

Thinking across Borders and Boundaries

Separation and interaction among borders and boundaries between
Palestinians and Israelis

EMMA VAN HEESWIJK & NOÉMIE HOFFMANN



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Bachelor Thesis Cultural Anthropology

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Map of the West Bank



United Nation OCHA¹: Map West Bank, February 2011

¹ United Nation office: <https://www.un.org/unispal/west-bank-area-c-ocha-map/>

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Introduction

Emma van Heeswijk & Noémie Hoffmann

A cup of sweet Arabic coffee

After a short drive, we arrive at the refugee camp Marka where Aamir's great aunt lives. All the houses look similar and are built out of small gray-white blocks. "Yallah, Come!", Aamir screams. "My aunt just has to cover herself and then we can enter." A small old lady with a bride shy smile opens the door. "Salaam alaikum!", she kisses my cheeks three times. Left, right, left and makes a sign to come in. The coffee is served immediately when we take a seat. Yary and Evy, the two Israelis in our group, look at the coffee, take a small sip, look at each other and put it away again. Emma looks at me and I know that she thinks exactly the same as I: They are not going to drink the coffee. I feel embarrassed as I know how disrespectful it is not to drink offered coffee in the Arab culture. The coffee has a light taste of cardamom and is packed with sugar. When I finish it, I notice that Emma is the only one who has also drunk her coffee. The great aunt looks at us and smiles, while Yary and Eya stiffly sit on the couch with their untouched coffees in front of them. 'So chutzpanit' these two', I think to myself. I smile politely.

(Noémie Hoffmann, 23-03-2018)

The situation described above was experienced by both authors during a trip with a group of young Israelis and Palestinians. One of the Palestinian key-informants introduced the Israelis and us to his great aunt. Although this situation is quite specific, it reflects that cultural and social boundaries are manifested at an encounter of both groups. The situation illustrates that in an unknown social environment, individuals fall back on their learned social norms and values, which they have obtained from their Israeli or Palestinian background.

In the era of globalization, the way in which we experience and understand borders and boundaries is being redefined. Experts assumed that the process of globalization would cause weakening of state borders and boundaries (Donnan and Wilson 1999, 1). However, increasing immigration flows, neo-liberal policies and new global threats, such as terrorism, result in a collective feeling of ontological insecurity (Wilson and Donnan 2005, 2; Appadurai 2006). A physical and psychological insecurity can strengthen the desire to belong

² Chutzpanit comes from the Yiddish word chutzpah and is in Israel often used for a person, who shows a shameless way of behaving. It refers to a person who acts without taking the effect of his/her actions on the environment in consideration.

to a specific social category or group. Collective narratives can transform the status of others within or in neighbouring communities. This insecurity can lead to a conflict where people must protect their existence or status against a perceived threat. Carrithers (1992) discusses a widely held belief among social scientists, namely that human beings are social beings in their core (Carrithers 1992, 57). Fearon and Laitin (2000, 848) expand on this theory by proposing that humankind always aims to organize through the creation of categories, by defining their own belonging to a group. Consequently, Eriksen has argued that there is a natural necessity of the 'Other' to reflect/mirror ourselves. Narratives are often used as a tool to build a physical and/or nonphysical line, which leads to the construction of a collective identity (Eriksen, 2010b).

Eriksen continues to state that borders and boundaries between groups have conflicting consequences. On one hand, Eriksen mentions that borders separate people from each other. Alternatively, borders preserve and require a particular form of interaction between individuals. Hence, borders and boundaries are created throughout interactions between two actors (Eriksen 2010a, 83).

However, we argue that borders and boundaries also create a space where two actors can interact and exchange whatever/information with each other. We argue this based on a statement of Gandolfo (2016), who mentioned that borders and boundaries define rules on how one has to behave socially. Therefore, borders and boundaries might affect the way one is expected to behave. Borders and boundaries can be either inclusive, strengthening a feeling of identity, or exclusive in that the presence of someone is a threat to the collector's existence. This consequently leads to a process of defining and redefining collective identities and causes, in essence, infinite tension. The potential existence of interactive social rules caused by borders and boundaries (Gandolfo, 2016) fueled our interest in the Israeli and Palestine territory: a place where Palestinians and Israelis live separated due to physical and non-physical borders and boundaries. Interestingly, both groups feel a strong connection with the land, reflected in history and religion, which makes the analyses of borders and boundaries within and around the two actors an even more interesting research field.

There is no doubt that borders and boundaries between Israelis and Palestinians impact the lives on both sides. At the end of the 1990's, the international community reached a consensus. To prevent future outbreaks of violent conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians, representatives agreed to territorial separation with more political authority, i.e. the famous *two-state solution* (Falah and Newman 1995). However, nearly 30 years have passed since the Oslo accords, and we are yet to see sufficient progress in this peace process.

In the meantime, the inhabitants of both sides live in a state of suspense: a perpetual conflict. The works of Rabinowitz (2001), Gandolfo (2016), Kurki (2014) and Newman and Falah (1995) demonstrate the asymmetric impact that borders and boundaries can have on people and groups in conflict.

This research calls attention to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, by employing a grounded theory approach. We focus on people's experiences in order to understand and provide micro-level analysis of borders and boundaries. The research will help to understand how separations allow the emergence of new collectivities. Collective narratives that oppose and or challenge the pre-existing narratives of conflict or social structure are challenged and re-shaped.

