence and even lethal brutality continue during ethnic conflicts as long as it remains profitable for ethnic groups to either control resources or participate in illegal activities (Napoleoni, 2005).

In general, ethnic conflict can be seen as a complex interplay of structural, political, economic and cultural/perceptual factors including, “the existence of antagonistic group histories...mounting economic problems... [And] the emergence of elite competitions” but scholarship has shown that rather than the result of a single trigger, “hostilities escalate only because of the existence of other underlying problems or permissive conditions” not because of any one factor (Brown, 2001, p. 20).

Protracted ethnic conflict, based on a ‘fear of extinction’ is not only a consequence of between-group competition for political, economic or cultural rights; it is a vehicle for the transmission of the past into the present day (Volkan, 2006; Wolff, 2006). One of the greatest contributors to the symbolic mobilization of ethnic groups in conflict involves the manipulation of myth and memory into stories or narratives of the past that become symbolic markers of the identity group. These cultural memories become shared by the collective groups and during ethnic clashes become conflict narratives (Smith, 2009).

### *Cultural Memory, Collective Memory and Conflict Narratives*

Some clarity can be gained by briefly exploring the terms used to connote the “joint awareness and recognition that members of a group share” regarding the past (David & Bar-Tal, 2009, p. 356). Cultural memory, “an act in the present by which individuals and groups constitute their identities by recalling a shared past on the basis of common, and therefore often contested, norms, conventions, and practices,” (Hirsch & Smith, 2002, p. 5) is used to describe how modern individuals harness the historical/memorial/personal past and is present during ‘positive peace’ “the presence of symbiosis and equity in human relations” (Galtung, 1996, p. 14).

Cultural memory often takes the form of civic communications and includes “public discourses about the past as wholes or to narratives and images of the past that speak in the name of collectivities” (Olick, 1999, p. 345). While public displays of shared identity often form a component of conflict narratives in protracted ethnic conflict they become more than an expression of group identity, they become deligitmizers of the collective memories of others.

Bar-Tal and Rosen pronounce that “collective memory is defined as knowledge that is passed on to members of a certain society through social communication channels regarding that society’s past [and is] the keystone of national identity” (2009, p. 358). In this sense, conflict narratives are a type of collective memory harnessed in ethno-national campaigns such as the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

Gedi and Elam propose that collective memory is in fact merely myth and question its relevance in opposition to actual memory “a personal human faculty that is related to actual personal experience” (1996, p. 43). They argue that the “mechanism of collective memory and the mechanism of personal memory are one in the same” and see the attempt to turn mythology into group history problematic (Gedi & Elam, 1996, p. 47). However, collective memory—knowledge that is transferred intergenerationally—functions in protracted ethnic conflict as “a socially constructed narrative” that is used to legitimize violence (David & Bar-Tal, 2009, p. 369).

### *Narratives in Ethnic Conflict*

In conflict, narratives define positions, actions and events, act to establish authority, encode certain actions with significance and create a ‘cultural logic’ individuals or groups link their experiences to (Rotberg, 2006). Histories function as oral or textual interpretations of the past turned “by the historian into that narrative we call history” (Munslow, 2001, p. 1). In ethnic conflict, narratives generate “people’s symbolically constructed shared identity” (Rotberg, 2006, p. 3). Narratives are specific social and cultural frames that link past events. While narratives ‘function’ as stories that legitimize or delegitimize actors and actions they may also be instrumental in bridging conflict positions.

Nationalism, the promotion of in-group interests, is a common conflict narrative that acts to erase, devalue or delegitimize alternative narratives (Ross, 2007). Cultural narratives become entrenched and can become instruments that “impart values, goals, and

myths that the society wants to instil into the new generation” they can also be harnessed for political purposes when elites “choose what is publicly remembered and what is forgotten” silencing alternative narratives and creating legitimization for social exclusion (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006b, p. 310). Conflict narratives strengthen collective in-group identity, they provide avenues for interpretation of past and present events, they mobilize support and they affect decision making and the ability of groups to compromise.

Protracted ethnic conflict is not only a consequence of between-group competition for political, economic or cultural rights; it is a vehicle for the transmission of the past into the present day. Whether mobilized by elites, actual aggression, or in response to an ongoing level of discrimination and social disenfranchisement, groups will continue to organize as one, whether by ethnic, religious or territorial solidarities. The challenge for modern generations of such conflict is to learn to break away from cultures of violence toward non-violent means. In many respects, protracted ethnic conflicts are the result of minority groups who will not take ‘no’ for an answer. For majority groups or bordering groups, the challenge of saying ‘yes’ may symbolize an intolerable accommodation for co-ethnics. While many ethnic conflicts are currently considered managed, there is yet to emerge a singular vision of how to both de-escalate hostility and erase the cultural perceptions that lead to mobilization in the first place.

Conflict transformation requires changing collective narratives regarding both identity and group goals. If peace is the goal of reconciliation then modifications must occur in the way in which a group’s identity, goals and relationships are constructed by

each collective narrative. When elucidating on the perception of peace in intractable conflict Bar-Tal and Salomon observe that,

Both parties in an intractable conflict yearn for peace but view peace in amorphous and utopian terms without specifying realistic ways to achieve it. New society beliefs must be formed that recognize the multidimensional nature of peace, outline the true costs and benefits of achieving it, understand what it means to live in peace, and specify the conditions and mechanisms for its achievement (2006, p. 37).

The strength of narratives in ethnic conflict is increased by perceptions that the 'other' groups' narrative seeks to erase lived experiences, dehumanize group members and delegitimize rational responses to violence. Conflict narratives characterize each group, regardless of actions and acquisitions, as the victim, this stance permits violence in many forms in order to preserve group existence. In order to move away from this stance, the group narrative must begin to legitimize their opponents, acknowledge transgressions and relinquish the identity of 'victim'. When positions are no longer portrayed as exclusive truths then collective memories can be examined.

### Conflict and Education

The role of education in conflict is an important and valuable theme for researchers seeking to understand the role of conflict, nation-building, identity politics and the marginalization and manipulation of populations. Daniel Bar-Tal posits that one of the reasons that ethnic conflict becomes protracted involves the evolution of a culture of conflict that is formulated, integrated, duplicated, and disseminated collectively (2007). In addition to teaching materials, educators themselves are instruments of understanding



“studies have shown that teachers have more power than the mere written texts in forming...understandings and value systems” (Angvik & von Borries, 1997; Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a, p. 312). Cultures in conflict have stories of history, taught by teachers and textbooks that come to represent a people’s past, “these narratives are selective, biased, and distorted as their major function is to satisfy the societal needs in conflict rather than provide objective account of the reality” (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009, p. 557). Formal education is an instrument of socialization and nationalism and contributes to people’s attitudes and perceptions of the past as well as their intentions and behaviours in the future. Negative impacts of formal education in identity conflicts can include:

- Education as a form of either political or cultural oppression;
- The deliberate censure of lived experiences in support of the dominant identity group’s version of history; and,
- Segregation of educational populations to encourage stereotyping and promote fear or hatred (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

Positive impacts of formal education can include:

- In-mixing of identity groups to foster tolerance and understanding;
- A chance to desegregate previously separated populations; and,
- A redefinition of social identity and citizenship (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

Education is a political construct and is integral to nation-building, “understanding this is to understand that very little about it is neutral” (Tawil & Harley, 2004, p. 11).

Scholars who have researched the use of textbooks and curriculum in countries experiencing intractable conflict, “where the past is used to justify the present” (Al-Haj, 2005, p. 47) have noted that ethnic prejudices become stronger as children become more aware of cultural differences (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a; Bekerman, 2009). Indeed, “prejudiced children are more likely to be moralistic, to dichotomize the world, to externalize conflict, and to have a high need for definiteness” (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p3). For example, this trend can be seen in a variety of religious communities where segregation encourages ethnic and religious intolerance and foments imaginary boundaries between peoples (Bar-Tal, 2004; Gor Ziv & Mazali, 2001). In order to investigate more fully the connection between education and conflict we explore the social role of teachers, the conflict of teaching, types of violence in education and, educating for peace.

### *The Role of the Teacher in Society*

A social role, “refers to a pattern of behaviors and attitudes related to a specific function or position as defined and expected by society...to which adults are expected to conform” (James, Witte & Galbraith, 2006, p.53). The social role of a teacher in a traditional society was generally involved in communicating values and customary knowledge in order to reproduce the culture. His or her role gained authority through the cultural constructs that allowed for the specialization of such persons as transmitters of cultural information and the explicit understanding that in order to function within the confines of the social system persons must learn the ‘way’ of their people. The understandings

transmitted in such an exchange gave a person the tools to adapt to the prevailing cultural norms and were largely informal (Morrow & Torres, 1998).

In modern states, the role of teachers, despite the social class of the student, has become articulated to both knowledge acquisition and orienting a person to possible future roles in society (Depaepe, 2007). This is a process that relies upon, not only the talent of both individuals to acquire and share knowledge, but the implicit partnership between society and teachers to be “custodians of traditional values,” while gearing learners toward innovation in what is often a rapidly changing social sphere (Britzman, 1986; Hoyle, 1969, p. 12).

A challenge lies in the ability of teachers to adapt to two distinct positions: one, the conservative agent of the state transmitting social values and, two the innovator with the flexibility to not only teach diverse populations of students but to acquire his or her authority through appealing to both employers and attendees through creativity, popularity and skills that rely on the act of teaching rather than its content (Hallinan, 2000).

The difference between these two types of teachers lies in both the embodiment of social values and the expectations of society. While a wise, or intelligent or holy man or woman attracted students who wanted to learn sacred information a modern teacher is awash in a sea of educational possibility that creates a limitless opportunity to craft curricula while at the same time being expected to support the conservative values of the state. The democratization of education has led to ‘teacher as disseminator’ with no

agreed upon syllabus of information and the result that most teachers feel they cannot ever 'know' enough (Britzman, 1986).

For the modern teacher there are a variety of social role expectations including: instruction, evaluation and socialization of students (Hallinan, 2000). During instruction a teacher will impart organized knowledge to the student and this activity comprises the bulk of the teacher's role. In evaluation a teacher judges the students and acts to both open doors for future roles and limit expectations for those he or she considers less 'bright' (Britzman, 1986). Socialization is a process that permits an individual to internalize cultural values and behave according to social expectations (Durkheim, 2002). During socialization, a very important component of identity based conflicts; the teacher may be expected to impart social values shared outside of the classroom in the larger society. Such expectations can lead to "acts of symbolic violence" aimed at creating political or ideological loyalty and causing harm to students core identities (Van Ommering, 2011, p.544).

For sociologist Emile Durkheim, socialization may be considered the most important part of the teacher's role as it creates the emergence of a contract between a citizen and the state where, schools are seen as "the guardians par excellence" of national character (Durkheim, 2002, pp. 3-4). The connection between national character and education has been an ongoing project of the modern world and with the rise of secular national identities—citizenship—comprises a new form of identity beyond religion, gender and ethnicity.

Citizenship refers to social participation, influence, [and] autonomy... If this idea of citizenship still applies, then any government should be concerned with having these qualities transmitted to its future citizens (Wesselingh, 1998, p. 40).

Durkheim considered education a moral concern, while others theorize that the modern state has packaged the role of education in more neutral terms where education,

Imparts facts about the way the world is, and not values concerning the way it should be. Statements about how things should be or ought to be are normative and pertain to morality. Unlike education, whose domain is public facts for public consumption, morality is a matter of the individual's heart. It is private (Cladis, 1998, p. 21).

Herein lays the place where the modern teacher's role in society is constrained both tangentially and substantially. Teachers are instruments of knowledge transmission on the one hand while being expected to be the social custodians of the majority on the other. While from one perspective the purpose of education can be seen as a conduit to social productivity from another vantage point the desired outcome of education is the acculturated individual. Because for many people, "socialization then, not private self-expression, is the aim of education" (Cladis, 1998, p. 20) then there does exist a social project that takes place in education,

...at the junctures of the familiar and the unfamiliar, the past and the present. [Where schools] ...are charged with conveying to students a society's shared understanding—its fundamental beliefs, practices and goals. Schools also are to cultivate in students dispositions for critical thinking, for evaluating contemporary practices in light of alternatives found in foreign or past cultures, in new developments taking place within contemporary society, or in longstanding ideals that need to be more fully realized in social practices. These two aims of moral education—teaching the ways of tradition and criticism, in the context of pluralism—go hand in hand, because future citizens who will become active

participants in a democratic society will need to consult the past as they look to the future (Cladis, 1998, p. 27).

For Durkheim, the teacher was expected to personally represent the core values of a society but in multicultural societies and conflict zones—where both identity and history are contested daily—schools can become instruments of cultural oppression. As Cladis (1998) reminds us, schools are not neutral.

Educational institutions, then, are contingent. They cannot be derived from God above or nature below. But they are not arbitrary. They belong to a vast though not shapeless narrative, or set of narratives, that a society tells itself about itself (p. 22).

In this way, the very identity of the teacher becomes instrumental in his or her ability or propensity to embody such values and confirm such narratives. His or her political ideology may or may not adopt or adapt to the prevailing politics of power and although some would argue that schools are agents of social replication teachers do not divest themselves of their political, religious, cultural and professional values despite economic demands and pressures to do so (Hallinan, 2000; Tamir, 2005).

While the scope of this study does not permit an exhaustive exploration of the predominant sociological theories of education a brief exposition of three outlooks may help to illuminate the realities of conflict for educators in conflict zones. Briefly, three sociological constructs, functionalism, conflict theory and symbolic interactionism, receive comment in regards to their perspectives in education. Functionalists see society as a system with interconnecting parts that are required to “make society work”

(Sadovnik, 2007, p. 3). In this sense, when one part of society—such as education—is seen to malfunction then the social order is challenged leading to community disintegration. Conflict Theorists see society as held together by types of power that allow “dominant groups to impose their will on subordinate groups through force, cooptation, and manipulation” (Sadovnik, 2007, p. 6). Modern conflict theorists argue that “the expansion of education worldwide has not been due to functional requirements or labor market demands but rather to the worldwide process of citizenship and the democratic belief that educational development is a requirement of a civil society” (Sadovnik, 2007, p. 7). The third sociological theory in education is that of symbolic interactionism which holds that schools and societies are part of an ongoing negotiation of social construction that duplicate existing social inequalities. “The everyday workings of schools (including teacher and student interactions), labelling, and linguistic discourse are at the root of unequal educational outcomes...teacher expectations of students based on categories such as race, class, ethnicity, and gender affect student perceptions of themselves and their achievement” (Sadovnik, 2007, p. 9).

In ethnic conflict schools function to support the majority ethnic group and if seen to malfunction signal to some a social rupture. They subordinate alternative perspectives while seeking to cohere nationalism and, they are constantly negotiating the symbolic landscape of society to create, support or challenge inequality.

### *The Conflict of Teaching*

During the best of times the role of the teacher is "...vague, ambiguous, and fraught with uncertainties...teachers are torn between varied and sometimes conflicting external demands, on the one hand, and their own internal tensions and needs, on the other hand" (Ben-Peretz, 2001, p. 48). It is not surprising that role divergence exists for teachers in conflict zones when their place in society is contested, they can face marginalization or incarceration if they teach in opposition to state policies and their livelihoods or very lives may be at stake (Tamir, 2005). Universities, institutions of higher learning, are undergoing change.

Society does not confine the university's role to service of the nation-state. This is one of the key changes now in the way that universities relate to their context: once an organ of the nation-state, a university now crosses national boundaries in teaching in the ways it has always done in research. Society also implies that the understanding is widely owned, fully disseminated, not located with some elite but with society itself (Laurillard, 2002, p. 136).

Despite the idea of the university as boundless and unfettered we are reminded that education can function as a double edged sword as schooling continues to be an instrument of national, citizen and social education (socialization). Happily, we also observe that schools, along with media, community groups and NGO's are a valuable locus of social change (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009, p. 559). It follows, that, if the general consensus of a society holds that education should espouse the values of cultural repetition and reproduction of the dominant group then teachers would be expected to contribute to the project. If, however, the role of the teacher/researcher/educator is seen



as flexible, creative and free then the contributions of instruction, evaluation and socialization become a far more personal pursuit. A conflict arises when the first value is held by the state and society and the second value is retained by the teachers themselves. If the role of the teacher is ambiguous and vague then in times of conflict, when social narratives themselves generate knowledge and behaviour beyond the flattened page teachers define a locus of inquiry into how their personal position is navigated amongst the national expectation.

In Israel, national education has placed the Israeli/Jewish narrative above all other cultural groups. Social authority and collective legitimacy is unquestioned for Israeli Jews and suspect, absent or marginalized for all other dominated groups (Tamir, 2005). Similar to other multicultural states, in Israel,

The politics of identity places the teacher in a delicate position. In the age of the national state the teacher was the bearer of the collective national message, and her authority derived from that message and the significance assigned to it by all social institutions. Now, like all other citizens, the teacher is identified as a member of a particular group that has a particular culture and values. For members of all other communities the teacher is no longer the embodiment of the state or the nation but simply 'the other'. Her authority over those who do not belong to her community therefore severely curtailed. Moreover, when teaching minority culture(s) the teacher is likely to be culturally illiterate... [And] in a multicultural school system teachers are likely [to raise] suspicion among members of minority and majority cultures alike (Tamir, 2005, p. 504).

The ability for teachers to maneuver within the contested space of professional obligations and expectations and whatever personal responsibility they hold, with or without a mandate for building peace is, tenuous and difficult. Regardless, there exist

movements away from a culture of violence toward a culture of peace and in this movement educators do play a role (McMaster, 2002).

*Symbolic, Cultural and Alienating Violence*

Direct (physical) and indirect (cultural/structural/repressive) violence (Galtung, 1990) has often accompanied ethnic conflict and education (in Bosnia, Northern Ireland, Sarajevo, South Africa, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Palestine) and schools have been sites for mass killings, sexual assaults, marginalization, discrimination and recruitment for paramilitaries (Davies, 2004). The following section presents three additional theoretical constructs to this thesis that specifically concern the dignity of the individual, that of symbolic, cultural and alienating violence.

First, merging Durkheim with Weber, Pierre Bourdieu conceptualized symbolic violence as an instrument of hegemony (Bourdieu, 2001; Salmi, 2006). In brief, Bourdieu saw schooling as an instrument of cultural and social reproduction. He saw the intrinsic power of institutions such as schools to “impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force” (Collins & Makowsky, 1993, p. 259). Symbolic violence supports certain truths while masking others and as opposed to direct (physical) or indirect (oppression) forms of violence, symbolic violence acquires the complicity of the individual—as victim/perpetrator—by changing the way in which one categorises the world.

Whether or not we know it, our practices contribute to the construction and reconstruction of social categories. The ways of being in the world are, however, potentially limitless, and to impose one way among many as the only, correct, or right way is to engage in symbolic violence (Schubert, 2002, p. 1092).

Symbolic violence is closely allied with Johan Galtung's theory of Cultural Violence (Galtung, 1990). Cultural violence can be conceived of as the cultural symbols that make direct (physical) violence and indirect (structural) violence permissible (Galtung, 1990). Direct violence includes "killing, maiming, desocialization and repression" of people while structural violence consists of "fragmentation and marginalization" of groups or individuals (Galtung, 1990, p. 292). Cultural violence legitimizes the use of direct or structural violence creating a stoplight logic that obscures reality and works by "changing the moral color of an act from red/wrong to green/right or at least to yellow/acceptable" (Galtung, 1990, p. 292). Together these three types of violence form a triangle whose interplay supports and reinforces each apex.

Galtung's theory requires investigating cultural elements to "show how [they] can, empirically or potentially, be used to legitimize direct or structural violence" (Galtung, 1990, p. 296). In cultural violence, all of which is symbolic, cultural products including religion, science, language, media and education legitimize direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1990).

Alienating violence,

Refers to the deprivation of a person's higher rights, including the right to psychological, emotional, cultural, or intellectual integrity, [and] is based on the assumption that a person's well-being does not come only from fulfilling material

needs. Looking at alienating violence means paying attention to the satisfaction of such diverse nonmaterial needs as empowerment at work or in the community, the opportunity to engage in creative activities... and the feeling of social and cultural belonging (Salmi, 2006, p. 4).

Salmi has researched the role of education in violence and sees schools as sites of direct (targeted killing), indirect (illiteracy and gender discrimination) and repressive (anti-democratic curricula) violence. To this he adds an additional category, that of alienating violence, “in many education systems, there is a wide disconnect between the curriculum taught at school and the community that curriculum is meant to serve” (Salmi, 2006, p. 12) and the “culture of fear prevailing in many school systems” from textbooks or curricula that marginalizes, erases, portrays negatively, or demonizes minority populations can erupt into violence as seen in South Africa, Sri Lanka and other sites of protected ethnic conflict (Salmi, 2006, p. 13).

These three conceptualizations of violence in education have one overlapping feature that is important when looking at education and conflict: the notion that schools are not simply sites of information gathering and dissemination but individuals and social groups alike hold educational institutions to particular ideals of human rights, values and responsibilities that are intangible, nonmaterial and culturally constructed. The ability of teachers to navigate these expectations can have far reaching consequences for populations undergoing protracted ethnic conflict when educating the next generation for either war or peace.