Hence, the thesis will contribute to the theoretical debate on the impact of borders and boundaries in times of conflict. The Israel/Palestine territory forms an interesting case and demands a more holistic analysis where an objective standpoint is crucial. This will hopefully lead to a more comprehensive understanding of borders and boundaries as complex social structures. Especially in conflict areas, borders and boundaries have different functions, affect social structures and are influenced by the societies they encapsulate. The dualistic approach shows that borders do not only separate people, cultures or states, but that they can facilitate a third space of interaction, a liminal space, in which transformative or new narratives can be formed (Kurki 2014, 1059). Therefore, the research elaborates on the question: *How are borders and boundaries a frame for separation and in what way do they create a space for interaction between Palestinians and Israelis?*

In the field

The research took place in the months of February, March, and April of 2018. Jerusalem formed for that time our home and most of our research environment. We observed how borders and boundaries reinforce particular narratives, establish separating lines and affect everyday life in Israel/Palestine. Over a ten week period, data was collected by Emma van Heeswijk among young local people living in Jerusalem or the West Bank. Emma's investigation focused on the separating aspects that take place on a daily base. Noémie Hoffmann concentrated on points of interaction. Her research population was formed by members of the bi-national movements: Combatants for Peace³, Parents Circle Family

³ Combatants for Peace, in the following indicated as CFP: <http://cfpeace.org/>

Forum⁴ and Tiyul-Rihla⁵. The data that Noémie collected illustrates the position and roles that members of bi-national movements have in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The significance of our research lays less in solving the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, or by explaining where the major problems of the conflict are to be found. Regarding these issues, an abundance of research from a broad range of fields have already been done, and yet researchers, peace activists, politicians and the international community struggling to find a peaceful solution to the border issue in Israel. Moreover, what we hope to offer the reader, and to contribute to the theoretical debate on borders and boundaries, is a holistic picture of the complex and paradoxical aspects found within the Israeli and Palestinian narratives.

The research takes Palestinians living in the West Bank and Israelis not as isolated research groups, but as two interacting collectivities that form our research population. By doing so the complexity, contradictions, and differences of experiences from both sides clearly stood out. We hope to contribute to a debate, not purely centered on the shallowness of difference and similarities. Moreover, the thesis presents a dialogue that unveils connections between the actors. The research is structured in a unique way, whereby the interdependence of both actors is highlighted. The approach is chosen, in order to understand how borders and boundaries between the two groups separate people, but also provide points of interaction, in so-called liminal spaces (Turner 1969). A space that can reinforce a dividing narrative or be a platform of reconciliation and recognition.

To thoroughly investigate borders and boundaries within the Israel-Palestine context, we made use of triangulation. Participation observation within the organizations, as well as in everyday activities of the participants, turned out to be the foremost method. Noémie Hoffmann joint activities and gatherings organized by bi-national movements within the Palestinian territories and Israel on a regular base. Emma van Heeswijk visited the Palestinian informants in the West Bank for a few days in the row, went with them to work and to carry out daily activities in order to understand their experience of borders and boundaries. ‘Walking interviews’⁶ turned out to be a beneficial method to explore the connection between

⁴ Parents Circle Family Forum, in the following indicated as PCFF: <http://theparentscircle.org/en/pcff-home-page-en/>

⁵ Tiyul-Rihla: <https://www.tiyul-rihla.org/projects>

⁶ Walking interviews, give the possibility to understand the informants experience of space and the environment, and form an important method while researching about borders and boundaries. In some instances the informant has been asked to choose a walking route, and in others did the researcher decide on the route. The method reveals a lot about the informants interaction with the environment as well as the concepts of ‘fear’, safety ‘self and the other’.

‘self and place’ of the informants. We not just lived together with young Israelis in Jerusalem but also started to help out from time to time in a local cafe, that functioned as a good meeting point with the young local population. Working in the cafe resulted in several benefits; Firstly we became known as ‘the two researchers’ within the environment. Secondly, it helped to expand our network through the snowball method and allowed us to collect many data through informal conversations and small talks. And thirdly, it helped us to blend into our environment and to build up alive within a very short period of time, as well as a close rapport with our informants. For more specific examinations functioned focus group interviews with a heterogeneous group⁷, in-depth interviews, one-on-one interviews and expert interviews⁸.

While reading the thesis five things should be kept in mind. First, most of the informants, Palestinians as well as Israelis, were male informants. Getting in contact with the female population was more difficult than expected. On the Palestinian side, fewer women were actively engaged in the bi-national movements, and they had more difficulties with articulating themselves with English. On the Israeli side, we encountered similar difficulties. Most women preferred talking about the current refugee crisis rather than about our research topic. Secondly should be mentioned, that most of the interviews and conversations took place in English or French, which is not our first language, neither the first language of our informants. While keeping in mind that this can cause minor distortion in the interpretation of conversation, we both experienced the communication without any significant difficulties in articulation and understanding. All informants spoke very well English and some of the Israeli informants were even bi-lingual. Thirdly, we decided to not include some of our collected data. This, given the heavy emotional stories that some of the informants shared with us after a rapport between informant and researcher, was built. Including all the information could have gone beyond ethical codes and could have harmed the informants' privacy as well as their trust in us. Forth, it should be kept in mind, that data were collected among a heterogeneous research population. Hearing personal stories from both sides made it

⁷ The participants in the focus group interviews came from various backgrounds. Palestinians, Israelis joined together during these conversation. The informants involved in mostly dialogues and discussions. Their different political orientations, reachin from left-wing to right wing, and their differing positions within society (ex-Hamas fighters; IDF soldiers/ combats/ special unit soldiers/ lonely soldiers from abroad in the service of the IDF; peace- activists; Jews; Muslims), revealed interesting confrontations, discussions and dialogue that gave us insight into the concepts of identification, othering, role conflict, and power relations.

⁸ In depth interviews were held with members of machsom watch, who are in possession of valuable knowledge regarding the permit regulation for Palestinians, the checkpoint regulation, the different territories, the IDF, D.C.O and the Israeli law.

in some situations almost impossible to stay objective. However, taking both groups from both researchers into account helped also to understand both sides, even though they may be contradictory in many ways. Fifth, the data collection among Israelis and Palestinians turned out to be disproportionate. More data were collected among Israelis. Reasons therefore are, having our living base in West Jerusalem and the burdensome of reaching Palestinians as a result of the border checkpoints.

The framework of the thesis entails five chapters and is structured as followed. A theoretical framework forms the first part of our thesis, in which relevant information around borders/boundaries and the phenomena of interaction will be discussed. The second chapter will provide information about the context of Israel/Palestine by giving a brief history about the past relations between Israelis and Palestinians. The third and fourth chapter will illustrate the results of our collected data. While the third chapter explains processes of separation and categorization among young Palestinians and Israelis, the fourth part will demonstrate processes of interaction created through bi-national movements. The fifth chapter, the concluding part, will bring both analyses together, providing new insights into the debate about borders/boundaries and interactions in the conflict society of Israel/Palestine.

1. Theoretical Part

Theoretical framework of borders

Emma van Heeswijk & Noémie Hoffmann

How can it be, the more connected we become the more borders and boundaries between peoples take centre stage? Contrary to what was assumed, we have not moved past or are close to a time beyond the nation state. The way we experience border and boundaries has changed since the end of World War Two. Contemporary studies of borders and boundaries has developed a school of thought also called limology (Kolossoff 2005). Border studies focuses on the different ways in which societies and political units have separated and divided themselves into social categories. The experience and meaning of borders and boundaries has changed throughout the globe, influenced by processes such as globalization, the German reunification, the end of the cold war, merging of cultures, economic liberalization and the decreasing significance of national orders, (Donnan and Wilson 1999; Haselsberger 2014). As a result, the conceptualization and typology of border studies developed into a multidisciplinary field. Generally speaking, the study of borders and boundaries takes over a fascinating frame for an understanding of complex human organization. Therefore the following section will highlight the ‘constructivist’ framework of borders and boundaries that is used to analyse the Israel-Arab conflict.

Traditional border approaches

The roots of border studies can be found in geographic studies. Geographers defined borders as demarcation lines, a set of lines that separate territories. Among the first geographers to show an interest in ‘borders/ boundaries’ were Jacques Ancel (1938) and Friedrich Ratzel (1897). Their investigations that borders were established to ‘limit space and or territories.’ Borders and boundaries were a necessity because they established a ‘political balance’ between groups. Ratzel introduced the concept of ‘Lebensraum’⁹ and saw a ‘organic’ connection between the people, the territory and the state (1897). Following his concept, he believed, state territories are growing with the size of the people, according to the need

⁹ Lebensraum; Eng. Translation: Living Space

(Abrahamsson 2013, 40). Geographic studies that were published after the first world war conceptualized borders as spatial division of territories, the historical mapping of economic and social structures and the role of the state (Kolossoff 2005; Newman and Paasi 1998, 187). After the second world war, the functional approach to borders was dominant. Advocates¹⁰ of the functional approach tried to understand how neighbouring relations are practiced and maintained between neighbours. Post world war two studies of borders and boundaries focus on how customs, laws and international statuses affected relations between separate territories.

Failure of traditional approaches

Traditional conceptualizations explain the phenomenon of state borders referring to the political function of borders. Looking through the scope of anthropology, traditional geographic approaches fail to explain the meaning-making of borders and boundaries. Kolossoff (2005) criticises the traditional approach and identifies its limitations. The traditional inter-state framing of borders fails to capture intra-state conflicts. Moreover, separation narratives underplay the role boundaries and borders play when identities are reframed and redefined. Kolossoff argues that the separation narrative utterly fails to explain how border changes can cause bloody conflicts between groups (Kolossoff 2005, 613).

Traditional approaches failed to explain how little changes of state borders or territorial borders can have such an overpowering effect on societies and individuals (Kolossoff 2005).

The tension when framing borders as ‘natural’ or ‘artificial’ is widely discussed in the classic works (see: Friedrich Ratzel (1897), Ladis Kristof (1959). Van Houtum (2005) argues that a constructivist approach to borders and boundaries is an overemphasis and restricts border studies in explaining the ‘why’: Why do borders exist and why do people continue creating borders then? Alternatively, Donnar and Wilson (1999, 26) believe it would be misleading interpreting state borders as not cultural, social or symbolic. At the time of the geographic peak of border studies, the angle anthropologists took at that time was contrary with the viewpoint of geographers, as the following paragraph will show.

¹⁰ Advocate of the functional approach John House and Oscar J. Martinez:
House, John William. *Frontier on the Rio Grande: a political geography of development and social deprivation*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1982.
Oscar, J. *Border people: Life and society in the US-Mexico borderlands*. University of Arizona Press, 1994.

Early anthropological interest into border studies

Emma van Heeswijk

Jacques Ancel (1938) highlights that studying borders without describing what it means for those it divides is an insufficient explanation of borders and boundaries. Alternatively, in other words, studying borders without describing its meaning given by the people it frames would be insufficient. Early anthropological concerns about borders and boundaries was the populations they encapsulated. Anthropologists explained the appearance and function of borders as units that developed in territorial isolation. Separation and differences between collectives is a result of a development in isolation from one another (Donnan and Wilson 1999). However, by taking this approach into account, collectivises are seen as isolated, culturally different from others and territorial separate. Through a shift in the way of human organization¹¹, social scientist also started to change their way of looking at the emergence and appearance of borders and boundaries. The territorial division became less important, since a better understanding of boundaries that separate categories was gained.

Social boundaries

By the late 1960, anthropologists did not only look at geographical landmarks as points of separations. Barth introduced his community approach and defined borders and boundaries as something performed and created by different collectivities on a social and cultural level, regardless state borders (Barth 1998), Donnan and Wilson (1999) describe '*Cultural borders as distinctions between different worlds of meaning.*' The main idea behind Donnan and Wilson analysis is that it is not only geographical landmarks that mark cultural borders. State borders and cultural/social boundaries are constructed; and not only a result of encapsulation, isolation and territorial separation. Borders and boundaries are things and symbols created by humankind through encounters, interactions, and negotiation.

Anthropologists [with Barth as a grounding father], started to take an interest in the meaning of a border between neighbours and the function it plays in social relations. Barth organized the world in 'social collectivities'¹², understood as a plurality of individuals who see themselves as resembling (Barth 1998; Donnan and Wilson 1999, 21-23). He supports his conceptualization by arguing that these collectivities are based on shared values, ancestors

¹¹ By 'shift in human organization', think of processes such as increasing immigration flows, transnational economic flows ect. Largely influenced by the process of globalization.