## Education for Peace

Peace education includes a variety of teaching and learning tools that recognize that a culture of peace “requires a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation” (UN, 1999, p. 1). The epistemological foundation of Peace (and Conflict) Studies maintains that “to know about peace we have to first know about violence” (Galtung, 1996, p. 9). Simply put, PACS seek to understand the role of conflict between individuals, groups and peoples and includes investigations into a variety of methods to resolve conflict (Jeong, 2000). In addition, PACS hold the values that human rights and human security are universal rights and that the bulk of human history has been nonviolent and peaceful (Fry, 2007).

Galtung conceived of peace as either negative or positive—‘negative peace’ “the absence of direct violence” or ‘positive peace’ “the presence of symbiosis and equity in human relations” (Galtung, 1996, p. 14). In addition, he felt that in order to describe the culture of peace you needed to understand its opposite, the culture of violence. Further, the goal of understanding violence is its transformation through the processes of conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and peace education (Fahey, 2002).

Peace education (Harris, 1988) has emerged over the last sixty years as a platform to achieve the goals set out in the mandate of the UN to create a global culture of peace (Boulding, 1988). Cultures of peace aim to promote respect for life and nonviolent

methods of resolving conflict using education aimed at teaching the values of tolerance and human rights (UN, 1999). Among the eight action areas defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as essential to promoting a culture of peace—peace education ranks first. Peace education includes promoting global education, training for the prevention and resolution of conflict and upholding the “universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between men and women” (UNESCO, 2009, p. 2).

The work of peace education is multicultural, multifocal and multidisciplinary “to attain a culture of peace, a society must actively strive toward positive values, which enable different cultures and nations to coexist harmoniously” (Iram, 2006, p. ix). Peace education is conceived of as a form of global citizenship and instils the values, attitudes and behaviours necessary to be a responsible member of the world community (Boulding, 1988; Lederach, 2003, 2006). The opposite of peace education can be considered war education, education that makes conflict “through the reproduction of inequality and exclusion, through perpetuation of ethnic or religious divisions, through its acceptance of dominant aggressive masculinities, through selection, competition and fear, and through distorted curricular emphases on narrow cognitive areas of learning” (Davies, 2005, p. 357). In nations that suffer from protracted ethnic conflict the switch from war education to peace education is considered critical and understanding the connection between conflict and education is a significant step toward change.

Although the “primary focus of peace education is on the individual” (Tidwell, 2001, p. 466) Paolo Freire’s concept of *conscientization* (2006) speaks to “the achievement of first personal and then group awareness,” (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 482). While the object of peace education might be personal transformation, the goal is social change. The ‘contact hypothesis’ (Allport, 1954) posits that intolerance can be the result of segregation and the inability for communities to share space. Contact between groups that are segregated can lead to positive emotions and reduce intergroup anxiety (Niens, 2009). In the next section the three most prevalent types of peace education in Israel are explored. What follows is an exploration of encounter groups, coexistence education, and the PRIME shared history textbook.

### *Encounter Groups*

Encounter groups such as the Middle East Reconciliation Group, *Giva’at Haviva*, *Beit Hagafen*, Seeds for Peace and *Neveh Shalom/Wahat al-Salam*, involve a gathering of individuals from both sides of the conflict in order to reconstruct their ideas, identities, and histories and find a common-sense understanding of the conflict. “For this to be achieved, contact should take place under the conditions of status equality and cooperative interdependence while allowing both for sustained interaction between participants and for the potential forming of friendships” (Bekerman, 2002, p. 410).

Encounter groups do not always conform to a traditional contact group “planned to continue for an extended period of time... [allowing] for a relative high acquaintance potential between participants; its context... [permitting] individuation of group members and finally, the participants in both groups... [are] of equal competence and similar in

number” (Bekerman, 2002, pp. 413-414). Many are shorter in duration—only a few days—and rely upon random recruitment; some are a meeting between professional equals (e.g. teachers) while others are lay people or students. Bekerman (2002) posits that encounter groups, despite ideals of fostering co-existence and tolerance, do nothing to minimize the simplification of identity of ‘Jew’ or ‘Palestinian’ and fail to invite in what Maoz (2004) terms the macro-reality of the State of Israel as a sociological actor. In addition, such programs are often hindered by the participants “negative attitudes, perceptions, and emotions” (Boaz Yablon, 2007, p. 1006) and have largely been “structured and used in an asymmetrical fashion, placing Arab participants at a disadvantage” (Abu-Nimer, 2004, p. 410).

These programs fail to recognize the different needs of Arab peoples during these encounters, often leaving them frustrated and disillusioned at the conclusion. Moreover, critics argue that Arab participants in cultural encounters primarily fulfill the desires of the Jewish majority, who wish to present Israel as a liberal state, ease their consciences, test Arab stereotypes, prove their tolerance, and verify Arabic loyalty to the Jewish State (Abu-Nimer, 2004, p. 410).

Despite such critiques, proponents of such programs identify the dearth of avenues to build tolerance and the values of a peaceful society without such attempts to allow groups in conflict to personalize one another and build positive relationships (Bar-Tal, 2004; Kriesberg, 1998; McGlynn, 2007).

There have been over 50 different Israeli/Palestinian “intergroup contact interventions” since the 1970s and in these groups attempts are made to counter the asymmetry and inequality in the external world by using co-cultural facilitators and



creating dialogue space for each participant (Maoz, 2004, p. 437). “When Israelis and Palestinians encounter one another they take part in the co construction of their relationship, with each group actively building a version of the group members’ own reality” (Maoz & Ellis, 2001, p. 400). Encounter groups are conversation based and limitations include language, such groups are often conducted in English or Hebrew simply because few participants can speak Arabic and this affects the ability of participants at times to understand, symbolically, the meaning of the words chosen (Maoz, 2000) and scholars have questioned the efficacy of such groups to create any meaningful political change (Abu-Nimer, 1999).

Encounter programs such as ‘Seeds for Peace’ between Israeli’s and Palestinians while in the short term increase levels of tolerance and understanding, long term, the gains of such programs are undefined. Kupermintz and Salomon maintain that friendships created during encounter groups are not sustainable in the face of “time and adverse political events” (2005, p. 295) and problems may arise when participants re-enter their social circles. Peace education, which neglects to deal with “collective narratives and deeply rooted historical memories and societal beliefs,” may erode short-term gains of common ground initiatives and “power and status asymmetries” may disable productive interaction in the future (Kupermintz & Salomon, 2005, p. 293).

### *Coexistence Education*

“Coexistence is a state of mind shared by society members who recognize the rights of another group to exist peacefully as a legitimate, equal partner with whom disagreements have to be resolved in nonviolent ways” (Bar-Tal, 2004, p. 253). Although

some scholars find the term coexistence to be both vague and superficial it can include a number of valuable intergroup interactions (Kriesberg, 1998; Weiner, 1998) and coexistence education constitutes “one of the few channels for the development of communication, trust, and genuine understanding of the complex Arab-Jewish reality in Israel” (Abu-Nimer, 2004, p. 405).

To be effective, Bar-Tal sees four necessary facets of education for coexistence: (1) it must foster conflict resolution through nonviolent means; (2) it must seek to recognize that both groups have the same rights and have equally legitimate concerns; (3) each member is viewed as a human being rather than just a member of the ‘other-group’; and, (4) education for coexistence requires an equal partnership in all forms of contact (Bar-Tal, 2004). Regardless, Bar-Tal considers coexistence education as a “minimal positive intergroup relation” in Israel (2004, p. 255) because the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is a result of decades of inter-group conflict sometimes between those who share Israeli identity (20 percent of the Israeli population is Palestinian). This is seen as a challenge because,

Education for coexistence following intractable conflict between two societies that live or will live in two separate political systems is more viable than education for coexistence that pertains to groups that are supposed to live in one system (Bar-Tal, 2004, p. 265).

One program in Acre, a long-term action-research project that set up mixed Palestinian/Jewish task forces of teachers, parents and school administrators, resulted in a shared “sense of empowerment and cohesion never experienced before” (Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2004, p. 369) taking place “on a personal level in mutual visits and

friendships, on a professional level by working together on various committees for years, and developing cross-school projects” (ibid, 2004, p.368). However, after the second Intifada broke out in 2000 respondents were asked to share their feelings and questions arose as to whether the structural realities in Israel, and violence against Palestinians, had caused “too many wounds...to heal” (Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2004, p. 369).

The Israel Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) taught Jewish high school students how to understand conflict narratives using the Northern Irish conflict. After the program ceased students were not only able to communicate the view points and perspectives of both sides of the conflict in Northern Ireland they were now able to describe their current situation from the Palestinian viewpoint (Salomon, 2004). Similarly, the Centre for Jewish-Palestinian Education (CAJE) supported the creation of two bilingual schools using Hebrew and Arabic and employing Jewish and Palestinian teaching staff (Bekerman & Maoz, 2005). This attempt to foster cooperative and egalitarian education though the development of bilingualism was hindered though identity issues: educators were seen to be celebrating and solidifying their own group identity rather than exposing participants to the culture and language of the ‘other’. Both the IPCRI and CAJE education for coexistence projects were of limited success because neither mandate transferred its goals to the greater society at large, the reality of structural violence in Israel was not changed, the political climate in Israel was not altered and the commemoration of each group narrative was seen to increase ethnocentrism (Bar-Tal, 2004; Bekerman & Maoz, 2005; Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2004; Salomon, 2004).

*The Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) Shared History Textbook*

Beginning in 2001 and lasting for five years, several Israeli and Palestinian historians and geographers began working together to create educational texts that honor both the Israeli and the Palestinian conflict narrative (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a). Over the years three booklets were produced that were distributed in seven Israeli and seven Palestinian schools—each concerning a different and contested time in history—in order to expose both cultures to the way the ‘other’ perceives the past and to ‘disarm’ history (Patience, 2005). While the external conflict was intensifying, the lead professors Dan Bar-On and Sami Adwan believed that the time was not right for a widespread initiative to combat the intractable qualities of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict but that the shared history textbooks, as a common teaching resource for both Israelis and Palestinians could characterize “an essential intermediate phase, in the process of learning about the other, [and] legitimizing the other’s valid reasoning”(Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a, p. 310).

Up until this joint project was undertaken both Israeli and Palestinian textbooks could be regarded as myopic and presented history that at best marginalized the ‘other’ and at times completely erased them. For example,

the 1948 War in the Israeli texts is called the “War of Independence,” while in the Palestinian text it is called “*Al-Naqbah* (the Catastrophe).” While Israeli texts refer to the first Jewish immigrants to Palestine as “the pioneers,” the Palestinian texts refer to them as “gangs” and “terrorists.” The heroes of one side are the monsters of the other side. Also, most of the maps in the texts eliminate the cities and towns of the other side. The texts show the delegitimization of each other’s rights, history, and culture... [And fail to include] the peaceful periods of coexistence between Jews and Palestinians (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a, pp. 311-312).

The teachers who introduced the textbooks to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in 2002 had a variety of responses: some Palestinian students expressed interest in meeting Israeli students, some Israeli students, immigrants themselves, had to first learn the Israeli narrative before learning the Palestinian story, some students were suspicious that the ‘other’ side would not have correct translations and some asked to take the booklets home to discuss them (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a). In most cases there was an interest not only in further exploration of the texts but an interest in meeting those from the ‘other’ side. With the exception of some students who were offended by the national symbols in the textbooks in general this project not only exposed a young generation to the story of the ‘other’ it allowed them to begin deconstructing their own narratives (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006a).

In Israel several revisionist historians have had an impact on the new Israeli history textbooks since the 1990s and the PA has created its own textbooks, far more balanced than those used previously from Egypt and Jordan. While Bar-on and Adwan have commented that “it is hardly possible to reach a consensus on a common interpretation of the history of the Middle East conflict” (2010, p. 1) the PRIME project did increase dialogue, encourage understanding and support a more critical thinking about history. Despite such valuable gains, rising tensions in the region have disallowed many such projects geared toward coexistence and mutual understanding and the joint textbooks were banned in both Israel and PA in 2010 (Bar-On & Adwan, 2010).

The goals of encounter groups, coexistence education and the shared textbook are to support the values of a peaceable society. Absent from each programs is what Lederach terms the 'art' of building peace, the moral imagination (2005). The next section explores the impact of the moral imagination in education including Rorty's sentimental education, Bar-Tal and Rosen's indirect model for peace education in intractable conflicts, the Rothman Aria and future visioning.

### Conflict Transformation and the Moral Imagination

A primary block to the establishment of peace is not so much the actual difficulty of achieving it but rather the feeling that it is impossible, the inability or refusal of many people to imagine peace as a realistic prospect. Before anything can be done it must be imagined (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 485).

Defined as unsolvable, intractable conflicts nevertheless result "more often from individuals' fundamentally different ways of seeing a particular situation than from the charged emotions caused by such a situation" (Thorson, 1989, p. 3). Because conflict transformation can be achieved by anyone, "[even] by persons and groups who are or are not primary adversaries in the conflict" (Kriesberg, 1989, p.122) the possibility for initiating change can happen anywhere. Moral imagination is a term used by John Paul Lederach to suggest the capacity for one to both envision and manifest new relationships in life using curiosity, creativity and taking risks (2005). What follow are four methods of stimulating the moral imagination: sentimental education, indirect peace education, the Rothman Aria Model and future visioning.

### *Sentimental Education*

One type of change is called ‘sentimental education’ (Rorty, 1989) and it involves persons stepping outside of group consciousness and consensus to “raise inter-cultural awareness and reduce cruel behaviour” (Ryan, 2007, p. 131). Rorty saw the person as a cultural product that could come to care for others “not by [rational] inquiry but by [sentimental] imagination... the ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers” (Rorty, 1989, p. xvi). Sentimental education does not transform conflict by equalizing or humanizing all participants; rather, it transforms conflict by recognizing that all humans—and animals for that that matter—feel pain. The ability to create sympathetic links and cultivate sympathy allows us to see one another as an extended family so that otherness is not seen as a threat and compassion can be practiced freely.

Sympathy allows us to see similarities between ourselves and others, not in terms of our ‘true natures’ but in terms of human emotions such as the respect and love we feel for our families and the grief we feel when we lose someone close to us (Ryan, 2007, p. 137).

The tools to be used to create such sympathetic links include “ethnography, journalism, the docudrama, the TV programme, the movie and the comic book [and most of all] the novel” (Ryan, 2007, p. 139). Each of these genres of the imagination uses “art to spread ideas” and cultivates our ability to sympathize with the suffering of others and create a union of interest with others (Crowe, 2011). According to Rorty, cultural transformation results from reading literature and being exposed to the narratives of others, that stories

can change your life and allow you to put yourself in the shoes of others, not merely out of human kindness, but as if the lives of others were intimate to you.

By cultivating our ability to imaginatively identify with others, we can extend the reach of our sense of injustice and form the kind of democratic moral community where sympathetic fellow feeling renders us more likely to act on behalf of less fortunate distant and different others (Voparil, 2009, p. 100).

This form of moral imagination is similar to Senehi's Constructive Storytelling model where,

The process of listening to a story involves walking in the narrators' shoes and because stories translate well across culture, mutual recognition is fostered when people listen to each other's stories—even across cultural divides and in the context of social conflicts (2002, p. 49).

In sentimental education the role of imaginer is both in the hands of the writer/producer of the story and the reader/receiver. The next step along the road of the moral imagination is to become the agent of discovery of oneself, instead of receiving a vision and connecting with it, one creates the vision oneself.

#### *Indirect Peace Education in Intractable Conflict*

Bar-Tal and Rosen (2009) have defined a model for peace education during intractable conflict. Rather than wait until the conflict is over Bar-Tal and Rosen suggest using their Indirect Model of Peace Education, a type of education that does not specifically address the conflict—“[its] goals, [history] or the image of the rival”—in order to avoid “direct clashes with the culture of conflict” instead, it concerns itself with



other peace education themes including “identity, ecological security...empathy, human rights, and conflict resolution skills” (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009, p. 563) The five processes that support a reconsideration of the situation and promote peace include:

1. *Reflective thinking*: refers to the ability to not take any knowledge for granted but to consider and reconsider various alternatives to reach valid inferences, decisions or evaluations...in addition, reflection leads to the exploration of alternative information that might otherwise be ignored (p. 564);
2. *Tolerance*: refers to the recognition and acceptance of the right of all individuals as well as groups to have thoughts, opinions, attitude, wills, and behavior...[and] it offers the opportunity to consider views that contradict the dominant societal beliefs of ethos of conflict and encourage the development of alternative views about the conflict (p. 565);
3. *Ethno-empathy*: [is] the ability of a person or a group to experience what the other ethnic group feels and thinks...[and] enables the ability to see members of other groups as human individuals who can be trusted and have legitimate needs and goals and with whom one would want to maintain peaceful relations (p. 565);
4. *Human rights*: the main goal of education for human rights is strengthening the young generation’s respect for human rights ... [Human rights] concern the dignity of the person [and include] civil, political, social, economic, cultural, environmental, and developmental rights (p. 565-6.); and,
5. *Conflict resolution*: abilities to negotiate, mediate, and collaboratively solve problems in the context of conflict... [and] to assist individuals in developing a nonviolent constructive approach (p. 566).

In this model, suitable when direct violence is still occurring and when the majority of the population is still supporting a culture of conflict, the goal is to “change societal beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviours” (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009, p. 567). In this model reflective thinking harnesses the moral imagination to accept new information and picture other options. The ability to explore alternatives to the conflict gives individuals the chance to envision anew the past, the present, and the relationships that lead to and away from conflict.

### *The Rothman ARIA*

The Rothman ARIA framework identifies that “identity-driven conflicts are rooted in the articulation of, and the threats or frustrations to, people’s collective need for dignity, recognition, safety, control, purpose and efficacy” (Rothman, 1997, p. 7). The ARIA framework is divided into four processes that lead into one another beginning with: *Antagonism* (adversarial framing), *Resonance* (reflexive reframing), *Invention* and *Action*. In the ARIA, the first frame focuses on the dimensions of the conflict (the what), and then progresses to understanding the values and desires of the participants (the who and why). In the *Inventing* stage a potential future is created “inventing is the process of brainstorming mutually acceptable, creative, and integrative options for addressing central and underlying aspects of the conflict” (Rothman, 1997, p. 20) and the *Action* stage implements what should be done in the future. Similar to other models that stimulate the moral imagination, the ARIA asks for participants to envision, imagine and then generate alternatives.

### *Future Visioning*

Elise Boulding speaks of potential visions and picturing opportunities, when she suggests that using the imagination allows us to imagine alternatives that can become “possible futures” (Boulding, 2000, p. 105). In her view these visions “act as magnets, drawing forth behaviors that could bring the envisioned future into being” (Boulding, 2000, pp. 105-106). This method of conflict transformation begins by conceptualizing in

a new way, how conflict came to be, what outcomes are desirable when the conflict ends and envisioning what peace, after the conflict ends, actually looks like.

[Many specialists] have come to recognize the value of visualization...subtly, unconsciously, the mind can be essentially “reprogrammed,” releasing new potentials and facilitating the accomplishment of things previously thought out of reach. Personal transformation does occur but only after people believe in the possibility of themselves changing, have a positive image of the kind of change they desire, and are positively reinforced by others seeking to accomplish similar goals (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 485).

According to Lederach “peacebuilding [can be conceived of] as narrative restored,” (2005, p. 146)—a story that is rooted in the present and then reconnected to the past; in order for people to imagine another future they may need to return to a point in their group’s history where their collective story started to be told by others. The ability to reclaim the story, to face the blank page of the future and envision a new world requires imagination and courage and can lead to a new future. Such cultural construction involves all members of society and all levels of the social order. In order to change the present one needs to imagine and then produce a different world and this ‘art’ of imagining does not always come naturally. The previous models can provide some structure or perspective on how to transform cultures of conflict using the moral imagination.

## Conclusions

This study is informed by research and scholarship into ethnic conflict, conflict and education, education for peace and conflict transformation. Because this study is concerned with both perception and imagination the role of narrative has been explored

as has the possibility for envisioning another reality using examples that stimulate the moral imagination. The experience of peace education in Israel and the role of the teacher in society have been investigated to better understand both the objectives and successes of educating for peace in a conflict zone as well as the challenges and obstacles experienced by educators themselves. By presenting various models that seek to arouse new thoughts and stimulate change this study seeks to place the research conducted within a wider arena that connects perception and imagination to conflict transformation.

## Chapter Four: Methodology

### Introduction

Research scientists strive to observe and understand the world around them. Social science seeks to observe and understand the world of human interactions and can use both classical quantitative methods—research that results in something you measure, or quantify in some fashion—and a group of methodologies termed qualitative. Qualitative research is both a research outlook and a combination of various research techniques. Generally, quantitative science uses large samples to make generalizations about the physical world and qualitative studies use smaller, targeted samples to deeper understand the social world. Where quantitative methods seek to confirm or challenge specific hypotheses qualitative research explores the behaviour of a community to generate new understandings (Bernard, 2006).