¹² Frederick Barth analysis is based on on the concept of ethnicities. According to him ethnicities are groups made up of individuals who feel belonging to each other and shape their social and cultural identity in a given context to indicate their 'uniformity'.

and traditions. However the actors manipulate their collective identity according to context and the characteristics are thus only of relevance if they are powerful in social relations that help to organize human interaction. The constructivist framework reveals that not all differences between cultures are based on geographical landmarks. Some differences arise because two different worldviews interact within the same geographical space. Donnan and Wilson (1999, 21) highlight this when they describe the way context and circumstance can affect the way an identity narrative is articulated. The constructivist viewpoint underlines, that borders and boundaries appear for each individual differently, according to one's position, status and identity (Donnan and Wilson 1999, 25).

Within the frame of our research, we will distance ourselves from a purely traditional viewpoint to borders and boundaries. The analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian borders and boundaries will be approached with a more constructivist point of view. Some borders and boundaries are fluid and subject to change. We do not propose a universal theory within limology, therefore we place our vision into a postmodern frame.

The creation of separation through Border and Boundary performances

Emma van Heeswijk

How and why are borders and boundaries maintained, if borders and boundaries do not only exist as natural manifestation or as result of geographical landmarks? Collectivities contribute to the extent borders will be enforced and protected. Physical borders and social boundaries often reinforce a narrative that justifies exclusion or marginalization. The constructivist framework allows us to take a look at how people ascribe meaning to borders and boundaries.

Performing categorization on a social level

Starting with an understanding of why humankind creates borders and boundaries, we first have to take a brief look at the concept of identity forming/ identification. Given the limited framework of the thesis the focus will be placed only on social identity. Through social identification we create a feeling of belonging and become a member of a group. The process is not black and white, and one can be a member of multiple groups. This aspect and the appearing consequences of mutual membership will be discussed at a later moment. Erikson

(1968) and Jenkins (2014) argue that identity is best understood as a continuously changing process influenced by social interaction and reciprocal exchange with others. The encounters and interactions that take place draw a distinction between one group and another.

Identification happens through a process of self-ascription, as well as the process of othering (Eriksen 2010b, 15; Moerman 1965, Donnan and Wilson 1999, 25). Categorization is often overlooked and seen as a natural and self-evident phenomenon (Jenkins 2014, 6). Social scientists however, are fiercely concerned about the need of categories. Douglas (1966) pointed out that classification helps to organize and ascribe meaning on different levels. Eriksen (2010b) takes this point further when he suggests classifications are not just useful but necessary to create collective narratives and identities. He believes that classifications are social and cultural products. The category of ‘others’ makes it possible to gain meaning in an existence (Jenkins 2014, 103). It is interesting to mention that boundaries may not always exist because of difference. Groups, which are separated by constructed boundaries and borders, can share same cultural attributes (same language, system etc). Barth acknowledges this possibility when he discusses cultural variations. He argue that 'cultural variations may indeed be an effect and not a cause of boundaries.' This is a winning point of view, primarily by trying to understand how after a peaceful (or semi-peaceful) co-existence of two different groups conflicts can emerge and these groups suddenly seem to be more separated and different from each other than ever before. Going back looking at the process of identification through self ascription and ascription by others, to understand the requirement of separation, the following paragraph will focus on two outstanding factors: ‘othering’ and the process of ‘collective memory’.

The process of ‘Othering’

Othering refers to a process of distancing oneself and/ or his own group towards another entity, through categorizing “The Other” as different or even frightening for the groups’ survival (Gandolfo 2016, 260). Baumann and Gingrich (2005) explain the process of selfing and othering in three dimensions: (1) orientalizing: which refers to pointing out differences, by regarding the own group as superior; (2) segmentation, which signifies seeing the other as a possible enemy for the own group; (3) encompassment, which indicates a hierarchical process of placing criteria of “sameness” on others through, for example, implementing religious conversions and the creation of stereotypes (Baumann and Gingrich 2005, 26). In conflict situations, the process of identification happens by pointing out the

negative aspects of the other. Keleman defines this process as ‘negative interdependence’. This interdependence causes objectification of “the Other” what as a result can lead to a fear of “the Other” (Gandolfo 2016, 261, Newman 2002, 9). This interdependence between “the self” and “the other” creates a reciprocal process of “Othering” and the creation of identity (Baumann 2005, 18-20; Hall 1996b; Brubaker 2004).

Collective memory and narratives

Memory is a fundamental base on which an individual or group construct their identity (Bartal, Salomon 2006, 6; McAdams 2001). However, memory is created in relation to events and to other people (McAdams 2001, 107). The notion that memory is framed by specific actors and the environment, was introduced by Halbwachs (1992); he called in the ‘collective memory’- a shared memory which supports the narrative of common identity. In the case of Israeli society, Gandolfo (2016) explains, that “Arabness” is often coupled with negative associations in common language and therefore passes onto the next generation as “a normal common knowledge”. This illustrates how processes of stigmatization can stay congruent throughout many generations. A process which normalizes an unconscious form of stigmatization. According to Autesserre (2012) narratives are created stories, that help people to make sense of their lives and justify actions on a collective level. It is paramount to be aware that they shape the perspective on the environment and can be used in a very functional manner. Individual and collective narrative can influence the way we act and how we relate to our environment. According to Brown narratives are performative, and bringing to life a reality, that may not have existed before. Narratives and collective memory are interwoven and can strengthen a sense of collectivity and exclude narratives that undermine a collective consensus. A process that resembles the drawing and redrawing of borders and boundaries (Pilecki and Hammack 2014).