Because “human behaviour...cannot be understood without reference to the meanings and purposes attached by human actors to their activities” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 106) qualitative research involves reflection and includes interpretations and impressions of the researchers’ experiences. Qualitative research assumes we are a part of the social world we study and cannot completely erase our impact. By incorporating their perspectives, social scientists can acknowledge and contextualize their impact on the research and gain additional levels of analysis through their own interactions (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

This research asks whether it is possible to challenge narratives of conflict in the classroom, how educators perceive the circumstances of challenging narratives of conflict both socially and professionally and what educator's visions of the future are. This qualitative research project surveyed the opinions, experiences and perspectives of educators teaching in five universities in Israel and interview data was collected from twenty-eight individuals who currently teach in the social sciences and humanities disciplines. Interview data was audio recorded, transcribed, verified by respondents and then analysed inductively using the grounded theory approach (Glasser & Strauss, 1967).

### Data and Data Collection

In order to access post-secondary educators interested in participating this study a variety of data collection methods were used; list-serves of academics in Israel were perused to identify individuals whose subject matter would most likely accommodate questions regarding narratives of conflict; academic staff lists were surveyed to acquire contact information for acting professors or instructors; and, snowball sampling (Bernard, 2006) was utilized once a core group of participants had agreed and participated in an interview. Snowball sampling involves asking participants to refer you to others in the selected population under study, "you get handed from informant to informant and the sampling frame grows with each interview. Eventually, the sampling frame becomes saturated [and]...no new names are offered" (Bernard, 2006, p. 193). 40 percent of the respondents in this study resulted from snowball sampling.

## Risk/Protection of Human Subjects

While not intended to cause any personal suffering or anxiety, there was some risk that some study participants might experience emotional distress when answering the interview questions. In order to minimize any emotional discomfort participants were informed of their right to discontinue participating at any time and each study participant was provided with the contact information of counselling services for additional emotional support. The counselling centres provided included 'The Israel Center for the Treatment of Psychotrauma' and 'The Palestinian Counselling Center'.

The risks involved in this study are minimal for respondents as they were in control of their contributions, had options regarding feedback methods, and could withdraw at any time. Participants may have found it time consuming or emotionally taxing to contribute to this study although none chose to withdraw from the study.

As this research represents an opportunity for educators to share their opinions and perceptions of teaching in countries experiencing protracted ethnic conflict this study may have provided participants with a valuable outlet to communicate their knowledge to outsiders and invite further research into the challenges and opportunities of teaching and in/tolerance.

## Description of Research Participants

In this research, invitation emails were sent to 89 academics working in five university settings: Ben Gurion University (Beer Sheva), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem), Bar Ilan University (Ramat-Gan), Tel Aviv University (Tel Aviv),

and the University of Haifa (Haifa). Participants were primarily contacted by their discipline or publications/research interests and every attempt was made to invite participants regardless of age, ethnicity or gender. The majority of participants asked that this research protect their identity. For this reason I will not numerically represent the percentage of educators from each institution. This research resulted in 28 verified transcripts of interviews; 32 percent of those contacted chose to participate.

This study involved academics with between 1-40 years of academic experience and focused on professionals from mainly the social sciences and the humanities. Many of those contacted had personally published academic works on conflict and education, conflict narratives or peace education. Some attempt was made to encourage responses from professionals familiar with the parameters of this study but the majority of the 28 individuals interviewed were not versed in PACS methodologies.

### The Interviews

Educators were asked a series of semi-structured questions in order to gauge their perceptions and perspectives regarding their roles, habits and opinions. The question themes included questions regarding how the experience of being an educator manifests both personally and professionally and if the decisions made as an educator had an impact on perceptions of employment status and security. In addition, research participants were asked a series of questions that investigated their interest, ability, experience and opinions regarding narratives of the national conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in the classroom. Using Cantril's (1965) self-anchoring scale respondents



were asked to share their visions of the future. The purpose of these future visioning questions was to understand educators' visions of the future and their hopes and fears. Personal interviews ranged in length from thirty minutes to ninety minutes and all respondents were sent transcriptions of their replies in order to verify and if necessary clarify responses. The Cantril scale has been tested cross-culturally (Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2000).

### Research Instrument

Because some research participants indicated that they had time for a personal interview individuals were invited to participate in this study in either personal (semi-structured) interview or online (self-directed) (see Appendix 4). Those who chose an online interview (9) were sent the interview schedule by email and responded to questions in writing. Those who preferred to be personally interviewed (19) were sent the interview schedule in advance chose a telephone interview (1) or were asked the questions by video-conference using Skype (18), an online communications tool that allows for real time audio and video conferencing. During personal interviews the interview schedule was used as a flexible instrument that allowed for a more organic conversation to occur while directing responses toward the research questions. This research was conducted by remote using the internet to access and interview individuals. The use of the internet—Netnography (Kozinets, 2010) uses online instead of in-person interviews to access individuals in remote locations.

This methodology has been utilized by a variety of Canadian and American researchers including Cater (2010) and Bertrand & Bourdeau (2010) and was chosen for this study to surmount personal obstacles to conducting research in-situ including parental responsibilities and lack of travel funds.

After an introductory question that sought to simply begin the conversation asking ‘why do you teach?’ this study used three questions to survey thoughts and perceptions regarding education and conflict, three questions to query opinions and perspectives concerning educating for peace and two questions from the Cantril (1965) Self Anchoring Striving Scale (1) What are your worries and fears for the future? And, (2) what are your hopes and wishes for you and your country’s future? These questions were chosen to help discover people’s concerns and aspirations. The Cantril Self Anchoring scale is a method for measuring a person’s wellbeing and is an evaluative tool to investigate whether people perceive themselves to be secure (thriving) or at risk (struggling or suffering) (Gallup, 2009). The Cantril Scale has been field tested cross-culturally in several arenas of ethnic conflict including Israel and Palestine (Polkinghorn & Byrne 2001; Byrne, MacLeod & Polkinghorn, 2004).

A final question allowed respondents to add anything further to the discussion. Although the majority of research participants were asked all ten questions some individuals warranted additional questions—probes—to further draw out meaning and reflection. A common probe during this research asked the question ‘what would peace

look like?’ when respondents answered ‘peace’ when asked about their hopes and wishes for the future.

### Research Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research validity “involves determining the degree to which researchers’ claims about knowledge correspond to the reality (or research participants’ constructions of reality) being studied” (Cho & Trent, 2006, p. 320). In quantitative research a study is said to have high internal validity when the research design allows the researcher to completely control all aspects that could impact what is being observed. When the research design is repeated with the same results the study is said to have high external validity and can allow the researcher to generalize their findings to phenomenon outside the original research experiment (Bernard, 2006). This research is a small, exploratory case study and as such is not intended to make generalizations outside of the participants interviewed.

Qualitative research methods are typically criticised as having low validity with results that are both inexact and undependable (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Because the value of validity refers to whether or not there is one observable reality it is not a quality necessarily strived for when looking at how humans attach meaning to their world. Despite this, steps can be taken to try to ascertain whether data is legitimate.

To increase research validity in this study interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and then returned to respondents to verify or, if necessary, change their

answers; once read/corrected research participants sent the final responses back to represent the final interview transcript.

Reliability refers to the ability for the research instrument (e.g. the interview schedule) to gain the same response over time. In qualitative research the goal is not to prove the reliability of the instrument used to gain data so much as it is to elicit original perspectives from persons surveyed. Qualitative instruments—interviews, ethnographies, participant observation—are tools for understanding social meaning. While quantitative methods can categorize and count the natural world only qualitative methods can give meaning to the social world. Because the same research questions posed by different researchers with different research subjects can yield different results qualitative research can be considered by some to be unreliable (Druckman, 2005). Reliability is largely a concern of quantitative research and therefore no attempt was made to increase research reliability in this study.

### Data Analysis

This research was analyzed using grounded theory (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory, a common qualitative research tool, requires one to repeatedly read content until categories and themes surface inductively from the data that are later related to generate theories (Bernard, 2006). In Grounded Theory examples from the data collected are used to highlight specific themes that emerge during data analysis allowing one to more deeply understand the concepts under study. This study used this inductive, iterative approach to explore, code, confirm and conclude its findings.

## Research Sites

Primary data collection was gained from educators from five universities in Israel: (1) Haifa University serves roughly 17,000 students and is located in two campuses in the northern coastal city of Haifa, (2) Ben Gurion University has roughly 19,000 students and is located in the Southern Negev desert in the city of Beer Sheva, (3) The Hebrew University of Jerusalem has over 20,000 students, and is located on four campuses in both East and West Jerusalem, (4) Bar Ilan University has over 26,000 students and is located in Ramat-Gan, outside of Tel Aviv, (5) Tel Aviv University serves over 30,000 students and is located in Western Israel in the coastal city of Tel Aviv,

## Assets and Limitations of the Study

All research models require the investigator to make decisions regarding inclusion or exclusion of possible respondents. In every study there are assets to be realized and limitations that hinder maximum research validity. What follows seeks to recognize the advantages and drawbacks of this study.

My personal acquaintance with several university educators in Israel was a great asset to the formulation of both the research design and in conducting interviews. Personal referrals were responsible for many successful interviews and allowed for a collegial atmosphere. The author's general experience and knowledge of Israel and Israeli history and the Hebrew language (and Hebrew accented English) allowed for less problematic dialogues and because I presented my interview schedule in advance participants had few questions regarding the goals and parameters of the study. What

follows is a reflection upon the limitations of the scope of this study including (1) language and (2) academic discipline.

### *Language*

This study contained a significant language bias by requiring respondents to answer their interviews in English. Although most respondents found the opportunity to communicate in a second language unchallenging it is highly likely that an individual uncomfortable communicating only in English chose not to respond to the interview request. Because this study did not send out emails in English/Hebrew/Arabic it was limited to only those individuals whose English mastery was sufficient to read and respond in English. This study sought respondents from Israeli and Palestinian backgrounds of both sexes. In addition, by focusing on institutes where Hebrew was the language of instruction rather than Arabic, Israel's other official language, it may have restricted access to voices from Israeli minorities.

### *Academic Discipline*

Universities are largely set up according to academic discipline separating social sciences from hard sciences and separating academics (pursuit of knowledge) from vocational training (pursuit of employment). While a variety of inter or trans-disciplinary departments are emerging to bridge more discrete categories of inquiry because of the sheer population of academics in any one learning institution and because of the goals of this qualitative research restraint was involved when selecting the individuals contacted to participate. In this study academics in the physical/natural/computing sciences were

not contacted. By focusing on social scientists and humanities professors no insight was gained from technical or hard science professionals. The rationale for contacting professionals in the social sciences and humanities relates to the possibility that their course material will directly address the national conflict. While many ideologies are ‘caught’ in the classroom the course content of hard sciences and engineering does not specifically address protracted ethnic conflict.

### Personal Limitations and Biases

My personal biases have no doubt affected this research. I have lived in Israel and studied Hebrew and Arabic. I have lived the West Bank and spent time in ‘Arab’ East Jerusalem. I conducted this research as both a graduate student and as a married woman with a new baby. My letter of introduction included the reality that had I not just given birth to a child; my intention was to have conducted my data collection in person on the ground. My first respondent told me that she joined my study because “I’ve been there...I’ve been a graduate student with a baby.” My identity as a new parent may have been attractive to some respondents, others, one in particular, found my honesty less than appealing and outright unprofessional.

I consider the reality that I have lived in Jerusalem for an extended period of time (1993-1994) and that I have returned repeatedly (2004-2008) to be an asset. My familiarity with Israel/Palestine may have contributed to my ability to attract some research participants and many respondents were surprised and delighted that I had lived and traveled extensively through Israel. My identity as neither Jewish nor

Arab/Palestinian/Muslim may have opened some doors but likely closed many others. I was asked by every respondent what my religion/ethnicity was and I was somewhat grateful to have a Greek/Canadian background with a Welsh married name. Identity is a highly charged issue in the Middle East and my outsider status surely impacted my ability to attract respondents as did my limited ability to communicate in both Hebrew and Arabic.

My personal bias, as a student of PACS and a practitioner of Yoga makes me open to diversity but unsupportive of violent methods to resolve conflict. I value human rights and justice and at times had difficulty with racist or discriminatory remarks. In addition, I am personally committed to including gender awareness in my research and scholarship and tried to elicit responses from participants that addressed this facet of identity. The respondents surveyed never brought up gender unless specifically asked about it and even then did not choose to examine gender as a salient feature. I elected to let the data direct the theoretical portion of this research and sadly only included the material on peace and conflict and gender from the analysis of conflict using Byrne and Carter's (1996) Social Cubism model.

### Conclusions

This study concerns the perspectives, opinions, experiences and perceptions of post-secondary social science academics in Israel. Although the research was conducted in English, the native tongue of only two respondents, the qualitative research model and internet based contact was not unsuccessful. Those research participants who chose to



participate were generous taking the time to contribute and recommending other academics to interview. Because this research sought out reflections on challenging narratives of conflict professors/instructors from the hard/natural/computing sciences were not sought. Interviews conducted were transcribed and verified to increase research validity and 32 percent of those contacted decided to participate in an interview.

## Chapter Five: Education and Conflict

### Introduction

The next three chapters present the research findings of this study. As the majority of respondents requested to remain anonymous in this write-up each participant is identified by the question being answered (1-10), their numerical designation (1-28) and by their identified gender (Male: M, Female: F). For example, an individual listed as 42F was answering question four, was the second person interviewed and is female. For a list of the questions please see Appendix 3.

This chapter explores three themes: (1) how teachers perceive the present political environment in Israel, (2) what circumstances—such as monitoring agencies—currently affect educators and whether or not the perceived conditions are viewed as threatening and (3) what impact the national conflict with the Palestinians has on educators—how it affects the ability for teachers to function and perform within the country and their perceptions of the relevance of the national conflict to their professional opportunities.

#### *Theme One: The Political Environment in Israel*

The first theme to materialize from the data transcripts is the belief by educators that the political environment in Israel has become more and more radically ‘right-wing’ with a parallel observation that the ‘left’ has been weakened or is altogether absent. In general, the ‘left’ implies individuals or organizations concerned with social justice and the collective good, an ideological stance that negates ethnocentrism and inequality. The ‘right’ is more closely associated with acquiring power through individualism and

monetary gain, at times at the expense of the collective and is more ideologically conservative.

Respondent 816M commented that the ‘Arab Spring’ was worrisome and that the failure to combat the rising right was a result of a powerless ‘left’ and a rising anti-peace platform in Israel.

Look you’re talking to me in the midst of historical events that are taking place on our southern border and I think on the one hand it is isolating, creating a greater isolation around the state, it’s very disconcerting and I’m very concerned about the reality around us. Because I’m not optimistic that the Arab states around us will turn into democracies overnight. I’m pro-democracy on the one hand but on the other hand, democracy also needs to defend itself and I’m afraid that to the rising powers in Egypt, democracy will not know how to defend itself and it will turn into an Islamic state which is a terrible situation. At the same time—I would have loved that this would not be the situation—but the fact that Israel will be the only democracy in the area gives it greater power vis a vis the West. I would have been happy to give up on that but in the circumstances now it is different. So I am very concerned on a national level from the exterior and also from the interior. Divisions—which I mentioned earlier—basically in Israel there is no left-wing, no liberal camp of any significance, it’s been totally abolished and the Israeli Knesset has now decided to create a committee that is going to investigate the exterior funding for peace oriented NGO’s. It was initiated by the Israeli minister Lieberman. It’s terrible. Internally the divisions are very harsh, you can see it in the education system, and you can see it everywhere.

This sentiment was echoed by respondent 99F, whom went further to show how minority and alternative politics are dismissed. 99F articulates that,

I’m not very optimistic. I hope that pressure will come from outside onto Israel because I don’t feel here, that something will change. The media, they are the same ideology as the government; I think it will be very difficult to change this. Only when Israelis relinquish their special rights, but I don’t think in the immediate future...the media encourages a feeling of fear of enemies everywhere. I am not at all optimistic. The Left here is nothing, a disaster. We’ll see because all the left is

quiet, too quiet, completely quiet! I want to see a real opposition, we have no opposition here, the Left they don't speak, sometimes the Arabs speak they say 'Oh they are Arabs' they delegitimize them. There is a communist party that is multicultural but it is delegitimized as extremely leftist.

Respondent 416M also noted the rising radicalism in Israel and noted,

I do believe the environment in Israel has changed as it is becoming very radicalized in the recent couple, I would say two or three years. There is rising nationalism which is turning a critical eye towards NGO's that deal with issues of promoting peace and also towards universities and lecturers, so there are websites and you can enter them, which monitor Israeli professors on their views and I would not be surprised if I come onto one of those lists at a certain point—if I am not in there already—but the universities are strong enough to ignore them now but you never know where things might go. There was a Hebrew University professor who was very prominent, and his views are more extreme than mine, who had a bomb planted in front of his home and he was wounded, his name is Sternhall, the person who placed the bomb was arrested recently but that is the exception that proves the rule.

Moreover, respondent 88F remarked upon the increasing divide amongst the student body,

The situation is getting more extreme every year when I see the students I see the gap between them. In religion and political things people are sitting on controversy, extremes, the Arabs think some way, the secular think in another way and the religious think in one more way. I haven't studied this, I'm not sure this is empirically right, but this is my feeling—that we have more and more people going to the extreme way and not in the middle...you have this group of very religious people and at the other extreme you have the secular...people don't accept each other, don't accept the 'different'.

The political situation in Israel is described by respondent 812M as dire and inflexible; he perceives that the national conflict with Arabs is secondary to the threat to Israel from his own right wing government. 812M related that,

My greatest fear is not the Arabs frankly it's the fact that we have an extreme right-wing government that is becoming stronger and stronger. I feel basically that Israel is walking off a cliff and does not realize it. On the other hand it could be that Israel needs some hard love in order to understand what is going on. I can see a situation where Israel does not exist as a Jewish state. The right wingers think what I'm doing could bring the end of Israel and I believe what they're doing could bring the end of Israel.

Respondent 42F perceives the atmosphere as highly charged in the classroom and speaks to the difficulty of relating to a mixed audience. She observed,

I have right-winger orthodox Jews who care about their narrative I have Palestinian Arabs who care about their narrative I have more liberal-radical students...so you have to be balanced because one of the complaints that students make, mostly religious students and right-wingers, is that we use and abuse our positions as their lecturers in order to impose our liberal left-wing political views of the conflict. The major challenge is to teach them sociology without them feeling that we're basically trying to impose a specific narrative on them. Even the use of the words...even if I use the word 'occupation' when I say the West Bank its already hard for some of them... if I use the word 'immigration', when I talk about a major wave of Jews moving to Israel after the 1948 war and I use the word 'immigration' rather than 'those that ascend', you know, those that 'went up', '*Olim*' (the Hebrew word for a Jew who has returned to Israel) *Aliyah* (the Hebrew word for the action of returning translated as 'ascending' or 'going up'), if I don't use the word *Aliyah* already they are suspicious!

The experience of being monitored by these organizations is expressed by respondent 39F who witnessed other educators being persecuted and communicated the arguments that some Israelis are making for political neutrality in teaching.

I am a sociologist and we are critical. It's not easy to be a teacher when the consensus is right-wing. I think lately, with the new government, things are changing, you feel that. When I was a student I didn't feel that but now, it's very strong. Now there is a phenomenon at the university—supported by right-wing parties, associations, whatever, teachers that are leftist are persecuted by new organizations that check our syllabi. Some friends of mine, I was not on the black list, but some friends they had a lot of problems...they say they are not objective because they have a leftist point of view in sociology and political science. They were attacked, in the newspapers there was a big debate about this, should the university pay for teachers who are anti-Zionist. Anti-Zionist in Israel is like a traitor. There was a lot of pressure, a leftist scholar at Ben Gurion University was in trouble and they talked about firing the teacher, but they have tenure you cannot fire them. They have not been fired but there was a consensus that they don't have to teach because they are almost traitors and public money should not go to them. A colleague of mine said something in a course and she was called and asked on the radio if she had said what she said and she had to explain. And that is very new, really new. This organization asked students to denounce leftist teachers. I can tell you that when I taught in the second semester I had to talk about the flotilla and a student asked me "and what does this have to do with the course?" and I had to find a way to link the information. Having to answer a question like that from a student?

Educators whose classes did not concern the national conflict with Palestinians were still aware of the anti-leftist atmosphere. Those who teach directly on the conflict expressed a fear of reprisals. Respondent 427F perceived,

Raising controversial themes causes conflict...in certain situations I have felt threatened for my job. There is a fear of open dialogue, both from the side of the establishment (sometimes even the university) and from the side of the students. Things are getting worse and people are more and more polarized.

The growing threat or power of these right-wing agencies is observed by many academics and shown to be more than mere monitoring of classroom syllabi. Respondent 410M reported feeling threatened and communicates his experience of professional repercussions because of his politics.

I was threatened several times. A few years ago, we organized a conference with the participation of Palestinians and Israelis and we discussed different political solutions. I was one of the organizers. And we two Israeli's, we got threatening letters from two professors who are known to be supporters of the settlers movement, right-wing. I didn't do with it anything, my colleagues went to the police and the police did not do anything about it. This is one case, another was, I was a member of a board of a journal in Haifa University in the geography department and I was excluded because they said I am too leftist. Unfortunately in the last years my political stance has affected me in my professional life. These organizations are becoming more and more extremist and they watch us and try to stop us.

The environment in which educators teach at universities in Israel is described by many respondents as both free and fettered. There is a sense that because their salaries are paid for by the Ministry of Education that the freedom to teach whatever subject matter is deemed relevant is, for some, impacted by a political environment that is more conservative and less welcoming to tolerance based peace education and cultural/historical transparency.

### *Theme Two: Academic Monitoring*

A practice of academic monitoring has accompanied the rise in 'right-wing' politics in Israel and has articulated progressive, human rights based content to a weakened or anti-Zionist (read: anti-patriotic) position. The conflict that many educators are

experiencing is described as a type of self-censorship that is occurring to keep off the ‘blacklists’

When educators were asked about risk in either their professional or personal life many remarked that the more extreme political and religious environment in Israel had given rise to so-called monitoring agencies that seem to operate in collusion with or consent from Israel’s rising ‘right’. The threats are seen as ideological and while considered a nuisance by some, other educators professed to feel both professionally and personally at risk. The perceived threat from the monitoring agencies was shown to impact the choices and decisions made in the classroom. The strategy of self-censorship was voiced by many respondents as a ‘minimum’ response to the perception that any questioning of the Zionist narrative would result in professional repercussions.

Respondent 42F felt that the student body was changing and related her sense of what ‘risk’ meant to her. She remarked that,

The word risk in the Middle-East [is] different—how shall I say it—during the second uprising, as a citizen of Israel, I was scared, I was really scared that my life was really at risk. When it comes to school we are facing pretty harsh times because the right wing organizations kind of monitor or threaten to monitor...our classes. They threaten to monitor our classes and they have a blacklist of people and they go through our syllabus’ so in that sense it makes me feel uncomfortable and kind of upset and annoyed also on the other side I’m annoyed by a change in the student body from being students to being clients, there is a change of atmosphere in many ways. I think it has to do with the change that took place in Israel as well as elsewhere regarding higher education. On one hand we had many democratic processes at the other end of which we had all these colleges and now we have to become popular we have all these popularity votes among the students. Sometimes I feel that I need to do certain things for them to like me—stuff which is embarrassing. It’s a disgrace.



Respondent 212M related that student led organizations were targeting educators.

For example,

It's very difficult not to have your personal views come in. I'm obviously careful. I try not to do anything that sounds too much like political propaganda and lately the students have become very sensitive to this, there is a student movement called *Im teritzo*, "if you want it..." it's based on the (Theodor) Herzl saying that 'if you will it, it will be,' that kind of thing, and although its died down a bit this year there are monitors that report teachers that are too leftist and too dovish. So that makes me even more careful.

This sentiment was echoed by respondent 414M who said the monitoring was targeting anyone with leftist politics.

In Israel now there are two social movements from the right-wing who have put out a black—if I can use that expression in English—a blacklist, of people who are what they categorize as post-Zionist and they include anybody and everybody that in their reading list include something vaguely, even vaguely critical of Israel. And I've been put on those two lists. There is a very steady tendency now...in Israel...in political life, for people who are not of the centre of the right to be questioned much more than in the past and it may put me at risk in the future. In Hebrew it's called *im tirtzu*, and it's a... it's sort of a play on Herzl with his sentence *im tirtzu enzot agadah*...which means 'if you want, it is not a myth' we, you know, the Jewish homeland can be implemented, can be put into effect. And they think there that they're real Zionists.

One Israeli academic related his experience of finding his own name on one of these blacklists. Respondent 417M said,

Israel has academic monitoring of leftist or liberal professors that critically look at the Israeli society...about a year ago, I [for the] first time opened one of these monitoring websites and found myself figuring on the HOME page as an example of someone that is betraying Israel. And you know my first reaction was shock... tremendous distress. I realized that I am potentially in physical danger because it

did already happen with one professor... They put a bomb on his door. So since my photo is there with an explanation, someone may hurt me too. I don't know who the students in my class are and they may go to this monitoring organization and complain about me.

Likewise, respondent 611M mentioned the professional atmosphere but did not feel personally or professionally threatened.

There is an attempt to pressure us to use a certain narrative of some kind, of an attempt to create a new Zionist narrative that is supposed to be 'the' narrative which is really ridiculous. A group called 'zo artzeino' it's a group of students that have a lot of money and resources and they try to apply pressure and basically that is it. It's annoying to me that they even dream of telling me what to say but I say whatever I think, I'm not afraid of them, I despise them.

While many educators acknowledged a professionally threatening atmosphere some academics did not feel at risk. Respondent 41M chose to position his observation as a benefit to outside perceptions of Israel.

Real risk? Most people believe that I am an anti-Semite because of my political views but I don't think that that puts me at risk in the sense that I don't feel that I am threatened. Israel is too intelligent to threaten people with different views they prefer to leave them alive to show that they are democratic—while they are not.

### *Theme Three: Impact of the National Conflict*

The challenge of teaching and being a teacher from Israel surfaced with particular attention to how the national conflict impacts the ability of educators to teach a multicultural population and the perception that the national conflict has affected the ability for university educators to function professionally.

When asked to discuss the obstacles and opportunities of teaching in Israel there was a sense that the political mood had an impact on the ability for teachers to address issues of the national conflict with Palestinians and in addition, teachers were seen to have an inadequate ability to address conflict narratives in the classroom electing, instead to not address challenging issues. There is no training in Israel for educators to address issues concerning the national conflict. Respondent 610M related his story as follows,

The regular teacher is exposed to different narratives, to stories, to attempts to teach according to the political line of the last government so the teacher stands there and does not know what to do with it. We did research on it. We published a book called 'Values and Goals in Curricula.' We saw that many times teachers are running away from sensitive questions because they don't know how to deal with them. They don't want to have to commit themselves to one side or the opposite one they just run away from dealing with those problems.

In addition, there was a sense that internationally the contribution of Israeli educators was somehow articulated to the actions and ideology of the prevailing right wing government. Some research participants spoke of the increasing difficulty both within and outside of Israel to conduct, present and publish research. Respondent 619M articulated the following,

Oh there are huge obstacles. There is more anti-Semitism really everywhere but not seriously. If you are an Arab and you are coming from an Israeli university you get the red carpet treatment, if you are a Jew coming from Israel you do suffer some hostility even when you are just studying European history. Today it is no longer in vogue to say the Jews are bad people the Jews are blood suckers and so on or that they are hatching all sorts of plots against the world...that is done, and is more or less gone in the West—not in the Arab world—but in the West. What in the West today is in vogue is to say, the Jewish State. Almost everything Hitler said in the 1930s is said in the West and in Europe about the State of Israel. Problems emerge when you are a Middle East historian like I am in the West because we are not seen

any longer as impartial and professional. There is this growing image that Israeli historians are not really historians but politicians working for their country and not working to show and analyze history.

The question of ethnic identity emerged as a concern by the academics interviewed and was perceived by some as a possible disadvantage for further professional development.

In terms of internal discrimination Respondent 67M, an Arab Israeli stated,

I try not to bring my ethnicity forward when I teach but nevertheless it is there, it does exist, it does influence my students whether I like it or not. My ethnicity can be a significant barrier and stop me from getting good posts and good jobs within Israel. Ethnicity influences two different things; here one is the interaction with students in class and also my chances to get promoted.

In regards to a perception of both internal and external discrimination Respondent 621M observed,

There is a sense inside this society that one cannot speak freely and it has become more and more difficult for Israeli academics to get published outside of Israel. There is a sense that we are not working independently of our governments choices, that we are suspect.

The notion that academics are being disadvantaged professionally by the political choices of the Israeli government coupled with a sense of professional insecurity within the world academic community (harder to publish, fewer job opportunities, less prestige) means that there is a perception that the political choices of the Israeli government are having a real impact on the ability of educators to be considered autonomous and professionally legitimate.

## Discussion

The implications from these responses are that some academics are finding the right-wing movements within Israel an obstacle to addressing conflict narratives and teaching for tolerance, recognition and inclusivity. The rise of the right-wing in Israel is perceived by many left-wing academics as inhospitable to critical dialogue regarding the role of government and the goals of the university. For the majority of educators surveyed in this study the goals of the university are being subverted to government, student and public political pressures. Academics are communicating dis-ease with the current political disposition of the Israeli government and feel it is impacting their ability to foster open analysis and dialogue in the classroom.

The observation that the society is becoming more extreme and more polarized and the parallel observation that there is no viable opposition party in Israel speaks to a perception that the left-wing (the party position on which Israel was founded) is facing a crisis that many perceive as hazardous for the country and for the objectives of higher education. Israeli academics receive their salaries from the Ministry of Education and some educators perceive that the freedoms experienced in the past decades are not only under review by the ministry but are under revision. The observation that peace-oriented agencies may no longer be receiving funding is contrasted to the perception that the pro-settlement government has the power to shape the discourses of education to minimize dissenting opinions. Regional realities that see Israel as a political entity amongst several Arab nations in social flux might be promoting a feeling of insecurity and may be

contributing to the inflexibility of the society and increasing radicalism in the student body.

The climate of conservatism is echoed in monitoring sites that charge that academics who teach outside of the classical Zionist narrative are suspect, anti-Zionist and unpatriotic. A country with such a virulent and vibrant national ethos, such as Israel, is vulnerable to both outside pressures from foreign administrations and internal pressure to present a unified position. The multicultural composition of the country is not echoed in the government and the marginalization of non-Jewish ethnics and non-Zionist or post-Zionist Israelis is tangible. For educators whose teaching materials straddle the national conflict or whose teaching philosophy support a critical examination of Israeli society the conservative climate becomes an obstacle to speaking about real world issues and social problems that bear closer scrutiny. Some educators communicated that they feel that many important Israeli social issues were being ignored and sidelined because of the perceived importance of both the national conflict with the Palestinians and the external threats in the Arab region. The militarization of the culture, the total social, political and economic mobilization around the primary goal of security means that other social problems: delinquency, health issues, unemployment, disability, and, social marginalization are issues that Israelis could address and alleviate should valuable financial and administrative resources be redirected away from the militarization and security imperative of the government. The conservative stand-point of many government ministries means that real world challenges for Israelis: AIDS and HIV, domestic violence, alternative sexualities and the rights of women are ignored or given only

cursory attention as the patriarchal, militaristic and extremist religious and political groups maintain power. Educators who illuminate the social landscape of Israel, particularly those whose goals are emancipatory and empowering are finding that solutions and options suggested to assuage social ailments are sidelined as a result of the security imperative.

The fear that addressing ‘sensitive’ topics will single out teachers for aggression from the public, their students, organizations that support the conservative right-wing and even fellow academics is altering the ability for educators to tackle important content in the classroom and allowing the atmosphere of threat or intimidation to affect their work. The sense that academic inquiry is viewed by some as unpatriotic is a genuine obstacle to teaching. The result of such obstacles is the slow self-censoring of some educators in their day to day classroom behaviour and the experience of threats and professional and personal repercussions for some educators who choose to teach alternative viewpoints.

The perception that the government is inhospitable to alternative histories and political positions is supported by evidence that the Israeli Ministry of Education ordered the removal of ‘new history’ removed from secondary school textbooks as of 2001 when Ariel Sharon’s right-wing government secured the election. The traditional Zionist ‘story’ of the birth of Israel was challenged by new evidence critical of the Zionists’ behaviour in what Israeli historian Avi Shlaim termed the ‘history wars’. In his assessment the conflict with Palestinians is sanctioned and regenerated for the purpose of patriotism. Truth, to the new historians is seen as a threat to the cohesion of the Israeli/Zionist

narrative. The support of this perspective from the right-wing governments is a reality that has affected Israeli academics for over a decade. Any investigation or inquiry into official Israeli society or history is considered an attack on Israeli solidarity. The total adherence to the Zionist narrative is considered necessary in order to delegitimize Palestinian goals and lived experiences and in turn, the national conflict with the Palestinians support Israeli social cohesion.

There is an interesting reversal of the national conflict in the social structure and academic community in Israel. On the one hand Israeli society is in a constant 'war' mobilization where the national conflict with the Palestinians becomes instrumental in the allocation of valuable government resources highlighting the conflict and allowing it to precede many other social concerns. On the other hand, many educators struggle to place the national conflict with the Palestinians in a meaningful context in the classroom due to lack of training, sensitivity to students and fear of professional or personal reprisals from conservative groups. This is an important observation because as long as the investigative agenda regarding the national conflict with the Palestinians is engineered by right-wing ideologues there will be limited support for alternative cultural narratives and students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds will struggle to add their voices to the Israeli/Palestinian experience. If tolerance grows with recognition and acknowledgment the current political climate in Israel will continue to impact the ability and choices of educators and will not contribute to a weakening of the conflict narratives but instead continue to superficially buttress the status-quo.



There is a perception that democratic, academic freedom is at risk and that, in a variety of ways, Israeli academics are being impacted by the national atmosphere of political and religious extremism. While some teachers interviewed dismissed the threats that surround their options as educators or mentioned that university tenure protected their choices, the majority of those surveyed in this study perceived their positions as under stress, somewhat threatened and that challenging narratives of conflict was considered risky. The sense that the universities should remain independent from the government—free to conduct research and teach according to each educator’s propensity, ability and accomplishment—was perceived as tenuous. While many educators felt that they currently enjoyed academic freedom they did worry that there may be repercussions coming in the future or methods to curtail their rights to choose. There was a ‘wait and see’ perspective that was shared by many respondents and for some that sense of a questionable future was combined with a feeling of dread or the unknown and trepidation for the future.

The educators surveyed in this study that communicated a fear or worry that their academic freedom was diminishing and was under attack from the right-wing government and monitoring agencies confessed that they did not view this scenario as a positive step for Israel in terms of its stance in the international community. Already conjoined to a sense that Israeli academics are ideologues who labour in order to forward the government agenda, the fear exists that should real academic freedom become fettered in the universities there would be limited ability for educators to maintain a position of perceived impartiality and fewer chances that educators would be able to

disassociate themselves from the Israeli government's political position. A symptom of democracy is a vibrant academic discourse that allows for a variety of ideas and experiences to exist in non-violent contestation. The silencing of many minority voices and a significant community of left-wing academics does not support democracy and would be further evidence of the increasing strength of the Jewish/Israeli ethnocracy in Israel. Educators who already feel threatened by the prevailing politics nationally have identified the lack of opposition from the left in Israel and are fearful that the right-wing agenda of the Israeli government utilizes this to forward an agenda that further weakens Israel as a perceived western democracy.

These findings suggest that there may be limited room for Israeli academics to address issues of the national conflict with the Palestinians and direct disincentives to doing so in terms of their professional employment and academic opportunities. It should be noted that there was a preponderance of leftist positions (self-identified) in those surveyed and most educators interviewed confessed that the social sciences and humanities in Israel came from a critical and investigatory model of education. The themes addressed in this chapter indicate that the majority of Israeli academics interviewed feel that challenging the Zionist narrative in Israel puts them in jeopardy. The monitoring agencies and the right-wing government are perceived by educators as non-neutral observers of their behaviour whose goals are to affect, alter and eliminate contested materials and if necessary attack academics who elect to research, publish and teach content that challenges conservative positions. The Zionist narrative, that the land of Palestine was unoccupied, that Palestinians left of their own accords and that the

territories of the West Bank are part of the Jewish/Israeli homeland form political platforms that rely on the invention of the past to suit the present. The goal of educators to stimulate academic inquiry and support critical thought and social/cultural investigation place many educators outside of the Zionist position and the political climate in Israel contributes to feelings of stress regarding the ability to teach meaningful and relevant material. The perception that Israel is a democracy, that her society is composed of a multitude of voices that celebrate diversity is contrasted to the ethnocracy of the conservative Israeli government that has practiced forms of institutionalized racism regarding the Palestinian Israeli community for decades and continues to challenge alternative viewpoints and experiences.

The findings in this chapter illustrate the strength of conflict narratives and the serious investment Israel has in preserving the Zionist ideal of history; it also shows how difficult it can be introducing alternative accounts and that many educators that have chosen to do so are facing role conflicts within their institutions, amongst the student body and with their fellow Israelis. Protracted ethnic conflicts are ‘internationalized’ conflicts where outside governments, stakeholders, and co-ethnics are enmeshed. Some Israeli academics feel that their global professional contributions are being affected by the actions of the government and several hold the view that they are not considered independent researchers by the international community. Many academics feel that they are being made to ‘pay’ for the unpopular choices of their government by the international academia. The sense that Israeli academics are not independent and that they, therefore, have little to contribute to world scholarship is contrasted by the fact that

many educators in Israel are being charged with being too subjective in the classroom by the conservative right-wing. The sense that Israeli academics are not radical enough for the international community and too radical for the home audience places educators in an extremely difficult position and for some has resulted in personal attacks and professional scrutiny both at home and abroad. The lack of training and experience addressing the national conflict means that many educators either do not address the significance of the conflict or do so in a way that is uncontroversial.

### Conclusions

Israeli academics are being impacted by the national atmosphere. There is a sense of occupational insecurity based on each educator's individual choices. The experience that those choices are being affected by the external atmosphere of pressure from the right wing has become problematic for some educators and cause for comment and concern for the majority of those interviewed. Aspects of personhood such as gender, age and religious observance were not regarded as important to educators but ethnic identity and ideological stance were. The fact that most of those interviewed felt that their 'leftist' tendencies had placed them under scrutiny and would continue to do so as long as the government remained right-wing shows that real academic freedom is seen as under threat in Israel. The Israeli educators interviewed were aware of the right-wing threats and some felt it necessary to teach around issues of the national conflict with extreme caution.

## Chapter Six: Educating for Peace

### Introduction

This chapter examines whether educators perceive a benefit in addressing narratives of conflict and how educators approach conflict narratives in the classroom. For those who do challenge conflict narratives the strategies used when approaching this material is explored as well as how educators view their purpose as teachers. The challenges of exposing students to new information, information that could conflict with existing knowledge bases gained in youth are considered as well as the perceived value of approaching and deconstructing the cultural narratives held. Challenging conflict narratives—repositioning agreed upon knowledge—is considered difficult by some educators, essential to many and unnecessary to the few educators who do not see addressing narratives of conflict as valuable.

This chapter explores four themes: (1) the value of challenging narratives of conflict, (2) the use of comparative examples in addressing narratives of conflict, (3) the practice of engaging openly with conflict narratives and, (4) challenging conflict narratives by teaching peace. Many teachers see a benefit in addressing the content and concerns regarding the national conflict and some have definite opinions about whether or not it is appropriate, beneficial or useful to include such content in the classroom.

#### *Theme One: Perceived Benefits of Challenging Conflict Narratives*

The first theme looks at whether or not challenging conflict narratives is perceived of as valuable and if so what are the benefits that emerge from this practice. The majority

of those interviewed felt that challenging conflict narratives was both essential and sincerely beneficial. The complexities of doing so did not seem to diminish the sense that it is important to broach this sensitive material. For example, respondent 56M perceived that,

It is essential to challenge competing narratives of the conflict. The risk is that you might create antagonism among some of your students (and colleagues). But the benefit is much stronger—to educate your students to critical thought and [a] mode of analysis—I can't see any other way to teach the conflict in an academic manner without discussing the contradicting narratives of the conflict. Sometimes it is hard to bring young students to think 'outside the box'. I can understand their difficulty. Some of them were personally hurt by the conflict and it is very hard to embrace and even listen to an opposite narrative of the events. I do my best not to let my ideological stance towards the Israel-Palestinian conflict percolate my classes, although sometimes it is indeed very challenging. Occasionally, I teach heterogeneous classes. Having both Israeli and Palestinian students in your class forces you to mind the language and terms you use (e.g. War of Independence /1948 War; Occupied Territories/West Bank/ Judaea and Samaria). Even an analytical notion as 'the Occupation' is a charged notion.

The benefits of challenging conflict narratives are considered by some as indispensable and appropriate. For example, respondent 516M remarked that,

Universities are places to develop critical thinking, places [to develop] liberal thought and places where we need to deal with issues, which are not comfortable for ourselves. [There are] places we need to look at with a critical eye but the primary goal of an academic institution is to develop critical thinking and in history you do that through a critical look at the past. It is essential to bring these issues up. And I'm not only critical of Israeli-Arab relations. For example, I have a class where I discuss the treatment of Holocaust survivors in Israel in the 1950s—of ignoring them, of looking down at them—it doesn't necessarily relate to the issue of conflict between different segments of society but also within the predominantly Jewish society. So in my mind, it is essential to bring these issues up.

Moreover, respondent 620M agreed that,

The benefits are those of critical thought. By giving legitimacy to both sides of a conflict you create a situation of open discussion that make people think in a deeper and less stereotypical way about the conflict. [We] try to disregard ethnicity but in a conflictive society like Israel it is not easy. I try to be as neutral as possible although I know that my students are aware of my political views. Neutrality [is] a problem if your goal is universal knowledge and understanding.

Another academic relates his observation that although there are benefits to challenging perceptions he indicates that there may be limits to doing so. Respondent 718M stated that,

Generally speaking educators can change the way people think about their own society and their own politics. This is not what is happening in school because there is a curriculum and a matriculation and teachers, even in high school, have to follow certain rules [for] future teachers, some have not thought about it in terms of state formation [but] I think most of the work should be done by the elementary schools by the time they come to us it is too late. You have to begin at ages 4, 5, 6 to change peoples' minds about the other, the enemy...at 22, 23, 24 it's much too late.

Some respondents indicated in conversation that they do not perceive of themselves as educators; that 'education' was the work of teachers at lower levels of the school system.