Conflicting categorization: unequal power and violence

Eriksen (2010b) and Kelman (1999) argue, that social identities become the most important the moment they are threatened. The perceived threat and fear does not have to be real to perform its function. The threat generates a need to strengthen a collective narrative. Especially in conflict areas, politicians and state authorities try to strengthen the national identity, with strict rules of who belongs to the group and who gets excluded (Kelman 1999). Narratives and stereotypes are used to spread fear of the ‘Other’, and as a result justify

security discourses on a macro level. Experiencing fear on a collective level, indicates the desire of strengthening to belong to a strong entity that offers protection. Within a conflict area, The model of ‘state of exception’ shows, how military force and violence can be implemented in order to protect the group¹³. There is usually an expectation of a gain or loss in the connotation of collective identity creation among the concerned actors (Kelman 1999). The control over borders, in the form of checkpoints, reflect power differentials (Gandolfo 2017). Eriksen has argued that social categories usually present asymmetric power relations, whereas one group is seen as superior to the other (Eriksen 2010). Social categories and thereby ascribed resources such as water or land are often framed as granted. However, if two groups are claiming the same resources, as in the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict violence can occur¹⁴. By coming back to the concept of narratives and stereotypes, collectivities often make use of presenting the other as a threat, in order to justify their counter reaction in the form of restriction of movement of the group that is perceived as dangerous for the own existence as collectivity (Newman 2000).

Interaction among and across borders/boundaries

Noémie Hoffmann

The concept of interaction brings together many cultural, linguistic, psychological, social and geographical aspects and is studied from different academic angles. Addressing all these aspects would go beyond the scope of our research concerning borders and boundaries. Therefore, we chose to base the analysis of interaction within the frame of border/boundary crossing through interaction, and the space in where transformations occur. The concepts of liminality, ‘rite de passage’ and role conflict will be applied in order to understand the border crossing processes from different angles. While borders/boundaries have been approached so far as physical and geographical social structure, the study now turns to the social aspects of borders and boundaries. The next section describes the *actor and his performance of interactions* within a borderspace.

¹³ Within this framework it is often talked about collectivities that melt together as national identities. Israel forms therefore a collective identity group.

¹⁴ Violent conflicts arise when for example group A challenges pre-existing social categories and attempt to appropriate the properties of group B. Violent outbreaks are the result of a competition over scarce resources within a territorial unit (Eriksen 2010b)

Anthropologists believe that all human actions are framed through the relationship with others, and are this requires an interaction (Eriksen 2010a, 53). Even the smallest cultural units are not about the individual itself, but about the relationship and the reciprocal character of actions with others (Eriksen 2010a, 53, Buber 2003, Turner 1969). In that sense, interaction is a fundamental process in the construction of a cultural unit.(Eriksen 2010a, 53). Social interaction and borders are not mutually exclusive but rather interact on multiple levels and influence collective identity and how their narratives are formed (Kurki 2014, Eriksen 2010a).

Social groups and collective identification

At a border space groups interact and individuals encounter one another. An important approach for the study of social interaction is taken by Goffman (1961) who tries to understand face-to-face interactions in encounters, as well as within the frame of a social groups (Bruner 1963, 65). The significant difference between a social group interaction and individual encounters, is in the relationship between the interacting members. A social group implies that members share a common ideology, identity, or shared memory and therefore perceive themselves as a social unit (Goffman 1961, 8; Allport 1954, 304). These social bonds tie people together and create a basic ground of common identification (Eriksen 2010b, 1). Goffman (1961) highlights the way encounters can frame interpersonal relations and the expectations people have of one another.

Encounters and their challenging effects on social roles and statuses

The importance of studying encounters and interactions between social groups lies in the spontaneous nature of interaction and the way they frame an individual's role in a conflict narrative or everyday encounters at border spaces (Bruner 1963, 65). Goffman defined encounters (focused gatherings) as the coming together of individuals outside of their collectivities. People who come together at these gatherings are participants and not members. Participants have no reciprocal obligation to other participants. Their encounters occurs outside of pre-existing social or cultural groups and are therefore the perfect frame for analysing Goffman's (1961) role conflict (Bruner 1963, 65). His analysis of encounters outlines the influence of interactions on the role and status of people in conflict. His approach to the border crossing process adopts a role model perspective. Goffman (1961) explains that the personal struggles people envisage are caused by interactions with different people. This

conflict develops because every person has, in relation to others, different social statuses and roles (Goffman, Eriksen 2010a, 53). Therefore, the role that a person is expected to play from his particular social and cultural environment can be challenged through a new encounter. If an individual denies performing his/her role, it creates a distance between himself/herself and his/her position in society. Goffman (1961, 98) refers to this process as role conflict. Distancing oneself from his/her “normal” socially expected role can have a threatening effect, not only for the individual itself but also for its environment, as Mary Douglas (...) explains with her ‘anomaly theory’ (1966). According to Mary Douglas acting in a socially “abnormal” way can lead to a threat for the collective identity (Douglas 1966). Falling outside of the social categorization or actively stepping outside of the socially expected role and position, challenges the social order and classification and can lead to a border crossing process as will be analysed in the following paragraph (Turner, Kurki 2014).

The process of role conflict is significant for our research, because it illustrates the process of challenging stereotypes and narratives of “the other”, through the process of fundamental self-reflection. After having discussed the different characters of interactions through encounters and within social groups, the focus will now be turned to the relation between interaction and borders/boundaries, through analysing the process of border crossing and social activism.

Borders as a performative space of interaction

Borders appear in many different shapes and frame social interactions which determine the nature of social encounters. The notion of borders separating people is more comfortable intuition rather than the premise that borders and boundaries are points of interaction and a space of transition. (Newman 2006b, 150). Peaceful interactions along and across borders is dependent on what the borders and boundaries signify for the divided collectivities. The term ‘border space’ refers to borders as a political and social space (Hatuka, 347). This term will in the following be used to emphasize that borders are not only implemented by sovereign leaders but rather used and performed by civilians through daily crossings or political actions (Hakuta, 347). Border spaces reflect the dynamic performance of civilians when framing and reframing collective narratives. Two main approaches are important for this analysis of borders as a performative space. An actor-oriented approach which considers social interaction, activism and border crossing process from the actor's point of view and a more structural approach which analyzes the space in which these interactions and border crossing

processes take place. Combining these two approaches will lead to a comprehensive analysis of the complex phenomena of interactions within border spaces.