One research participant remarked that an educator is a person who indoctrinates someone. The indication here is that the goal of affecting social change through education is not shared by all teachers, in this instance respondent 718M felt that that affecting people's perceptions of the national conflict would be more effective when they are younger, that it was too difficult to change people's minds at the university level.

Some educators are sceptical of the impact of challenging conflict narratives and choose not to address them. Respondent 526F felt the impact of interpersonal contact more powerful than addressing the asymmetry of the conflict and declared that,

I have always tried to give everyone an opportunity to share their narrative, but only acknowledge that there are different political narratives—I have not allowed political discussion to take place in the classroom. I have instead given students an opportunity to get to know each other as people from different cultural backgrounds and to appreciate the beauty of difference. Politics have no place in my teaching.

For some research participants there was a sense that challenging conflict narratives would not make any realistic difference that it has limited value and will be ineffectual in changing perceptions or behaviour. For example, respondent 58F communicated that,

Yeah...it's very challenging and you know when I discuss that with my faculty they say you have to be careful to discuss these things and in the end you're not going to change anything and [you are] wasting your efforts on things [and] that the students [are] just [going to] complain. I don't discuss the peace process in the class. I don't believe students in the class will change what they are thinking.

A few academics felt that exploring narratives of conflict was of no use because Israeli students are already familiar with the Palestinian narrative. Respondent 528F observed that,

The conflict enters most discussions at some stage, and very different narratives are brought up during discussion. Israelis are very involved and it is sometimes hard to guide the debate, and keep it civil, and it may be difficult to tease out the various arguments because of the emotions involved [but] Israeli students are by and large



committed to their own narrative, they do understand the Palestinian story—they just don't accept it.

Although some perceived little benefit in addressing narratives of conflict many educators were committed to teaching challenging content regardless of its effect on the dominant narratives as it is considered congruent with the educative goal of stimulating and fostering critical analytical skills and open discourse.

*Theme Two: Addressing Conflict Using Comparables*

A common method that educators used in the classroom to introduce and challenge narratives of conflict or increase social sensitivity is to use comparative external examples. Many Israelis are deeply connected to their own narrative and unaware of the Palestinian narrative (and *vice versa*); this can require the use of other theatres of protracted ethnic conflict to illustrate local political and social realities. In addition to the conflict with Palestinians the experience of managing inter-ethnic discord between Israeli Jews is addressed and the challenge of giving voice to minority stories. For example, respondent 28F said that,

I like to teach about other minorities in other countries so it's easier for students—especially those who don't agree with me—to be more understanding if I bring examples from other countries because if you say in the States Blacks are discriminated against they will understand that more easily but if you start with Arabs are discriminated against...they find it more difficult to agree with that. It depends on the things that I am teaching but usually in all my courses you can see that I incorporate things related to Arabs in Israel and their situation. I teach about their socio-economic status and its effect on their delinquent behaviour and court treatment of Arabs compared to Jews.

Likewise, respondent 522M related that,

There are enough examples from other times and places that I can use to illustrate these principles without alienating anyone. I'm not required to approach these issues directly in class. There is polarization of public opinion both inside and outside this country, which is, in the long run inimical to open discussion of anything. There are unconscious factors, but on the whole my idea of teaching is to present the relevant contents with my own concerns and prejudices screened out.

Respondent 57M relates his perception of using Israeli examples in comparison with Europe and remarks that,

It is absolutely difficult to challenge conflict narratives in the classroom; especially with the Israeli context. You know I'm teaching a course entitled "Immigration, citizenship and multiculturalism" and I've made a choice to talk about Europe, not about Israel. Sometimes I do use Israeli examples [and] when I use these examples I feel that there is some resentment in the class. I can feel it. Not explicitly but implicitly nonetheless.

One academic speaks about his method of addressing narratives of conflict in the classroom and how his strategy is perceived by students. When speaking about the benefits of challenging conflict narratives Respondent 514M said,

The benefits are primarily challenging the students to examine their own assumptions about the conflict and the way I know many of my colleagues and I do it is by theorizing and putting Israel in a comparative perspective and that limits the risk. For example: comparing Israel to Northern Ireland or Sri Lanka, in that way they understand that Israel is one case out of many. You start, by saying 'we're not talking about Israel today....' And most of the students understand very quickly that we are actually talking about Israel and the Palestinians. Certainly when I began teaching in the 1980's presenting the narrative of the Palestinians or even within the Jewish community of the *Mizrahim*, what we call the Oriental Jews was quite difficult. Today it's much easier, and I think one of the reasons, is not only political in Israel but its related to the fact that in Academia in general there is more openness to conflicting narratives. It's very

much a part of the way which students for example learn from the general media. The media today regularly carry narratives of the Palestinians so it's much easier.

Professor 59F shows how difficult it can be for Israeli students to conceptualize ethnic discrimination. She perceived that,

The concept of universal rights is difficult for Israeli students to understand. It is very easy to speak about nations, common origins, everyone understands that. But when you speak about universal rights, that Arab and Jew have the same rights, that is new for them because the ideology is so biased toward Zionism they don't see the 'other' they don't see that Arabs in Israel have the same rights. Arab students, they feel discrimination but don't have the tools to express themselves and their feelings. It is my goal to make people critical and to see how discrimination exists in the Israeli narrative.

For many teachers there is a perceived value in addressing the social/political realities in Israel using examples from elsewhere in order to minimize the risk and acknowledge Israelis deep commitment to their cultural narrative.

### *Theme Three: Open Engagement with Conflict Narratives*

While some educators choose to look at narratives of conflict using external resources other educators focus on the realities in Israel. For several research participants the challenge was the method of introducing sensitive material not the material itself. For example respondent 510M reported that,

You know all the ugly things that Israel did... I put it on the table, I analyse them, and I discuss them. I teach about Arab society in Israel and I put everything on the table. Many times there are embarrassing responses, results from the students from both Israeli and Arab students. I think the most important thing are people

that are open to listen to different voices, to seriously think about them and find themselves in these narratives as they are exposed to them...especially in such a society where everybody is recruited to one narrative.

One academic speaks about his personal experience running an encounter group and its' impact. In encounter groups conflict narratives are dialogued and challenged by individuals with a variety of outcomes. Respondent 513M related that,

I ran together a yearlong course between Jews and Palestinians...it's called a dialogue...it's not always a dialogue... and in that course half of the students were Jewish, half were Palestinians and there were strong opinions about realities. For me it wasn't easy because on the one hand I tend to sympathize with the narrative that my group has [but] on the other hand I have the obligation to allow the other group to present their own narrative. At times it's quite difficult, especially because the competing narratives here in Israel, are very—competing. If you think about changing attitudes among the people who are taking the course then most of the time you see some very interesting change, some kind of renegotiation of identities, re-examination of identities, now to what extent this generalizes to larger groups...I am less optimistic about the long-term change that these dialogues can lead to. For the people who are part of the dialogue this is a strong experience, [for] most of them it is the first time they have [had] the opportunity to listen and react to the opinions of the other group, it's not only informative but it's very powerful. It's interesting, because although in the Israeli universities the Jews are the majority and the Arabs are the minority [but] it's easier to get Arab people into these types of courses than to get a Jew because for the Arab students, this is an opportunity to speak out loudly about what is bothering them all the time and the Jewish students don't seem to have this need. These are courses that are processes and—especially for the Jewish participants—these are, at times, quite painful. You have to face accusations you have to face things that you never heard [before] or you never [had] to face. The Jewish participants are at times in a quite bad situation.

The strength of actually facing the existing narratives is perceived by another academic who laments the government's choice to disallow one of the tools for peace education,

the PRIME textbook. In his reflection he shows how challenging conflict narratives is critical to understanding how a group forms its perceptions. Respondent 518M articulated that,

The joint textbook was forbidden to us by the Ministry of Education. I supported teaching both versions not only because it is politically correct but it is also good history teaching because you cannot understand history if you don't know what historical actors think of their own situation. You have to consider, not only the events but how people perceive the events and if the Palestinians perceive what happened in 1948 as a *Nakba* then that is what we have to teach because otherwise we don't understand the Palestinians and even—I disregard for a moment whether there was a *Nakba* or not or who was to blame, this is not my point—as a historian I don't teach about what happened in 1948 I teach about how we teach about what happened in 1948. If the situation remains as it is it will be fine but there is more and more tendency to regard people who don't think as the government as unpatriotic. If that continues and they try to change the way people in the university teach that could mean the end of academic freedom.

For some educators the chance to openly engage with narratives of conflict results in increased tolerance and understanding. For those who used the shared textbook—inviting active discussion of the various narratives—there is concern about the impact of removing such a valuable bridging tool from the classroom because of its effect, long-term for building peace.

#### *Theme Four: Teaching Conflict by Teaching Peace*

When asked the question 'Why do you teach?' many respondents echoed the sentiment that it was something 'required' of their position but that it was also very enjoyable and rewarding. While some stated that they would prefer more time to do research many found that the profession had become a calling. Although some research

participants simply spoke about the strategies and challenges they experienced in the classroom and as educator/researchers the role of teaching as a mission did emerge.

Respondent 612M believes that the benefit is not merely academic but can contribute to building peace. He perceived that,

Israeli society is moving more and more to the right and to a certain extent we are feeling like a minority and a persecuted minority. Most of us are leftist and we have a certain label attached to us. For people that are not convinced that peace is possible... [If] they can find a new way to look at the enemy then I have done my job. At least they will meet someone like me and not just be isolated into their little ethnocentric camps.

The ethnic divide in Israel is characterized by an Arab educator who perceives the benefit of teaching about the conflict from a personal perspective. Respondent 77M articulated that,

I think one of the greatest opportunities is the ability to influence and shape and reshape students thoughts, ideas, perceptions, stereotypes...the normal practice here in Israel, the dominant group, which is the Jewish population they interact with Arabs where in most cases the Jewish person is the superior and the Arab person is the inferior whereas in this situation it is quite the opposite, I have the authority, I have the knowledge, I'm interacting with them from a higher position and for some...for some this is not very easy. When you pass through check-points or something as an Arab they stop you, they check you, they can search, tell you to do this, do that, don't do this, don't do that, when suddenly [Israelis] enter into this interaction with an Arab lecturer, an Arab teacher, well they really can't tell the teacher what to do, but it is quite [the] opposite the teacher can tell them, do this exercise, don't do this exercise... no one will challenge that. And I think this is in a sense...a risky thing but an opportunity where you probably change the way they think about Arabs or about different ethnicities. I challenge the national belonging [and] you get these students who are open minded and they are willing to take their own stories one step forward and challenge it.

Respondent 611M spoke about the transformation of ideologies in the classroom and increasing sensitivity. He observed that,

There can be no real academy without democracy so I'm a supporter of democracy. I'm a supporter of democracy [so] I tell my students what it is and what it is not and I feel that I do a lot...I see my students, especially right wing students try to come to terms with democracy and their ideology, it means that they think about the Palestinians as human beings that are supposed to have rights but [then] they ask themselves 'how would they have rights and we want to have greater Israel?' And they come with different solutions that you don't have to agree with but at least it shows that they are not treating the other human beings as inferior or something like this and that's good enough.

Respondent 510M expressed his opinion that nurturing tolerance was just as important to him as an educator as fostering critical thinking. He said that,

I try very much not to preach, to put things on the table, to be tolerant to any opinion, even those opposite of mine, and to raise academic arguments, not to preach to one truth or another. To put all the things on the table including those that are not convenient to one side or the other. And the benefits...the first one is academic, this is the nature of academia, to be open to different opinions, perspectives, narratives and interpretations and to think about them openly. Sometimes it's not convenient but all of them are relevant and all need serious consideration. The second one is tolerance to the other. There are other narratives and we need to be tolerant to that.

Respondent 117M viewed his contributions within a wider ideological atmosphere and said that,

In the last years my teaching became something different—I would say almost a mission—and the reason that I live in a particular society, with a particular culture, within a particular context, where—I would say—in general, the environment is of continual mobilization for participation in conflict. Obviously there is some kind of pluralism but the mainstream leaders provide particular types of information—ceremonies provide a particular type of information, and schools provide a

particular type of information that obviously is selected by them with certain emphasis. Thus, people that live in such an environment are to a certain extent blinded by [it]. I believe that I have a mission to enlighten the students... people that come to my classes are products of the mobilization and of the indoctrination... [And] I am in the school of education so my work is really doubled in its importance because people that come to my classes are people that will eventually be teachers, principals, counsellors, working with young generations and I am aware of it. This means that they will be the gatekeepers, the transmitters, and if you want 'shapers' of the reality of the next generation. So my mission is here to move them into a more open-minded, complex worldview.

Likewise respondent 613M agreed that his role as an educators had the potential to impact society and change people's perspectives. He remarked that,

I think that being a professor here in Israel in that specific area that I am working now of conflict resolution in the specific area of multiculturalism...I think it has a sense of mission...that perhaps people who teach in other areas don't have. I think it's rewarding, the feeling that perhaps you are making this very small contribution to something very big. My students they go and they work with different NGOs who work in peace education or inter-group relations or the peace movement so when you are teaching a class you are always thinking 'now maybe I am changing the attitudes of one, two of my students and they may then become peace activists or become people who work with underprivileged population or peace education' so it is more rewarding than in other matters. I think I am privileged in a sense that I'm teaching something that also I believe it is important for society.

In addition to educators who saw a mission or calling in challenging conflict narratives several teachers saw no benefit to doing so and one critiqued the method with which they were commonly addressed. Respondent 51M said,

I doubt there is any benefit in dealing with [narratives of conflict] the way they are usually dealt with. Most peace education is useless because it is usually engaged in the same discourses that they are trying to change. So they change nothing. I think that part of that is expressed in engaging with historical narratives as if the problem of conflict is in any way related to historical narratives, which it



is not. I'm sure that if Palestinians would have equality in Israel their historical narrative would stop being tremendously relevant. Structural change is much more powerful than ideological ones. The ones that usually don't want change emphasize ideological change so as not to have to deal with structural change. I've raised issues that have to do with historical narratives in my classroom but I don't find them to be tremendously helpful for anything.

Either directly or indirectly, some Israeli educators are teaching peace. The perception that the teachers own identity contributes to 'encountering the other' whether the teacher is a leftist or an Arab was mentioned as well as the role of building tolerance by addressing conflict narratives in the classroom. The mission to enlighten students, particularly student teachers was pointed out as well as the notion that the ideological constructs of cultural narratives might lose their social significance should the structural realities change for Palestinian Israelis.

### Discussion

The opinion that altering the perception of students is beneficial and valuable was supported by the majority of educators interviewed. While several felt that there was limited or no gains in challenging conflict narratives in the classroom the reasons provided to support this position ranged from pessimism to peer pressure to the assessment that national identities would remain necessary until more minorities gained economic security i.e. that cultural violence (conflict narratives) would be necessary until structural violence (systemic discrimination) stopped. This is interesting because a structural approach—one that views the economic, social and political rights of non-majority Israelis as an important factor in contributing to a weakening of the strength of

conflict narratives—does not contribute to tolerance or acknowledgement of the experiences of the ‘other’ but it suggests that such a reality could make the content of cultural narratives less important to the formation of the cultural identity. This approach suggests that conflict narratives, as ideological constructs are less relevant when individuals and groups feel social inclusivity within Israel but cannot necessarily speak to the validity of conflict narratives with the national conflict with Palestinians. This would require a structurally sound Palestinian Authority and Palestinian sovereignty, both of which are fettered by notions of Israeli domination and control of the territory in dispute.

Positive responses suggest that the outcomes of challenging conflict narratives are critical thinking, the ability to challenge one’s assumptions, the chance to increase understanding of one’s own culture and ‘others’ and the opportunity to increase tolerance and acceptance among individuals who may hold discriminatory or ethnocentric views. The ability for this type of dialogue/encounter/coexistence to open the minds of students is a direct method of educating for peace. Ethnocentrism views one cultural group as superior to another and makes permissible the marginalization and discrimination of minorities. The positionality of some educators as individual examples of ‘other’ is of interest because it acknowledges the challenge for some educators of being perceived as the ‘same’ as their students while offering something that seeks to make an impact on the identity and understandings of students by embodying ‘difference.’ The sense that the identity and ideology of the teacher can meet the goals of an ‘encounter’ group in the classroom could be considered a success if the teacher also chooses the strategy of engaging openly with narratives of conflict with either homogenous or mixed group

students. As the goal of peace education is the participatory engagement of the conflict in order to foster understanding and cooperation students and teachers who do engage with the national narratives increase comprehension and educate one another about different perceptions and experiences.

Though the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians continues building tolerance and understanding is a value shared by many of the educators interviewed. It would seem that the bulk of those consulted share the assessment that challenging narratives of conflict is important. These individuals are educating for peace. While some educators choose to not address the national conflict with the Palestinians openly many still find ways to invite the concepts of inclusion and human rights into the classroom and using the tool of comparable conflicts do address important social, political and cultural disparities at home. The sense that the goals of critical thinking welcome a tolerance of thoughts and a welcoming of new ideas and information means that most educators, while not necessarily choosing to directly educate for peace, or indeed address the national conflict with the Palestinians at all, are nonetheless using the academic methods of inquiry, assessment and understanding and this is not incompatible with educating for peace.

Educators surveyed perceive the goals of academic learning to: develop the ability for one's mind to accept fresh evidence; change people's perceptions for the better; and, stimulate analytical, critical thinking. These goals correspond to the goals of peace education. For those who perceived it as unbeneficial to challenge narratives of conflict

some found the indoctrination or socialization of Israeli students at the elementary levels far too strong and influential to generate new understandings at the post-secondary level. The notion that peace education—as opposed to the ideological socialization that concretizes Israel identity in youth and continually mobilizes the culture toward conflict—is less successful when students have already entered adulthood, (in Israel students largely attend university after serving in the military) corresponds to the perspective that the right-wing government sets the agenda for education in the lower levels of Israel and is disinterested in adding peace building to the curriculum. While many educators responded that they are free to teach what they like and have few controls on the content of their class lectures and course assignments many communicated that they still consider challenging conflict narratives as ‘risky’ and some indicated that they were changing their professional practices because of the increased conservatism and monitoring in Israel. The job of teaching tolerance may be more effective at younger ages but some educators related their commitment—for some the ‘calling’—to use whatever contact with students they had to further the goals of cultural understanding and tolerance.

The practice of addressing conflict narratives was viewed by many as problematic and needing a strategy in order to approach contested content. The main strategy used involved using a removed focus—to address local matters through the aperture of distant conflicts such as Northern Ireland or Sri Lanka or to address social realities within Israel by looking at structural violence elsewhere. There are few conflicts as long-term and intractable as the Israeli/Palestinian conflict but educators in Israel commonly include

Northern Ireland when using comparable examples because of the longevity of the dispute and the multitude of incarnations of the conflict. The conflict in Northern Ireland has been characterized in religious/ethnic terms, it has involved revolutionary rhetoric and armed struggle and it is categorized by many of its participants as anti-colonial and emancipatory. Importantly, the example of Northern Ireland, as a conflict that is post peace accord and has had decades of structural aid may contribute to the ability for Israelis to conceive of an end to their own situation, one that might not encompass all concerns but at the very least includes an end to violence and a commitment to reconciliation. In this way, Northern Ireland becomes more than a way of speaking about conflict; it becomes a way of entertaining peace. This popular method of avoiding a direct clash with people's constructs of the conflict and ethnic identity is harmonious with Bar-Tal and Rosen's (2009) Indirect Model of Peace Education because it provides students with an opportunity to consider and reconsider realities without having to negotiate their personal identities within the subject matter under review. Using the strategy of 'outside' loci of conflict permits students to reflect on the experience under review and connect with the individuals involved. Whether or not that contributes to social change in Israel, the process does affect the thoughts and perceptions of individuals and their ability to connect with others.

War education makes conflict "through the reproduction of inequality and exclusion, through perpetuation of ethnic or religious divisions [and] through selection, competition and fear" (Davies, 2005, p.357). By choosing to challenge narratives of conflict and increase sensitivity and tolerance the majority of Israeli educators

interviewed are trying not to educate for war. While the goals might be presented as academic goals the methods used to critique, challenge and analyse the social/historical conceptualizations of Israeli society and Israeli/Palestinian identity are the methods of educating for peace. Of fundamental importance in educating toward peace is the goal of engaging with difference and creating the pathways to engage with contested materials and entrenched perspectives. Educators who do not feel that their institutions support open discourse about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict may nonetheless find ways of addressing the parameters and permutations of the conflict in the classroom with aims of increasing understanding and tolerance and participating in rigorous academic inquiry. Although some have communicated measures of self-censorship some educators have found that an open dialogue is instrumental in engaging student opinions and experiences and building tolerance. For those who do not see a benefit in engaging with narratives of conflict because it does not impact the status-quo or affect social change they may still see the benefit academically in engaging with content outside of the Israeli narrative while attempting to keep politics out of the classroom.