Liminality, a space of transition

The process of personal border crossing has been studied by two influential anthropologist Victor Turner (1969) and Arnold van Gennep (1960). Van Gennep introduced the concept of 'rite de passage' a three- stage model which illustrates the process of personal border crossing. The first stage of Van Gennep's model shows the individual as isolated from the social environment. The second stage demonstrates the individual is in a marginalized position. The third stage is where the individual is reintegrated into a social order with a new position and status in society (Kurki 2014, 1060).

The space and state in which the individual is situated during the 'rite de passage' have been studied with greater detail by Victor Turner with the concept of liminality (Turner 1969, 359) Turner states that members of a society move through different positions and structures and are between these stages in a liminal state; a betwixt and between position. For the analysis of border crossing processes, this model forms an interesting approach, as it conceptualise the undefined and unaccepted position of liminal personae ("threshold people¹⁵") within a conflict society. This model will be applied to frame the experiences of bi-national social movements.

The first phase of separation gives attention to the reason people join bi-national movements and therefore separate themselves from their prevailing society. The liminal phase draws attention to the experience of border crossing and the undefined and unaccepted position in relation to the environment. The third stage shows that the re-incorporation in society forms a challenging process for the research population. Donnar and Wilson (1999, 113) ascribe the term 'liminal outsider' to people who do not get accepted by his/her social environment and therefore stay in an isolated position of society. The second phase, the margin position, is especially of significant importance for the understanding of interaction at borders. The liminal personae have a controversial position outside of social orders. Falling outside of the distinctive arrangement of dependent institutions regulated by statuses and positions, also called society, give individuals the possibility of critical reflection and to criticize powerful actors (Turner 1969, Kurki 2014, 1060). A liminal position can thus have an empowering, but on the other hand also a humiliating effect. This liminal status can lead to

¹⁵ Term used by Turner (1969) in reference to people who cross or act in a liminal space. Threshold people describe individuals who are confronted with borders and boundaries.

an exclusive position. Exclusion from society or facing, what Goffman described, as a role conflict has great potential for generating cultural criticism and the creation of social change.

Social activism within border spaces

Border spaces have the potential to generate of social activism¹⁶ which inspires change. Physical borders are spaces where a flow of people get socially and economically separated and therefore the call for a reaction against the separation is strong (Kurki 2014; McDonald 2002). The appearance of a border awakens people to critically think and reflect on the purpose and the impact of the border on the personal life and political agenda (Hatuka 2012, 348). A border can, therefore, be used as a tool for creating awareness among citizens and as a call for activism (ibid.)Border zones are, in that sense, often used by social movements as a political space which forms a threat to the function borders are supposed to play (Hatuka 2012).

The conflict between pre-existing social structures and civil activism is strongly manifested at a border space. For an accurate analysis of the confrontation/encounters of these forces and actors, an approach from social movement studies is crucial. As Touraine (2002) notes, the idea of social movement studies is to envisage the conflict from the actors perspective and not label the actor and his social actions as a simple outcome of objective power structures (Touraine 2002, 89). He argues that social movements are a direct answer to the threat and hope to counteract a given structure and to guide change (ibid). In that sense, social movements are a response to an asymmetrical power relation between state structure and the equal civil rights (Touraine 2002; Hatuka 2012). This framework is of relevance for our analysis, as we argue that bi-national movements in Israel position themselves outside the institutionalized political spectrum, and experience to some extent exclusion from the own society.

Crossing a border means to change from one social space or social structure to another, and therefore a process of negotiating one's own identity, cultural ideals and values (Donnar & Wilson 1999, 108). This is one reason why members of bi-national movements are people who experience this process frequently and are more aware of the constructiveness and subjectiveness of a social structure (Hatuka 2012). This awareness of one's own identity and position is one crucial step toward the change of a rigid identity. A move towards an

¹⁶ Social activism will be approached from a perspective of social movement studies, which defines social activism as a actor centered practice and process of collective resistance (Bonilla 2012).

integrative and fluid identity concept (Kurki 2014, Newman 2006b, McDonald 2002). We argue that the liminal stage, of being betwixt and between the dominant social structure, offers great potential for creating and performing a transcendent identity. The concept of transcendent identity is proposed by Kelman (1999) and forms a suggestion for the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinians negative interrelated identity. By introducing the concept of transcendent identity, he argues that an overarching identity is needed which brings both sides together under a common aspect of identification (Kelman 1999, 586). As will be argued in the empirical part, bi-national movement try to realize that process of identity change that Kelman (1999) illustrates with his analysis.

2. Context

Context Israel- West Bank

Israel and the West Bank form an interesting frame for the study of borders and boundaries and its complexity within the 21st century. The following chapter contextualizes our research by presenting actors that are separated by several borders and boundaries and others who challenge the same borders and boundaries. Therefore a brief history of border drawing and shaping within Israel and the West bank will clarify the political and social boundaries we are concerned with. The main objective of this section is, to provide a contextual analysis of the historical, political and socio-economic conditions in Israel, specifically Jerusalem.

Border displacements

Noémie Hoffmann

Israel is a space where complex processes of multiple border displacements have taken place through continuous changes in politics (Bar-Tal, Salomon 2006, 4- 6). A significant transformation in Israel formed the shift from 'a diaspora non-state situation to one in which statehood has been achieved' (Falah and Newman 1995, 692). The diaspora non-state situation refers to the time in which the current Israeli territories were under control and Jewish people were living in Palestine without statehood (Falah and Newman 1995, 692). The UN Partition Plan for Palestine of 1948 divided the country in two states and gave Jewish people for the first time their formal state (ibid). This transformation was a pragmatic approach to ensure a peaceful side by side coexistence of Palestinian and Israelis. However, this division was followed by several wars between Israel and the Arab countries which lead to multiple border displacements (Falah and Newman 1995, 693).

A "good fences, good neighbours" mindset was then applied during the creation of the Oslo peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, starting in 1993. During these peace negotiations, the first agreements between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Liberal Organisation (PLO) were made. The Israeli government agreed on the creation of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and assigned the responsibility and control over some parts of the West Bank to the PNA. By accepting a Palestinian political entity, it was made

clear that a demarcation line between the respective territories had to be created. This process of separation is a traditional form of creating a state structure (Falah and Newman 1995). Creating a border was at that time seen as a positive step towards a peaceful solution. However, presently, the West Bank is for the most parts under the control of the Israeli military. This lack of Palestinian state institutions creates an asymmetric relation between Israelis and Palestinian, which influences social, cultural and economic realities of both sides.