The conflict some are experiencing as agents of the state (with salaries paid for by the Ministry of Education) and contributors to social change is evident. Most managed to find ways to address the discourses of difference and feel it is vital to do so. However, many of those interviewed felt that addressing conflict narratives required some form of stratagem demonstrating the institutional atmosphere, the mood of students and the challenge of challenging conflict narratives in the classroom. Some educators felt their role required them to research and teach according to their department and discipline but

some thought their real job was increasing sensitivity and using contested material to foster social change and cultural understanding. The perception that many educators feel that their work is placing them in opposition to the predominant conservatism in Israel is considered by some as problematic because the academic freedoms and social commentaries of educators, especially social scientist and historians are contributing factors to the way a society perceives of itself and how it perceives of others. The institutionalization of certain Israeli narratives is part of the socialization process at the lower levels of education; the ability for educators to work outside of those narratives at the university level may be one of the only avenues for some Israelis to encounter difference. Certainly for Palestinian Israelis who are encountering the Israeli narrative and life amongst Israelis for the first time in university the continued availability of discourses of difference in the university are critical to engaging with entrenched perspectives and perceived cultural identities.

Because teachers view their work as instrumental in influencing people's perceptions and attitudes the majority of those interviewed felt that the opportunity to challenge conflict narratives was a valuable tool in increasing tolerance and understanding and impacting students behavior. Many perceived that without the perspective of educators such as themselves students would have no exposure to alternative viewpoints and a few perceived this a detriment to not only individual Israelis but Israeli culture; the conflict with the Palestinians and with the Arab world dominates the Israeli discourse and for this reason many other social realities are given cursory examination by Israeli media and the Israeli establishment. Some educators surveyed

viewed this fundamental orientation as a major obstacle to working with students to recognize social problems and affect social change. Ironically the dominance of the national conflict with the Palestinians in Israeli society does not result in an ease of broaching the subject of the conflict in the classroom although many educators indicated that Israeli students (Jewish ones at least) are very well versed in the history of the conflict while not necessarily having had exposure to the experience of Palestinians and Palestinian Israelis. The attachments that conservatives have to their narrative present's difficulties in mixed-group classes and many educators use comparables when such individuals are present rather than engage directly with identities of difference in the classroom.

While the long-term effects of teaching for tolerance were not specifically addressed the sense that the chance to at least present contested material was important stood out for many educators. In order to delegitimize cultural/symbolic/alienating violence in the classroom the instructors felt it important to approach the subject matter (directly or indirectly) as a service to their students. One individual went as far as to call his teaching a mission, one that harnesses the unique qualities of the educator to impact not only the next generation but the next generation of teachers. The idea that educators are instrumental in shaping the concerns and agendas of the next generations is not new to teaching but for educators who communicated that they have lived and taught for decades in Israel there was a sense that the Israeli students would not access this 'contested' information in their daily lives without getting it at school. The joint-textbook—a concrete bridging of the narratives of conflict—showed institutional support



for engaging with discourses of difference and the loss of the joint-textbook is a symbolic erasure of the cultural narratives from official education. The work of educators trying to cultivate the perception that history is a version of events rather than the truth will remain a challenge until more diverse notions of identity and experience are seen as less of a threat to official national identity.

### Conclusions

Protracted ethnic conflict is maintained through controlled perceptions and presentations of the past. The goal of educators who challenge narratives of conflict is to present alternative visions and observations of the past and different representations of the conflict. The majority of educators interviewed feel that challenging conflict narratives is a valuable activity and one worthy of investigation and analysis. Some educators used external examples of conflict while others used examples from within Israel/Palestine. While one educator felt that the structural realities of discrimination against Palestinians remained unaffected by dialogues supporting alternative perspectives most others felt that recognition of the Palestinian narrative was essential. The benefits of such recognition were viewed by the majority as compatible with other ideals of liberal education including critical assessment and independent thinking.

While not all educators felt their role included contributing to social change many felt that open investigation of social/political realities was part of a university education. Moreover, those educators who chose to openly engage with the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in the classroom supported the goals of ‘encounter’ groups in the classroom,

allowing a discourse with difference regardless of its impact on the structural realities of Israelis—Palestinian Israelis in particular. The goals of enlightenment and fostering tolerance were not shared by all of the educators surveyed however the goals of critical thinking and quality inquiry and analysis were considered valuable by-products of a university education and these goals are not incongruent with the goals of educating for peace.

## Chapter Seven: Future Visioning

### Introduction

The ‘art’ of imagination is a mindset and a method for creating psychological contingency plans; such visions permit individuals to visualize and then manifest the future (Boulding, 2000; Lederach, 2005). In this chapter respondents were asked to imagine the future and share both their trepidation and preferences for what is to come. What follows are reflections that are personal and professional and that speak to both individual desires and the collective good. This chapter utilizes two questions from the Cantril (1965) Self-Anchoring Striving Scale. The Cantril Self Anchoring scale is a method for measuring a person’s welfare and happiness and it is a tool for evaluating whether or not people see themselves as living a safe and stable life or one that places them in potential risk; the perception of risk can extend, in addition to the individual, to the group to which he or she feels a sense of belonging. During protracted ethnic conflict individuals’ ‘collective’ identity becomes very salient. The Cantril scale may allow a person to conceptualize from both an individual and ‘group’ perspective and can provide an avenue for an individual to speak personally about their feelings, leaving rhetoric from the ‘collective’ behind. In this study respondents were first asked what their worries and fears were for the future for themselves and for their county and secondly what were their hopes and wishes.

This section could have logically been separated into ‘fears and worries’, ‘hopes and wishes’ but interestingly, educators often chose to respond to the question regarding

‘fears’ only after being asked about their ‘hopes.’ Three themes emerged from the data collected and include: (1) the fear of extinction, (2) the outcome of partition, and (3) the hope for peace. In this study the majority of respondents viewed their futures very conservatively, many indicated that they were not optimistic about the future and found the ‘art’ of imagining the future tricky and complicated.

*Theme One: Fear of Extinction*

The first theme to appear from this section is the ‘fear of extinction’ quality closely associated with protracted ethnic conflicts. Many educators imagined violence against their families or an impending end to Israel or Zionism. The possibility that the state was politically moving in an untenable direction was expressed and whether that outcome would be positive or negative as well as what alternatives could be imagined. The ‘doomsday’ mentality is shared by many respondents and when asked to share their worries or fears many respondents felt that the ‘experiment’ of Israel might not succeed. Included in this section is the idea of a personal or familial exit strategy of emigration.

When asked to envision the future many respondents remarked on how the instability over the decades made them struggle with the notion of Israel as a permanent political entity and whether or not Israel was ‘viable’ in the Middle East. Respondent 828F worried that the international community would not support the existence of Israel in the future and that Israel’s image was only associated with conflict, she remarked that,

I am afraid that the world will increasingly forget the Holocaust and will deny the necessity of a Jewish state. Israel is a country of tremendous innovative energy, and I worry that our image is dominated by the conflict with the Palestinians, and

indeed it is often hard for outsiders to think of Israel outside the conflict. Many other issues are also important.

Respondent 83M spoke about his proximity to the past and the importance of understanding the history of the Jewish people and the importance of Israel. He believed that,

If I take a look at Israel this is the Jewish nation this is a nation under trauma and if you don't understand that I think that you don't—you can't—understand Jewish nationality or Israel... [There] is always something there that you are afraid of, something, you see the history, it's not so far, for me it is my father, it is not so far it's there... I hope that this fear will not be part of my daughters life's but I'm not sure...I don't know...I don't know...it was something that I didn't think about when I was younger.

Respondent 813M spoke about his experience of living in Israel and his hope that his children would experience peace. He remarked that,

You always live here with a kind of knowledge that we are being threatened but living a completely normal life. The threats are there and when you think about it, when you watch TV you say to yourself 'wow, what is going to happen in ten-fifteen years?' It may be from Egypt or it may be an atomic bomb from Iran... people who come from other places in the world they cannot believe it—we live a completely normal life—it is threatening, it is frightening, but you don't believe it when you think about it. I wasn't born in Israel. When I came to Israel I wished that my children would not go to the army but that didn't work out so now I wish for my grandchildren that they don't have to go to the army. It's kind of a wish I don't think will happen very easily.

One educator compared the rise of political Islam globally to the rise of National Socialism in the 1930s in Germany. Respondent 819M perceived that,

I would say my main concern today is Egypt and Jordan. The Jordanian Monarchy is fragile; both agreements with Israel are in jeopardy now because of big question marks about who is going to rule in the future. Not to say the demonstrations were negative, they were positive, but even positive phenomena can create crises. If Egypt stabilizes then there is no reason to be too worried. Okay, we wait and see. And what worries me is that everybody I hear, everybody is problematic between recalcitrant calls to finish Israel off in Egypt. If liberal people are saying the peace agreement with Israel should be null and void then that worries me. As a historian, I'll tell you what, I would agree with those who argue that the main battle is between civilisations but it is within the Islamic civilisation—between moderates and fundamentalists. I feel that the liberals are losing in the Muslim world. We are living today in a dangerous world which— in my view—is becoming even more dangerous. Muslims, who are a huge population in the world, are very slowly, very gradually moving towards radical Islam. What worries me most is not so much that people are radical Islamists but that they are non-committal they are standing on the borderline between the two options and waiting to see who wins and it reminds me very much of what happened in Germany in the 1930s most of the Germans were not Nazis but they were sitting on the sidelines and waiting to see 'who is winning' and when the Nazis won they joined the Nazis, that is what worries me.

The fear that the conflict would persevere and that more and more generations would be affected was mentioned by many educators. For example, respondent 827F believed that,

My country—Israel—is in danger of an endless war, and is more and more racist and inhuman. Racism and xenophobia is very strong. I am not afraid [for myself], but I am worried for my children and grandchild. I wouldn't want them to live in this atmosphere of hatred.

Respondent 819M communicated his concern that anti-Semitism was on the rise again and his perception that he is only alive because of Israel. He remarked that,

I'm Jewish and my family was murdered in the 1940s and none of them survived. The Zionists amongst them had arrived in Palestine before so they survived. So to me the State of Israel is a life saver. But I think that anti-Semitism is again returning to the fore, in a different way, a different way than before. But to blame

Israel for everything bad that happens in the world is to my mind uncritical and unsubstantiated so I am very worried about that. I don't see another Holocaust happening but I can see a more difficult life for Jewish people because the Holocaust is forgotten.

Some educators communicated a threat to the Israeli/Jewish collective while others manifested a more existential dilemma. Respondent 83M reported that,

I have these constant worries for my family, for my loved ones, my parents for everyone—for my wife (we are very family oriented) but also from a collective point of view. I have views, that something terrible might happen which...I don't know exactly what but fear that everything will collapse. I don't know...big war or bloodshed, it's always there, and it's not rational but somehow: fear. To be attacked or persecuted as Jewish [or] as someone that lives in Israel it's always somewhat somewhere there. There is a fear of 'something' connected to the collective I belong to, I was born to, the Jewish nation, that everything will collapse and something bad will happen. I look at Egypt, everything is collapsing there and people around Israel are afraid of this neighbourhood, when you see everything collapse it is a fear that it is always there, what if everything collapses and we don't know where we will be? And what if there is an atom or nuclear weapons now? I don't know... these are big disturbing questions, it bothers me.

Several research participants felt that a personal solution to the national conflict might be emigration. Respondent 97M remarked that,

There is a lot of uncertainty about the future, on the one had the peace process is stuck, on the other hand there is, what I would describe as [an] attack on citizenship rights and democracy in Israel from the 'right' parties. For example there is a proposal out for highly discriminatory laws that are being considered within the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, at the moment that are limiting my rights as [an Arab] citizen. This is one of the things I think will just get worse and worse. We talk with my wife about this. We would consider moving to Canada as one of the good countries to live in.

Likewise, respondent 82F contemplated sending her children outside of Israel. This is her narrative:

I'm not an optimistic person and there are too many fundamentalists on both sides, Jews and Arabs, totally fundamentalist, you know...when there is God around its really hard to compromise with God. I'm really worried, we trusted Obama in many ways we were hoping that he was going to do something to end the occupation, the fact that Israel still occupies [the West Bank] is something which is really hard for me to take and there are many days when I want my kids to emigrate to Canada, to the States to Australia, I don't know where this is really hard cause family is really important to me but when I look ahead I'm a pretty pessimistic person.

Some of the educators interviewed held double citizenship and mentioned that if necessary leaving the country would be considered. For example respondent 816M observed that,

Israel's history has always been a doomsday history, that's all I can say, look luckily my family can—and I hope this never happens—but we could easily transfer abroad. We have citizenship, we have the language, and we have the skills. I hope that does not come.

In these responses educators communicate the sense that they do not perceive the future to be a safe place for Israelis and that the country may become intolerable to live in for minority citizens and those who see the right-wing government as opposed to a peace process.

### *Theme Two: The Outcome of Partition*

The next topic to emerge regards the geopolitical outcome of the partition plan between Israel and Palestine, if it is a positive, negative or desirable outcome. In this



section educators argued for both the existing peace plan, a new pan-regional entity similar to the European Union and the demise of Israel in its current political incarnation. For those who imagined a change in the current geographical parameters of Israel several saw the two-state solution as the preferred outcome. For example respondent 810M remarked that,

I feel that now we are in a stage that we don't have any more political power, and when I say 'we' I mean Israelis and Palestinians, the political power to make peace. I think the compromise to make two states is unavoidable. We have reached a point where the car is running to a crest and nobody can stop it, we will reach the point where we will have to withdraw without all the benefits we hoped to achieve and I guess the scenario is something like the end of the first Israeli republic and the establishment of a second Israeli republic [based] on new ideas.

The two-state solution was mentioned by several research participants including respondent 913M who observed,

I think that the Palestinians and we will have to divide the territory here and to create two states hoping that we will get along better as neighbours than we are getting along now 'not' separated. I think peace with our neighbours will allow us to get a better pattern of relationships between the Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs and I think that the way we imagine peace now in Israel is kind of living a normal life, us and our neighbours going to the Arab countries to vacation and Arabs coming to Israel to go shopping here so it's not just a political situation, we want a normal life to be like any normal country in the world.

When asked to imagine the future respondent 912M imagined a regional solution that in the immediate required recognized borders. The following is his story:

I'd like the peace process to start moving forward, there was a time of optimism when Rabin was prime minister, I don't know if we'll get back to that, people have become more negative, more cynical because that failed but you know,

nothing would make me happier than to have real peace in the area. I don't think we have to fall in love with one another, or become close allies with the Palestinians or the Syrians I just, for me, we had a cold peace all these years with Egypt, it was far better than the alternative, obviously I would hope in time, maybe not my lifetime, but in some time that the relations could be closer. But for now if most of the major issues were settled. If Israel had borders that were recognized by both itself and its enemies and the world that would be a pretty good start.

One educator mentioned that two national entities were unnecessary in the region. He conceived of a future political incarnation that could encompass both nations. Respondent 91M remarked,

There are enough people thinking about it that know or think like I do that a two-state solution is not a solution at all so within the Palestinian and the Jewish side you even have people that don't want to see two states because then you get two evil entities instead of one. Who needs a Palestinian state right? You have to ask yourself what I gain by having a Palestinian state. They're going to be as bad a state as any other state right? You should have one state for its citizens a civil state. Palestinians they rightly say 'You can say whatever you want but you can speak that way because you have a Jewish state.' So that is why you have to give up on states. But still there are Palestinians that realize and speak in a language of not seeing a two-state solution as a solution at all and they are ready to consider what would happen if we could put together a big state, a civic state for all. It would take the leaders of Israel moving away from a Zionist position and for the leaders in Palestine moving away from the idea of a Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel.

In these responses, there is little consensus that the so-called two-state solution—the solution that has supported the notion and reality of partitioning the land between Jews and Palestinians since 1947 and after—is a positive possible outcome, both whether it means retreating from Israeli land gains in the past decades or whether the reality of Israeli annexation policies make a Palestinian state, free of Israelis, possible.

*Theme Three: The Hope for Peace*

When asked to imagine the future many educators replied ‘peace’. When probed further the minimum quality of peace required an end to killing and the violent conflict with a limited vision of the other parameters of peace. There was a strong desire to stop the violence. Some educators remarked that they were less interested in the political dimensions and more interested in how to bridge the experiences of the past in a new Israel/Palestine. Respondent 92F envisioned,

I want peace, to see the end of occupation, to see the end of the occupation period. I don't care what it's going to be, Palestinian state, Israeli state I don't care. It's not my business. I'm not there to tell them how to run their life. I don't want to run their life anymore. I want Jewish Israelis to acknowledge the consequences of 1948 and enable the Palestinian citizens of Israel, to commemorate their tragedy in ways that will enhance peace.

Some research participants welcomed the demise of Israel in its current political incarnation. Respondent 81M related,

Look I don't fear the end of Zionism. That would not be a fear. My fear is that it's not coming soon enough. That's my fear but it's a funny fear within the context in which I live. The fear is my politicians will keep doing what they do best which is killing their citizens. They specialize in that; they have been doing it for 60 years now with great success.

Similarly, respondent 910M wished for a future that would usher in a new Israel. He hoped,

That we will get out of this nightmare of occupation, and settlements and all the religious identities with it, the periphery—the west bank, the occupied territories

have become an anchor of the development of Jewish identity instead of Hebrew identity, which is particularistic, which is antagonistic to the surroundings and so forth. We will be free from it in the second republic.

When asked what 'peace' would look like one educator wished for an end to ethnic discrimination. Of the future, respondent 98F wished,

I hope things will look much better, first of all the political situation... I hope it looks much better and that Arabs will be in more important positions in the country and not be treated like second class citizens. That we will have money and that people will be human beings. I'm so happy that [we] can see Arabs go further, it is difficult for us to be successful and to achieve and to improve [our] situation and not present the stereotype that Arabs are just going to destroy the country.

When asked what 'peace' would look like in the future respondent 915M simply stated,

No war.

For many respondents the end of Israeli occupation of lands earmarked for Palestine was considered a minimum option toward the potential for peace; for others the end of discrimination or violence. In general, the respondents interviewed did not share a vision of the future that could articulate a reality beyond the parameter of negative peace—an end to outright violent conflict with uneasy regional relationships between Israel and her neighbours.

## Discussion

Many of the educators interviewed perceived a threat to either their personal survival or the existence of the State of Israel. Despite the interpretation that the Israeli/Palestinian conflict can be considered somewhat asymmetrical—uneven strengths and resources between the parties in conflict with Israel as the stronger party—many Israelis interviewed still viewed themselves at risk or threatened. This fear is rooted in one of the main characteristics of protracted ethnic conflict that the goal of the one party is the destruction or annihilation of the other and that each party is intimately convinced a future act of aggression against them is imminent.

Similar to the way that protracted ethnic conflict erases the ‘symbolic’ boundary between combatant and civilian—each individual superficially ‘representing’ his or her ethnicity regardless of his or her social/cultural contribution to conflict—in this study many educators interviewed, worried that failures in the political sphere in Israel would result in an end to the entire Israeli civilization. There was a perception that the timeless wandering of the Jewish people, without a homeland and destined to once more be discriminated against and targeted for aggression was entirely likely. That said, in opposition to this position, several educators voiced their opinions regarding the strength and aptitude of the Israeli military to combat any antagonism; they felt secure that nothing could be brought against Israel that the country could not militarily handle. Several educators spoke with open confidence of the ability for Israel to defend her borders if necessary regardless of the magnitude of attack. This is contrasted to the sense

in many other respondents that Israel's comeuppance is eminent in particular if the right-wing government continues to dominate the Israel cultural/political agenda.

Some respondents articulated their professional futures to the role of anti-Semitism in academia and lamented the view that Israeli educators would not be perceived as neutral or professional until the Israeli government stopped its current policies. Others viewed anti-Semitism as a regional concern with Arab Muslims connecting anti-Israel rhetoric to the Jewish qualities of the majority of her citizens. The role of intolerance in the Muslim world was mentioned as well as the comparison between the moderate silent majority during the Second World War and the perception of a moderate silent majority in the Muslim world. Both instances are presented to give weight to the perception that the Holocaust occurred because there was limited resistance to the goals of Jewish extermination by the common German people and that just such another eradication of the Jewish people is envisioned by extremist and irredentist Muslims in other countries.

For the majority of respondents the reason given that Muslims would want to eradicate Israel was anti-Semitism not because outside Muslims feel a deep connection to the territory and because of its significant religious qualities. The instability in the Arab world communicated to some as the 'Arab Spring,' which suggests a non-violence regime change in countries that had single party rule for decades, does not alter the perception from some educators that the 'Arab Spring' signals a collapse in the region that will increase instability and eventually impact Israel. While some interviewees

tentatively celebrated the regime change most hesitantly supported the change and only if its result resulted in more democracy in the Middle East not less.

Some respondents linked their perception that the world was a ‘dangerous’ place to radical Islam and the sense that a larger Muslim population would inevitably result in the elimination of Israel. Indeed the racism of radical Islam and the racism of the Israeli government were both posited as realities that put Israelis at risk and the fear that Israelis would be killed by her enemies related in addition to the reality that Israelis are being killed quite regularly by Israeli government policies.

The idea that the choices of the right-wing government is putting individual Israelis and the state of Israel at risk communicates that for many educators interviewed there is a perception that future repercussions or events may be coming wherein that risk threatens the very existence of a Jewish state in the Middle East. The notion that the Jews of Israel are a besieged community and that some educators see their personal survival articulated to the role of the government suggests a sense of vulnerability and fear. While some educators did not fear an end to Israel as such they did mention that they would welcome a ‘new regime’, a ‘second republic’ and an end to the ‘Zionist experiment’ in the Middle East. This is interesting because it suggests a vital interest and anxiety connected to the existence of Israel and both support for and distress about a perceived end to the current state. From a collective perspective some educators perceived their Israeli-ness as Jewish-ness and articulated their sense of foreboding and dread to their ethnicity and the travails of their ancestors.

Regarding ethnic identity, two important perceptions were presented: (1) that anti-Semitism remains a powerful force opposing the progress of the Jewish/Israeli people and, (2) that some educators share the belief that the terror of the Holocaust made necessary the creation of and continued existence of the Jewish state of Israel. The sense that Israel was created to safeguard and protect the Jewish people is here associated with a degree of alarm that the actions of the right-wing government and social conservatives are placing Israel into a position that makes her citizens no longer want to live there. Several educators mentioned their 'exit strategies' of emigration, travelling abroad and sending their children out of the country. The irony here rests upon the notion that while for those who do not live there the state of Israel is considered a safe place for Jews while significant numbers of those interviewed viewed the state in opposite terms—unsafe, insecure and dangerous. The notion that one could 'escape' the conflict or that their younger generations could evade future violence by leaving was shared by many respondents. In addition to the several individuals who revealed personal or familial dual citizenship elsewhere many others voiced concern and worry that their children and grandchildren would experience insecurity because of their perception that the conflict would continue for generations to come.

Many respondents voiced a pessimistic attitude when asked to imagine the future and when probed about their hopes and wishes responded 'I'm not optimistic.' The general message was one of pessimism and apprehension for the future. While some educators mentioned the 'peace days' of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, when the historic handshake with Yasir Arafat occurred (1993) most considered this creative 'spring' to be



running dry. Several respondents communicated that they had immigrated to Israel (made *Aliyah*) after the 1993 peace accords with a sense of optimism that their children, born in Israel, would not need to do military service or experience active combat because they perceived a future where the national conflict with the Palestinians would be resolved. They mentioned that their choice to move to Israel was motivated by assurance and hopefulness for the future and that the positivity they no longer felt had been replaced by dread, regret and a sense of powerlessness. While a few interviewees felt that the situation in Israel would get far worse before things improved no respondents articulated a positive vision of the future to the current political regime. Some voiced a hope that Israel would be swayed by the international community but in general there was a sense that Israel had lost her way, was no longer practicing the politics of preservation and integrity and that in some way the tide of right-wing conservatism could not be stopped. No research participants interviewed envisioned a future of ‘positive peace’—a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship in which the humanity of each party was celebrated and ensured.

The goals of future visioning are to imagine the optimal outcome of a situation and to manifest it in the future. The educators interviewed tended towards Galtung’s (1990) notion of ‘negative peace’ when asked to imagine the future—the absence of direct violence. Many responded that they wanted a resolution but most did not/could not/chose not to articulate what that meant. While several hoped and wished for ‘peace’ few actually envisioned and verbalized a future where the conflict was transformed into a

harmonious and safe reality that celebrated and preserved the humanity of all parties to the conflict.

Some educators conveyed political solutions when asked to imagine the future as if the future was ‘work’ linked to the choices and behavior of the government alone. The political futures envisioned included two-state, one-state, pan-Middle Eastern collective and the complete end to the ‘Zionist experiment’ but overall those who spoke about the future in terms of a political outcome did not encompass other levels of society in any meaningful partnership with change. For some respondents the visions of what is to come are only perceived of as a byproduct of the machinations of the political elite.

Acknowledgment and recognition of the narratives of conflict were addressed as functions of educative values—critical thinking, meaningful analysis—but with few exceptions did not enter into discussions about the future. For one educator that did express a holistic vision of what the future meant her visions included honoring the conflict narrative of Palestinians in Israel. While several interviewees expressed an affinity for the idea of collective memory only a couple of individuals articulated the concept to the experiences of the Palestinians, the remaining respondents were speaking about the collective memory of the Jews. This is important because a chief characteristic of conflict narratives is their total denial of the lived experiences of others if they challenge or weaken the strength of the in-group’s story. The fact that at least some of those interviewed included the narrative of the Palestinians, whether inside or outside of

Israel shows an ability to address the relevance of both stories and recognize the importance of those stories to the parties in conflict today.

It is not possible to answer the question if educators think that the Israeli people are interested in commemorating the experiences of the Palestinians since 1948 but the fact that this response encompassed a vision of the future that included validating the perception of the ‘other’ represents the ‘art’ of the moral imagination in that it envisions a transformation of the way parties ‘see’ the conflict. This educator articulated not only a vision of peace but a transformative method in which to manifest peace.

When asked what they wished for in the future some interviewees mentioned the end of Israel’s occupation of the West Bank. In addition, the existence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank was articulated to religious extremism and the notion that the settler movement was antagonistic and viewed its purpose and authority in religious terms. There was recognition that the occupation had created a different kind of Israeli, one that did not live in Israel proper but lived in a tangible yet existential reality—in a contested political and cultural space—and importantly, that this settler Israeli was increasing the risk to those who live in Israel proper. The sense that the settlements are not only a threat to Palestinians and a future Palestinian state but are placing Israelis and Israel in peril was shared by several educators interviewed. The idea that peace was not possible as long as the occupation continued was viewed from a variety of perspectives. Although no educators connected the end of the occupation to a future Palestinian state most feared the prospect of their children having to serve in this ‘periphery’ and some

imagined that the duties of ‘running’ the occupied territory of the West Bank was burdensome for Israel and a tragic enmeshment of the two communities. That the occupation was viewed as a ‘nightmare’ by one respondent supports the importance to some of the goal of getting out of the West Bank and the prominence of ceasing settlement operations in support of a peaceful future.

In addition to the notion of ending the Israeli occupation and ending the settlement movement a few of those interviewed imagined a completely new Israel, one that was predicted as a civic state, one that dispensed with the Zionist narrative—a new or second republic. The idea that the current political regime is simply one expression along the continuum of the Israeli national manifestation and that a future incarnation will espouse different values and alternative pursuits to continued militarization and cultural and territorial annexation in the West Bank illustrate the presence of an imaginative potential. This shows something quite significant, it shows that group identity is weakening in Israel and that a questioning is taking place regarding her stories of origin. In order to imagine the end of the existing Israeli state the moral imagination needs to be present—a fresh way of seeing new opportunities, as well as innovative potentials.

## Conclusions

Many of the respondents interviewed articulated a ‘fear of extinction’ when imagining the future. Those who voiced concerns about Israel’s outlook saw continued conflict and worried about the impact of violence on their children and grandchildren. Some thought anti-Semitism would return in force and worried that the ‘Arab Spring’

could result in less regional security. Imagining the need to ‘flee’ future violence was mentioned by several respondents and some mentioned emigration as an option at least for their children and grandchildren. A couple of respondents imagined a new national regime that would alter Israel from a Jewish state into a civic state. For some of those interviewed they envisioned a continuation of the conflict with Israel the victor while a few envisioned undefeatable aggression against Israeli Jews and an end to the ‘Israeli experiment’ in the Middle East.

While there was limited optimism that a peaceful future could be manifested any time soon there were several responses that shared a creative vision—for Israel, for Jewish and Palestinian Israelis and even for the region—harnessing the moral imagination when envisioning the future. While the greater conflict with the Palestinians was present in the responses many educators saw a harmonious relationship between Israelis (both Jews and Palestinians) as more imperative. Perhaps in order to imagine a future relationship with Palestinians, those within Israel and without, Israelis will need to imagine a new Israel.

## Chapter Eight: Conclusions

### Introduction

In this exploratory qualitative case study, 28 Israeli teachers from five universities were asked to talk about their experiences and opinions as educators in a country experiencing protracted ethnic conflict. They were invited to share their perceptions and perspectives when asked if they chose to challenge the conflict narratives of Israelis and Palestinians in the classroom. Finally, research participants were asked to picture the future and to communicate their fears, worries, hopes and wishes.

A variety of research themes have emerged from the data collected. Some included observations and opinions regarding society, the structure and dynamics of the multicultural classroom, the purpose of educating in Israel and thoughts regarding the 'national' future. This chapter identifies ten key findings in this study that harness the unique perspective of society held by educators. The first concerns the atmosphere in Israel as a functioning civic democracy responsible for upholding human rights and academic freedom and the ability of educators to thrive professionally and personally under the increasingly extreme social/political climate. The second key finding relates to how the Israeli academic monitoring groups are perceived by educators to be using the ideology of Zionism to position their critiques of educator choices and to further their political and social agendas. The third key finding speaks to the challenge many educators are encountering teaching mixed group classes where religious identity impacts the classroom atmosphere and additionally, how it is affecting the ability for educators to

approach complex and sensitive social issues. The fourth key finding relates to the pedagogical and psychological foundations of challenging narratives of conflict in the classroom as ‘positive’ while the fifth key finding does so in the ‘negative.’ The sixth key finding concerns the sense that many educators share that they are feeling that a threatening atmosphere surrounds them either professionally or personally. The seventh key finding speaks directly to the ‘fear of extinction’ quality of protracted ethnic conflict and explores the perception that some educators share that there could be an impending end to Israel. The eighth key finding speaks to the fear some educators shared about the future in Israel and their perception that Israel’s social/political trajectory will put their families at risk and the fear associated with that perspective. The ninth key finding speaks to the strength of the Zionist ideology in Israel and the sense that some academics feel their choices as educators are perceived by some as a form of treason. These key finding addresses the ‘conflict’ teachers are feeling in their jobs as educators as they attempt to satisfy the standards of their profession while managing the expectations of radical Zionism in the classroom and the community. The tenth and final key finding speaks to the potential amongst the research participants to imagine a desirable future in Israel and the ability for educators to imagine ‘positive peace’.

*Key Findings #1 “The Situation is Getting More Extreme”*

Many educators interviewed in this study felt that the atmosphere in Israel was hostile to individuals who teach from a critical standpoint and that there are tangible repercussions for persons who do so. The right-wing government, social challenges to academic freedom and blacklists were perceived by many educators to be obstacles when

challenging conflict narratives in the classroom with consequences that could include personal and professional harassment. The strategy most educators shared for countering such perceived threats was self-censorship—removing content that can be perceived of as ‘anti-Zionist propaganda’ or refusing to teach the Palestinian narrative. Despite evidence that educators can and do challenge conflict narratives the general perception among those interviewed is that to do so puts them at risk.

Many of the Israeli educators interviewed are experiencing anxiety or fear because of the expectations of their social role and their personal principles and choices in the classroom. Some believe in academic freedom and the strength of university institutions to protect their choices as educators but for most of those interviewed the feeling of freedom to teach as they see fit is curtailed by an atmosphere of harassment and possible personal and professional repercussions. Some educators felt that their classes were one of the only avenues to counter right-wing sentiments and perspectives of political Israel. Others did not see the validity or necessity in attempting to increase tolerance regarding the national narratives but did not see their positions as necessarily in line with the monitoring agencies or the right-wing government either.

The personal choices of some educators were impacted by the surrounding socio-political atmosphere in Israel while some educators remained unaffected. Of those educators interviewed that saw themselves as instruments to achieve academic goals—to develop the ability for one’s mind to accept new information; to change perceptions; and, to stimulate analytical, critical thinking—many also viewed the extremes in Israeli



society as problematic. In addition, the sense that things were becoming worse instead of better was shared by many academics interviewed and further, that attacks on academics were symptomatic of attacks on Israeli democracy and the rights of the human individual.

Educators communicated, that Israel has ‘an extreme right-wing government that is becoming stronger and stronger. Israeli society was becoming ‘very radicalized’ and more ‘extreme every year’ and that the media in Israel ‘are the same ideology as the government’ encouraging ‘a feeling of fear of enemies everywhere.’ Many educators perceive a politicization of education and notice that higher learning is becoming articulated to support the Zionist Ideology. The purpose of education is here in dispute—should schools only tell the Zionist ‘story’ (Cladis, 1998) or are schools places where learning can include other truths (Bar Tal & Salomon, 2006). For those whose works include a deconstruction of the Zionist narrative they perceive that Israeli society is becoming more opposed to their academic and educative pursuits.

### *Key Findings #2 “Im Tirtzu Ein Zo Agada”*

The existence of academic monitoring sites in Israel has had a significant effect on the behavior of some Israeli academics. While a few educators surveyed indicated that the blacklists were of little concern to them and were irrelevant to their teaching choices some educators indicated that the lists were worrisome, threatening and one educator mentioned his emotional responses to being placed on one of the lists. The personal identity and inclinations of educators is resulting in unwanted attention that is placing them in a ‘delicate position,’ and one in which their authority and legitimacy is being

challenged (Tamir, 2005). For the majority of educators that communicated concern with the monitoring agencies there was a sense that the scrutinizing of their syllabi and the chance for their comments in class to be publicized and criticized was troublesome and annoying and had altered their ability to continue their previous professional practices in the classroom. Teachers now had to be ‘careful,’ do things to be ‘popular’ and not appear too ‘leftist or dovish’ lest they risk being accused of ‘betraying Israel.’

The name of one of these groups “*Im Tirtzu*” associates the monitoring agency with one of the founders of Zionism, Theodor Herzl who famously wrote (in Hebrew) ‘*im tirtzu, ein zo agada; ve'im lo tirtzu, agada hi ve'agada tisha'er*’ translated in English as, ‘If you will it, it is no dream; and if you do not will it, a dream it is and a dream it will stay.’ This group’s Facebook page describes their mandate as follows:

Im Tirtzu is an extra-parliamentary movement that engages in on and off campus Zionist advocacy, in an effort to strengthen the values of Zionism in Israel, with the aim of securing the future of the Jewish people and the State of Israel and advancing Israeli society in its struggle to overcome the challenges it is currently facing.

Regrettably, in recent years, anti-Zionist trends have been proliferating in Israeli universities, which have gradually displaced, marginalized and excluded the Zionist discourse, preventing the Zionist majority from making its voice heard. For the past two years, Im Tirtzu has been the only entity that has provided a response to the spread of post-Zionist and anti-Zionist currents among the faculty and student body in Israeli universities.

Im Tirtzu believes in the capacity of every person to influence his environment. We believe that a return to Zionism and an ethical Zionist renewal is the solution to the problems and crises Israeli society is currently facing. Once we regain our belief in the validity and justice of the Zionist cause and in our ability to make a difference in steering our reality we shall be able to deal successfully with the challenges that confront us (N.A., 2011a).

The *Im Tirtzu* website contains an eBook entitled “*Nakba Nonsense: A Book That Fights For the Truth*” that contains 73 pages supporting the Zionist narrative while seeking to deconstruct and delegitimize the Palestinian conflict narrative.

The second monitoring agency mentioned *Zo Artzeinu* translated from Hebrew to English as ‘this is our land’ a nonviolent protest movement created to stop Israeli land concessions to Arabs. The group was started in the early 1990s in opposition to the Oslo Accords signed by assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The group has been responsible for civil disobedience and setting up outposts in the occupied West Bank—territory considered Judea and Samaria by *Zo Artzeinu* members. The group heads the ‘Jewish Leadership’ group of the Likud party, the current right-wing political party in power in Israel (N.A. 2011b).

While neither of these two organizations was linked to direct violence the traumatic experience of one educator finding his face on the *Im Tirtzu* home page was connected by that individual to the overt aggression experienced by another university educator whose ideological position had resulted in a personal attack. In September 2008, Yaakov Teitel, an Israeli West Bank settler, placed a pipe bomb outside of Professor Ze’ev Sternhell’s home and wounded the professor. Mr. Teitel said that he had moved to Israel to carry out attacks because of his belief that “he was an ‘emissary of the Lord’ [and] instructed to carry out the attacks by God” (BBC, p.1, 2009).

*Im Tirtzu*, *Zo Artzeino* and the attack on Professor Sternhell are examples of rightwing incarnations from the contemporary political landscape in Israel. Many

educators communicated that they ‘do not know who their students are’ that ‘there is a change in the student body’ and that ‘lately students have become very sensitive.’ The general consensus from many was that they were concerned with becoming targeted by right-wing monitoring agencies and that they were suspicious and concerned about the unknown ideological positions held by their students.

*Key Findings #3 “You Have This Group of Very Religious People”*

The majority of those interviews disclosed that they teach ‘mixed’ classes that included individuals from both majority and minority Israeli groups. Further, many educators communicated that they were responsible for teaching students from the Jewish, Christian and the Muslim faith and include persons who identify themselves as belonging to secular/ethnic, traditional and ultra-orthodox social groups. In addition to facets of identity such as ethnicity and religion some educators experienced challenges dealing with issues of gender and citizenship status when navigating complex content in the classroom and their roles as teachers.

A significant concern from those whose subject matter touches upon items of immigration concerned the fact that individuals from orthodox settler groups (differentiated here from ultra-orthodox groups who do not necessarily support the existence of Israel) were expressing their concern with language that they consider anti-Zionist in the classroom including using the non-Hebrew term ‘immigration’ instead of using the Hebrew word ‘*Aliyah*’, a word that speaks to religious observance and obligation not citizenship and nationality. Several educators mentioned the concern they

felt when attempting to navigate terms considered sensitive by this social group and included language that addressed contested historical material from Israel's past (terms such as *Al-Nakba*), the current occupation of the West Bank (Judea, Samaria), describing new-comers to Israel in Judaic terms only (*Olim, Aliyah*) as well as any content considered critical of Israel, Zionism and/or supportive of the Palestinian position.

Educators described 'right-winger orthodox Jews,' the 'religious,' right-wingers,' 'real Zionists,' 'fundamentalists,' 'people going to the extreme way,' and those who support actions that some educators considered 'racist and inhuman.' Respondents perceived that liberal minded Israelis were also a challenge, secular students, 'liberal radicals,' had their own narrative that they wanted to see reflected in the course content and lectures.

Religious observance can be transmitted socially (Oberschall, 2007) and can act to increase collective legitimacy for many Jews in Israel (Tamir, 2005). For educators, religiosity is considered a part of the tapestry of Israeli life and they agree that the lines of social sensitivity become dependent upon those who attend class. However, for some educators the levels of observance were precluding any meaningful discussion of social concerns such as AIDS, domestic violence and the treatment of homosexuality. Additionally, one educator communicated that some female Arab students were unable to meet with him for office hours without a male chaperone regardless of precautions taken such as leaving his office door open for interviews and never engaging in any physical contact with students.

The observation from respondent 611M that there should be ‘more God in the sky less God on earth’ speaks to the position held by many educators that the religiosity of some students made addressing sensitive content in the classroom more difficult, that it was affecting the ability for some educators to address sensitive social issues and that, as respondent 82F said, it is ‘really hard to compromise with God.’

*Key Findings #4 “It Is Essential to Challenge Competing Narratives”*

Educators used a variety of methods regarding contested materials in the classroom, some spoke freely, many used a comparative approach using examples external to Israel and others refused to discuss sensitive issues in the classroom. Many educators interviewed perceived the benefits of challenging conflict narratives as similar to the benefits of higher education—critical thinking, challenging assumptions, investigating realities and supporting independent thinking. While the majority of those interviewed feel that challenging conflict narratives is both valuable and important many confessed to feeling uncomfortable addressing perceptions of the past, some disputed whether or not challenging narratives of conflict was beneficial in the present political/socioeconomic climate and one professed that educators received no training in bridging narratives of conflict and that they were unlikely to under the current government.

Conflict narratives are more than stories that ethnic groups tell themselves about their origins and identities (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006b) they are methods used to delegitimize the collective memories of other groups (Olick, 1999). When the Ministry of Education rejects the PRIME shared textbook or pressures educators to teach only an

acceptable historical narrative, when the government espouses only pro-Zionist political positions and when monitoring organizations harass educators who challenge narratives they are doing more than supporting the Zionist narrative they are delegitimizing the dozens of other experiences and perceptions of the past held by both Israelis and Palestinians. They are also delegitimizing the work of educators whose historical and social research tells a different story. In addition, because the nature of collective memory is to pass on knowledge to the next generation educators who do challenge conflict narratives are considered a threat to the formation of Israeli/Jewish national identity (Volkan, 2006).

Educators communicated the importance of ‘giving legitimacy to both sides’ of the national conflict, in order to ‘acknowledge that there are different political narratives’ and to provide ways for students to ‘examine their own assumptions.’ While some felt that addressing conflict narratives was problematic and felt the need to be ‘careful’ most still perceived that addressing sensitive issues such as the national narratives contributed to a renegotiation of ‘students’ thoughts, ideas [and] perceptions.’ This speaks to one of the positive outcomes of education—that it can challenge and transform how people see conflict increasing sensitivity and understanding (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

Because education is so closely tied to the project of nationalism some educators are experiencing role discord, on the one hand they are expected to present certain material in support of the established authority of the Israeli government and on the other hand they are supposed to maintain academic discipline with rigorous scholarship and

relevant instruction. Further, educators that teach a multicultural audience have to negotiate the expectations, assumptions and politics of their students while delivering course appropriate content. Many educators who challenge conflict narratives in the classroom are attempting to minimize the cultural oppression experienced by students whose social worlds are erased in education. For educators who choose not to challenge conflict narratives for personal or professional reasons, they may be unwittingly encouraging stereotyping, intolerance, hatred and fear.