Performing identity

Noémie Hoffmann

National identity is one of the main obstacles when it comes to building a constructive relationship between Palestine and Israel (Kelman 1999). The conflict when creating a collective identity as Kelman (1999) states, is that Israelis and Palestinians identities are partly constructed with negative aspects of the other (Kelman 1999, 582). Both see themselves as victims and exposed to the threat of the other. The territorial demarcation is therefore used by national authorities to ensure security and to protect its citizens. The image of "the other" as a frightening element is used serve political narratives in Israel and Palestine (Falah & Newman 1995, 694). The interwoven relation between national interest and collective security makes Israel's situation complex. Both states 'refuses to recognize the symmetry in the perceived collective threat' (Falah & Newman 1995, 694). A change in geopolitics through a process of socialization by focusing on "the other" is seen as a way to overcome the threat (ibid.) Furthermore, through constructing a new form of identity, which focuses on a positive interdependence and equal status interactions, the negative interdependence should be overcome (Kelman 1999, 581).

It is discussed that the demarcation line which is yet seen as a security border between perpetrator and victim would be a contribution to the complex situation, if seen as a common element for the construction of a new identity (Kelman 1999, 583; Rabinowitz 2002; Bornstein 2002). This would imply that citizens, Palestinian and Israeli, have to turn away from the state power perspective, towards one that believes in a shared space solution and in the agency of citizens. The bi-national movements/projects Combatants for Peace, Tiyul Rihla and The Bereaved Family Forum are trying to activate these civilian forces to

counteract policies that promote system of apartheid¹⁷ These movements therefore form an interesting population for the analysis of interaction along and across borders and boundaries.

Jerusalem and its inhabitants

Emma van Heeswijk

Jerusalem forms in the research an important case as both societies; the Palestinian and Israeli, claim the city to be their capital. Even if our research population is just partly based in Jerusalem, the special religious and political importance of that place has to be understood, as it illustrates the fundamental tensions between both groups. Tensions between different actors (ethnic groups, religions, states) are almost a daily topic within Jerusalem, at least if one trusts the international news. This has been particularly evident after the United States President, Donald Trump, announced recognition of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel¹⁸

It shows once again how the borders and boundaries in and around Jerusalem are in constant motion. The complexity of Jerusalem lays also in the different inhabitant it hosts, and the variation of meaning that people ascribe to this city Jerusalem is often called the ‘holy land’, and many religious devotees, belonging to one of the three monotheistic religions of Islam, Judaism or Christianity, claim their ancestry routes within Jerusalem (Alfasi, Nurit and Fenster 2005). Given this, Jerusalem was advanced as a ‘corpus separatum’ (a separated body) from the United Nations in 1947; a city that should not be excluded to a single nation due to its significance for many different actors.¹⁹

However, territorial brawls and border displacements, as discussed above, resulted into a split Jerusalem (nonetheless) under Israeli occupation. The different inhabitants of Jerusalem are in many ways segregated and use protection mechanisms, whereby a harsh differentiation between one and another is made (Alfasi, Nuri and Fenster 2005, 354). On the other hand, history shows, that Jerusalem forms a ground where a lot of encounters between Israelis and Palestinians takes place. As Bornstein (2002) presents, soon after the West Bank was taken from Jordan in 1967 and became occupied territory under the Israeli military, the border was performed as an open barrier (Bornstein 2002, 1). At that time it could be better defined as a flexible boundary, which implies rules and conditions, rather than a stubborn

¹⁷ System of apartheid: A system based on a racial/ethnic divide.

¹⁸<https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/trump-recognizes-jerusalem-as-israeli-capital-says-final-borders-up-to-israel-palestinians-1.5627953>

¹⁹ Un General Assembly, future government of Palestine, 29 november 1947, A/ReS/181

border (Hassouna 2016, 67). Many Palestinians crossed this border with ease, in order to work in Israel, since the chances of earning a reasonably satisfactory amount of money were higher (Bornstein 2002, 1). Vice versa, many Israelis organized themselves on the east side of Jerusalem (and other parts of the West Bank) and formed settlements (ibid.). Even though it shows that for a long time people, labor and goods had already crossed the boundaries, it does not mean that Palestinian and Israeli were granted equal rights. It can for example be said that Palestinian Jerusalemites never received the full legal status of citizenship (Bornstein 2002; Rabinowitz 2001). Nonetheless, the circumstances changed and the borders/ boundaries between the two groups tempered in some way.

A security policy (from the Israeli government) was implemented as a result of the turbulences caused by the first Intifada in 1987 (Gross 1999). The upswing of the second intifada in 2000 was followed by the construction of the separation wall. The construction of the separation wall, segregates people in a physical way and restricts their mobility. Jerusalem, on the other hand remains a space for interaction between people (Hassouna, 2016). Peace movements, and non-government organizations approach Jerusalem as a city, where a common identity between Israelis and Palestinian could be built, and where the border/ boundary between these groups is seen as a tool for dialogue.

3. Chapter Empirical Part

Emma van Heeswijk

Performing differences

‘The good soldier and the bad terrorists’

‘Bombing Gaza and building these fences is to protect us!’ You know what makes us different from them? Palestinians are terrorists and soldiers have a purpose by killing, and of course, unfortunately, some civilians die, but they are not bad people like terrorists. It is not their intention to kill innocent people, but so do terrorists!’