*Key Findings #5 “I Don’t Believe Students In the Class Will Change”*

Bar-Tal (2004) argues that coexistence education can only minimally contribute to the reduction of conflict. Feelings that there was ‘no benefit’ or only limited gain from programs that seek to minimize the social/cultural/spatial boundaries between the two national groups were shared by the educators that did not feel challenging narratives of conflict was valuable/possible/desirable in the classroom. The fact that members of differing ethnic groups were sharing one educative space does not erase the momentous diversity present in the classroom. Some educators remarked that no gains could be made in increasing sensitivity between the national groups because by the time students reached university ‘it is too late’ to change their minds, that you are ‘wasting your efforts’ if you try to teach about the conflict and that Israeli students ‘understand the Palestinian story—they just don’t accept it.’

It may be useful here to consider the age/experience of Israeli and Palestinian students. Many educators remarked that Israeli Jewish students often came to the



universities after both national military service and significant experience travelling. There were several comments regarding the intellect and maturity of Israeli/Jewish students who 'knew very much' but 'read very little.' In addition, it was mentioned that Palestinian students come to class from a very different social/cultural setting. Many Palestinian students come to university from their home village and experience considerable culture shock in Israeli society. In addition, Palestinian students are speaking and studying in Hebrew, a second language that many speak, but are also responsible for reading substantial amounts of information in English. The difference in cultural backgrounds, personal experiences and abilities between members of the two ethnic groups is noteworthy and the opportunity to bridge perceived entrenched perspectives of the past, identity and the current conflict may be insurmountable to some educators to undertake.

Furthermore, there is limited evidence that attempts to openly discuss the national narratives of conflict have any benefit for the greater society because in order to challenge narratives of conflict the experience of conflict is presented from ethnic-perspectives that do not necessarily encompass the multiple identities of both Jewish and Palestinian individuals. The reductive process of presenting national narratives can solidify cultural positions and alienate individuals who do not 'see' themselves in either story.

Alienating violence is characterized by curriculum that denies an individual "the feeling of social and cultural belonging" (Salmi, 2006, p. 4). Teachers who do not address

conflict narratives do not further a feeling of inclusivity and teachers who do examine conflict narratives risk alienating their audiences because they are personally seen as members of their ethnic group. Many educators spoke about being perceived as a role model. For educators who identified themselves as members of a cultural minority their ethnicity was considered a highly salient component of their identity that had a significant impact on their role as educators. In this sense, neither the content shared by educators nor the educators identities themselves present 'neutral' ground. It cannot be concluded that not challenging conflict narratives is evidence of ethnocentrism because research shows that challenging conflict narratives can actually strengthen ethnic identity (Byrne, 1997) for both students and teachers (such as in integrated schools in Northern Ireland and the Hebrew-Arabic Bilingual schools in Israel).

*Key Findings #6 "In Certain Situations I have Felt Threatened"*

Some educators perceived that their roles and choices as educators were either putting them at risk or may do so in the future should the right-wing gain more strength in Israel. While some educators did not feel threatened, either personally or professionally, many did and articulated that sense of threat to choices that they made in the classroom.

The existence of blacklists and the perception that to be placed on those lists put one at risk had a variety of responses. For some educators they made decisions to try to 'not' be placed on the blacklists: changing their syllabi, altering course content and speaking in pro-Zionist language. Some educators made no changes in support of the

concept of academic freedom and in the face of annoying intimidation tactics from student organizations.

Educators who perceived that they had lost or may lose professional opportunities because of their choices spoke about feeling ‘persecuted,’ ‘at risk,’ ‘attacked,’ ‘threatened,’ ‘pressured,’ ‘monitored,’ ‘questioned’ that they had to be ‘very careful,’ and ‘try not to do anything that sounds too much like political propaganda.’ For those who did perceive the situation as threatening the locus of concern was always identified as ‘right-wing’ Israel, either student organizations, the government or professors who support the settler Zionist movement.

*Key Findings #7 “I’m Afraid the World Will Deny the Necessity of A Jewish State”*

Some educators articulated problems with Arab nations and the international community to current incarnations of anti-Semitism. For those who perceived an anti-Jewish message in their experiences as professionals in the international community they considered the cause of negativity to be anti-Semitism. Some educators voiced a concern for the ‘end of Israel’ and linked anti-Semitism to the destruction of the state of Israel. Even those who did not connect their frustrations professionally in the international community directly to anti-Semitism still spoke about calls to ‘finish Israel off,’ that ‘if you are a Jew coming from Israel you do suffer some hostility,’ that anti-Semitism is ‘returning to the fore’ and that Israelis are not understood by the international community because their ‘image is dominated by the conflict’ with Palestinians.

Some educators thought the international position of Israel was in jeopardy because of the perceived instability in the Arab world, that weak or collapsing governments in the region (Egypt, Libya, Syria, Jordan) would result in a rise in Islamist governments—governments that do not support the existence of Israel and have, in the past, had violent confrontations with the state. There was a fear of even greater isolation in the region as Arab nations struggle to ‘turn into democracies overnight’ while some insiders called for a nullification of existing peace agreements with Israel. While one respondent feared the world would ‘forget the Holocaust...and deny the necessity of the Jewish State’ another educator felt ‘quite confident that we are stronger than our neighbours’ but felt the threat nevertheless.

There was also a fear that an individual could suffer aggression simply because he or she lived in Israel. The Israeli identity, similar to the Jewish identity was a target of hate that could inspire violence and that a vulnerability is attached to the Jewish/Israeli collective, that is ‘always there.’ Several educators perceived of themselves and their families in a perpetual struggle for survival and that Israel, as the Jewish homeland would suffer persecution, not for her actions, but because of her ethnic identity.

*Key Findings #8 “I’m Worried for My Children and Grandchild”*

Several educators voiced concerns that the immediate future in Israel would lead to less security and greater threats of physical violence. For those who shared the perception that the right-wing government, settler Zionism, the continued occupation of the West Bank and instability in regional Arab governments would lead to greater insecurity for

Israelis many feared that the conflict would continue to impact future generations of Israelis just as it had in the past. The perception that the conflict would not be transformed peacefully was evident in the number of respondents who spoke about the impact of the conflict upon their families.

The fear associated with living in Israel seemed greater for individuals who identified as parents and grandparents. Their concern was palpable in statements that envisioned that things would just get ‘worse and worse’ in Israel. Some educators with dual citizenship communicated that if the conflict escalated they would leave Israel and ‘transfer abroad.’ Those without citizenship elsewhere were encouraging their kids ‘to emigrate’ to other, safer countries. For those without the option of moving there was concern that a future without conflict was difficult to imagine, that it had become a wish that ‘will not happen very easily’ and there was concern that future generations were going to live in an ‘atmosphere of hatred.’

*Key Findings #9 “Anti-Zionist in Israel is Like A Traitor”*

The dominance of the Zionist narrative in Israel and the difficulty for some educators to navigate the strength of the right-wing—organizations that are critical of any perceived anti-Zionist sentiment—were perceived by many as a personal and professional threat. The ability for monitoring agencies to position educators as ‘leftist,’ ‘liberal’ and, therefore, ‘suspect’ was perceived of as threatening as was the risk for teachers who were identified by monitoring agencies might lose their jobs, pay or positions because as employees of the ministry of education, they are paid from the public purse. These

educators felt there is a sentiment in Israeli society that those who are being paid by the state should show unwavering support for the state. Ergo, if the Israeli government shows support for radical settler Zionism (a position that hopes to secure the West Bank in order to form a 'greater Israel' that includes the biblical territories of Judea and Samaria) so should educators who work for Israel.

Settler Zionism seeks to silence and intimidate those who hold alternative perspectives (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006) as the goal of a 'greater Israel' becomes a new nationalism that once more harvests legitimacy from the biblical past to support political goals in the present (Volkan, 2006). None of the educators interviewed espoused support for settler Zionism. However, there was a shared perception from some respondents that the government does support right-wingers and this assessment has resulted in many educators choosing to change their course content, shying away from teaching about sensitive issues and using language considered uncontroversial to orthodox settlers in the classroom. Many educators are choosing to self-censure themselves in order to minimize conflict with right-wing agencies.

*Key Findings #10 "I'm Not an Optimist"*

Protracted ethnic conflicts are characterized by a 'fear of extinction.' Ross (2007) identifies the theme of 'exile' as a crucial experience driving the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The notion that Jews have spent thousands of years in exile and survived all manner of violence in order to reach national independence can be contrasted to the Palestinian narrative that gives voice to the thousands of Palestinians exiled from their

homes since 1948 living in refugee camps and in the Palestinian Diaspora for decades. In order to imagine future peace nations—Palestinians and Jews—will have to let go of ‘that’ past and envision a more harmonious future. As the experience of conflict has become a part of Israeli and Palestinian identity, for many, losing the story of the past might mean losing the story of who they are.

When asked to imagine the future and share their fears and worries many educators imagined that Israel might not survive as a national entity. A continuum of ‘doom’ was shared by many educators. There was a perception that Israel was moving towards an unavoidable outcome, of ‘endless war’ that could result in massive violence and ‘bloodshed.’ Some visualized the prospect that individual Israelis would be harmed and they feared for their children and grandchildren. Others welcomed such a catastrophe confessing that the sooner ‘this’ Israel ended the better in order to pave the way for a new national or pan-regional political entity.

No educators interviewed envisioned the future of ‘positive peace’ within Israel and amongst her neighbours. While no respondents articulated a vision of the future as harmonious and inclusive many educators answered that inter-group relations between Israelis and Palestinians and amongst all Israelis were unlikely to improve in the face of the current political realities—specifically the prolongation of the occupation of the West Bank and the continued building of Jewish settlements there. Educators shared a sense that the government of Israel was continuing to pursue its agenda unfettered by a real political opposition and that any meaningful grassroots movements towards peace were

absent. Several respondents felt that Israel was on a trajectory that would further limit her ability to make peace. The relevance of the 'Arab Spring' to the region generated reserved optimism from a few interviewees but the majority of those surveyed felt that losing the stable 'negative peace' with Egypt would be detrimental to Israel in the short-term. Overall, responses concerning the future were conservative, pessimistic and fearful for what is to come and very few educators articulated their contributions professionally to significant social change.

### Research Limitations and Future Studies

Previous social research into the experiences and opinions of post-secondary educators is either unavailable or nonexistent. The goals of this study were to introduce a novel vantage point when examining the role of education in conflict and peace by utilizing the unique positionality of educators themselves in society. This study was limited to those educators who were comfortable writing and speaking in English, to those who had access either professionally or personally to enough broadband or wireless internet access to be interviewed online or by email and those available and interested in participating in my study. This research would have been far more comprehensive had translation been available for letters of introduction, letters of consent and the interviews/transcripts themselves. This would have invited additional individuals, broadened the range of participants to include more Palestinian Israelis and provided a greater amount of overall respondents from which to base my conclusions.



The majority of those interviewed in this study identified themselves as male. The majority of those men were of Ashkenazi descent (eastern European Jewry), and the overall majority of research participants were Jewish. Future research should survey Arabic language centres of learning and include more voices from Palestinians, and women. In addition, this study would have benefited from more background regarding content that emerged from the key findings including interviewing individuals from the Israeli Ministry of Education and at least one of the monitoring agencies for example: *Im tirtzu*.

The locus of inquiry in this study involves a Canadian doctoral candidate attempting to navigate social/cultural content experienced by Israelis and Palestinians, largely rooted in English scholarly articles and books and reliant on the semi-structured interviews of Israeli academics for primary data. The position of being an ‘outside’ investigator hoping to comprehend personal/collective/national content has been criticized by many scholars—for example, Pappé mentions the audacity of ‘post-Zionist’ historians in Israel who chose to study the Palestinian catastrophe as an example of inappropriate subject matter for ‘outsider’ Israelis to study (2006). My identity cannot be massaged into something it is not. It is entirely possible that my chosen topic of inquiry is grossly inappropriate. Although I cannot change my identity I have striven to verse myself in as much familiarity with the discourses under review as possible. Doubtless I have made errors in judgment as a subjective player in this pursuit. I hope that my status has at least contributed space for Israeli academics to voice their concerns and

perceptions and any limitations of analysis are mine alone and do not reflect on the research participants.

Having focused on the perceptions and experiences of educators in the classroom future scholarship could expand to include other ‘work’ of educating including research, social activism, community education and political transformation. Regardless, this research has attempted to offer an original inquiry into the role of educators in conflict and peace and has used PACS methodologies to both investigate the social dynamics under study and to examine opportunities for conflict transformation.

### Conclusions

Israel is a country that has been in conflict, at times violent conflict, for decades. The Jewish citizens of Israel hold a collective narrative of persecution and survival that goes back further into the actual remembered past and occupies a social/cultural space that is articulated in a variety of ways. The Zionist story of origin is a narrative that largely distorts, erases and ignores the experiences of Palestinians. There have been Israeli progressives, working independently or with Palestinian partners who have attempted to create and present platforms for bridging the competing conflict narratives. The rise of the political right in Israel is considered by many of the educators interviewed to be a detriment to bridging the narratives.

This exploratory study investigated whether it was possible, valuable, beneficial or desirable for 28 social science and humanities educators in five universities in Israel to challenge narratives of conflict in the classroom. In addition, this research sought to

examine the unique role educators hold culturally as agents of socialization and instruments of social transformation. The results of this study point to an escalation in extreme positions in Israel, an inhospitable atmosphere for critical academics and a general pessimism regarding the future. However, this study also identified that the majority of those interviewed used strategies to challenge narratives of conflict in the classroom and most felt it was essential and beneficial to do so. Many respondents felt worried and uncertain about the future, most struggled to harness the moral imagination and imagine a future that encompassed the qualities of 'positive peace' including mutual cooperation and equity among individuals and even fewer could imagine the means to manifest such a reality.

Protracted ethnic conflicts are defined as intractable and impossible to resolve, this standpoint limits the ability for individuals to feel that any change or improvement is possible. Because a primary block to achieving peace is the ability or not of conceiving peace persons experiencing conflict may be unable to manifest peace because they are incapable of imagining peace. Educators occupy a particular social location positioned between the holders of social authority and those that would challenge the status quo. The strength of the Israeli narrative not only defines identities and behaviours it may limit the ability for individuals to harness the moral imagination and conceive of a different world.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Letter of Invitation to Participants

1. Dear Dr./Professor (XXX),

My name is Katerina Standish. I am a PhD student at the Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at the University of Manitoba in Canada. I live in Victoria, BC, Canada and I would like to interview you for my thesis.

I am contacting you because of your work on (XXX) and because of your role as a teacher. I am hoping to learn about your experiences, perspectives and opinions in a short email interview. I have attached a letter of information about this doctoral research and a copy of the questions I would like to ask you. I had hoped to interview you in person but my husband and I have recently had our first baby and I (and my thesis advisor!) am hoping I will be able to complete this study by interview through Skype or my email.

If you are interested I would be very grateful if you could respond and let me know if and how you would prefer to be interviewed. If you choose to reply to the questions posted in this email it is easiest if you press **[reply]** and type directly into the email. It should take you between 15-30 minutes maximum. You will have agreed to be interviewed if you respond to the following short questions and will not need to sign the consent form. To respect your privacy all correspondence will remain confidential and for my eyes only. I hope you will consider sharing your experiences with me.

Sincerely,

Ms. Katerina Standish PhD Candidate  
Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace & Justice  
University of Manitoba, Canada  
[katerinas@shaw.ca](mailto:katerinas@shaw.ca)

2. Dear Dr./Professor (XXX),

I am contacting you because (XXX) gave me your contact information and felt you might be interested in joining my study. I am hoping to learn about your experiences, perspectives and opinions in a short email/Skype interview.

My name is Katerina Standish. I am a PhD student at the Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at the University of Manitoba in Canada. I live in Victoria, BC, Canada and I would like to interview you for my thesis. I have attached a letter of information about this doctoral research and a copy of the questions I would like to ask you. I had hoped to interview you in person but my husband and I have recently had our first baby and I (and my thesis advisor!) am hoping I will be able to complete this study by interview through Skype or my email.

If you are interested I would be very grateful if you could respond and let me know if and how you would prefer to be interviewed. If you choose to reply to the questions posted in this email it is easiest if you press **[reply]** and type directly into the email.

It should take you between 15-30 minutes maximum. You will have agreed to be

interviewed if you respond to the following short questions and will not need to sign the consent form. To respect your privacy all correspondence will remain confidential and for my eyes only. I hope you will consider sharing your experiences with me.

Sincerely,

Ms. Katerina Standish PhD Candidate

Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace & Justice

University of Manitoba, Canada

[katerinas@shaw.ca](mailto:katerinas@shaw.ca)

## Appendix 2: Letter of Informed Consent

Informed Consent



Informed Consent Form

Arthur V. Mauro  
Centre  
for Peace and Justice  
at St. Paul's College

252-70 Dysart Road

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3T 2N2

Telephone: (204) 474-6054

Fax: (204) 474-8828

### Research Project Title

Peace, Conflict and Education: University Educators and Challenging Conflict Narratives in Israel

*This is to invite you to participate in research conducted by myself, Katerina Standish. I am a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Manitoba in Canada. Please contact me at any time with any questions or concerns.*

### Researcher

Katerina Standish, PhD Candidate

Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice at St. Paul's College

University of Manitoba, Canada

1029 Wychbury Avenue, Victoria, BC, Canada V9A 5K7

Email: [katerinas@shaw.ca](mailto:katerinas@shaw.ca)

Telephone: 1-250-508-8806 Fax: 1-250-382-0753



*This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.*

***Purpose:*** *The purpose of this interdisciplinary and comparative case study is to survey the perceptions, experiences and perspectives of post-secondary educators working in regions that have suffered from protracted ethnic conflict.*

***Participation:*** *I am interested in learning about obstacles or opportunities to challenge conflict narratives in post-secondary education and how educators negotiate their professional space. In this study I will ask you to share your perceptions and opinions regarding your experiences as an educator in a (your choice) telephone, web-cam or self-administered interview. Interviews will take between 30 to 90 minutes. You will be provided with the interview questions in advance. With your permission, telephone and web-cam interviews will be recorded on a digital audio recorder. You will be asked to review a written record of your interview to make certain my understanding of what was said is correct and to provide you with an opportunity to make changes or remove information.*

***Confidentiality:*** *If it is your wish, no personal information of any kind will be made available to others in order to ensure that your identity will at no time be revealed. Files*

*containing notes, contact information, and interview responses/transcripts will only be available to me for the purposes of this research and files will remain in a locked cabinet. Files will be destroyed five years after research completion. This research will be used toward my Doctoral Thesis and may become published. I may also share some of my findings at academic conferences.*

***Withdrawal of Participants:*** *I recognize the sensitivity of this material and would like to ensure participants that they may withdraw at any time from this research project by informing me by email or telephone ([katerinas@shaw.ca](mailto:katerinas@shaw.ca) 1-250-508-8806).*

***Results:*** *Research results will be made available by email or mail.*

*Would you like a copy of the research results?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No*

*Please indicate where you would prefer results to be sent by providing your email or address:*

---

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*Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or*

*consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.*

---

*Participant's Signature*

*Date*

**Katerina Standish**

---

*Researchers Signature*

*Date*

*This research may contribute to future studies.*

*Would you be interested in being contacted for further research questions in the future?*

*Yes*  *No*

*The Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board has approved this research. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 1-204-474-7122, or e-mail [margaret\\_bowman@umanitoba.ca](mailto:margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca). A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.*

Thank you,

Katerina Standish

## Appendix 3: Interview Schedule

**Section One:** As a teacher in a country that has experienced protracted ethno-national conflict you are likely very familiar with the prevalent stories that define and describe the history of the conflict for each side. The following questions seek to discover any personal opinions you might hold regarding your experience of being an educator, your ability to challenge various narratives of conflict and your thoughts about the future.

1. Why do you teach?
2. What roles does ethnicity, language, gender or ideology play in your experiences as an educator?
3. How does your role as an educator affect you in your personal life?
4. In what circumstances have your choices as an educator put you at risk? (please explain if your experiences involved personal, professional or cultural risks)
5. How difficult is it to challenge conflict narratives in the classroom? What are the risks/benefits of challenging competing stories of the conflict?
6. What do you perceive as the greatest obstacle to being an educator in a country that has experienced ethnic conflict?
7. What do you see as the greatest opportunity as an educator in a country that has experienced ethnic conflict?
8. What are your worries and fears for your future and the future of your country?

9. What are your hopes and wishes for your future and the future of your country?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?

**Section 2:** The following questions are asked to determine demographic qualities and will be used to describe respondents who wish to remain anonymous.

1. In what country and city/district do you currently live/work?
2. What is your ethnic background?
3. In what language(s) do you teach?
4. What is your age?
5. What is your gender?
6. In what type of educational institution(s) do you teach?
7. What subjects do you teach?
8. In the dissemination of this research would you like to be identified (choose one)

Your name

place you teach

neither (anonymous)

## Appendix 4: Demographics

	Male	Female			
<b>Gender</b>	20	8			
<b>Age Range</b>	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60-70
<b>Male</b>		1	9	6	4
<b>Female</b>		2		3	3
<b>Jewish/Israeli</b>	19	7			
<b>Palestinian/ Israeli</b>	1	1			