(Yuval, Israel informant, 20-03-2018)

The room is filled with tensions, when a group of Jewish teenagers, who are initially coming from Australia, and Amir, a Palestinian ex-fighter from Jericho come together. It has to be mentioned, that this getting together is more of an exception, and happened in the frame of an organized evening program. The conversations that took place focused on the process of ‘identification’ and ‘othering,’ and shows a typical process of framing oneself and the other as experienced within the field. The above-presented extract shows the need of ‘another group,’ to define the existence of oneself and collective identity. In the example Yuval, a Jewish teenager who came to Jerusalem for six month, shares his thoughts on Palestinians. He sees them as terrorists because, according to him, they are killing people without a purpose. The Israeli soldier on the other hand is framed as ‘hero’ by Yuval. This is a good example of how the image of the ‘good’, Israel, exists by mirroring it with the ‘bad’, the Palestinian. It underlines, how our own (social-)identity is highly constructed in relation to other people in our surrounding (Eriksen 2010).

The analysis of how boundaries between different social group come to exist is separated into two main sections. The first section will elaborate on imagined boundaries, by looking at the concepts such as othering, negative interdependence, stereotyping, inner-group narratives and fear, and how they affect the creation of collectivities. The second section will be focussed on physical boundaries, such as checkpoints, security borders and fences. The analyses of the physical border offers an understanding of the asymmetric power relations that can result out of border drawing and vice versa. These two kinds of boundaries are strongly interwoven, and can therefore not be discussed solely by themselves. However, to

understand how they affect both the process of ‘othering’ and ‘self-identification’ a closer examination of each type of boundary is required, as is done in the following two sections.

1. Imagined boundaries

1.1 The other as a mirror: boundary construction

‘And usually the right wings are the Mizrahi, they are usually the most similar to Arabs and want to be the most dissimilar to them’ (Itay, 26-03-2018, Jerusalem). I am sitting in a cafe in a secular liberal neighbourhood in Jerusalem with Noémie and Itay, a local DJ and actor from Jerusalem, while slurping a double espresso. Itay seems to enjoy our interest in him, as he has been talking for two hours straight. His goal is to connect Arabs and Israelis/Jews through music, because he believes music is something that brings everyone together to enjoy. However, while talking about the different groups that are living alongside each other within Israel, he shares his experiences and thoughts on the right-wing group in Israel.

Itay mentions the Mizrahi Jews²⁰ as a specific group that promotes a strict separation with Arabs (Palestinians). The conversation with Itay illustrates how Mizrahi Jews, who predominantly come from Arabic backgrounds, are the ones who are feeling the strongest urge to distinguish themselves from the Palestinians. Itay is a descendant of the Mizrahi group himself and during the conversation he explains that his family is very religious and that his father is a famous Rabbi in Jerusalem. With a Jewish grandmother coming from Syria, Itay feels that he shares the *‘same culture’* as *‘the Arabs.’* He grew up watching Arabic television and listening to the same music as the Arabs. However, he explains that his grandmother never finds friendly words about Palestinians: *‘she [grandmother] also hates Arabs, and she wants to be different. It’s not the same. We’re Jewish, and they are Arabs, it’s not the same.’*

The experience of Itay is similar to that found in Barth’s (1998) analysis of cultures. Barth argues that: *‘cultural variation may indeed be an effect and not a cause of boundaries’* (Eriksen 2010b, 46). This viewpoint shows, how not necessarily significant contrasts between two groups are the provoking point for the cause of a boundary. While in Itay’s point of view there is no major cultural difference between Arabs and Mizrahi Jews, he still feels that they are strongly separated from each other and do not wish to interact with each other on a

²⁰ Mizrahi Jews are also known under the term oriental Jews. They lived historically in the Middle East and North Africa: Kozłowska, Magdalena. "Who Am I? Mizrahi Discourse on Identity in Contemporary Israel." *Hemispheres* 29, no. 1 (2014): 47.

regular base. Furthermore, Itay's experience shows how the process of boundary construction between Israelis and Palestinians underplays similarities between the groups and overcommunicates differences between Jews and Non-Jews (Eriksen 2010b, 27). Imagined boundaries are not a result of cultural differences or spatial separation but performed and created often with a purpose as will come to show in the following sections.

1.2 Negotiating social categories

Jenkins (2014) and Erikson (1968) believe that identity is a process, rather than an achievement. Identity formation is a process that happens through self-ascription, othering, and negotiation (Eriksen 2010b; Erikson 1968; Jenkins 2014). As a consequence, identities are influenced by the environment and context in which they are formed. Israel counts many different ethnicities, given the history and emergence of the country as a diaspora. The informants could talk for hours about the different groups within Israel reaching from Ashkenazi Jews²¹, Mizrahi to Arab- Jews, Druse²², Bedouin²³ and Ethiopian Jews:

'[...] the skin color, the language, the food that's been cooked, the costumes... even in Judaism, it splits up you know. The people that come from the Ashkenazi countries they have a very different way of praying, singing. Their customs are completely different. On the streets is very visible, you can very much feel it. When someone is Ashkenazi or Mizrahi, you can very much feel the difference.'

(Tomer, Ashkenazi Jew, 5. April 2018, Jerusalem).

The process of categorization is apparent during the several conversations with Jerusalemites about the Israeli society and religion with a notable operation of 'othering'. Even when talking about the different groups within [the Israeli] society, as the example of Tomer shows, most informants distinguish between different groups. However, when the context of the conversation changes towards the neighbors, the Palestinians, the inner societal categorization does not seem to matter anymore: *'We are all Jewish, there is no difference. That's what keeps us together. We share history, and now it's our turn to protect what our parents and grandparents have established.'* (Joshua, 10. March 2018). Jenkins (2014, 6)

²¹ Ashkenazi originally referred to Jews of Germany, but also from central and eastern Europe.

²² Druse is a middle eastern religious community. Druse count to one of the most insular groups; a high percentage of the small group lives in Israel.

²³ Bedouins were originally a nomadic religious group, across the Levant, irac and north Africa. Many Bedouin settled and live in Israel.

argues that two groups may be different from each other on one level, but can still belong to the same meta-category. Depending on context, such as the way they prepare food or how they pray, one may be identified as a Mizrahi Jew or an Ashkenazi Jew. However, when the context is taken at a broader level, the meta-category of being Jewish or Israeli becomes more dominant and the smaller separations within those categories seem to vanish. As a result the identity boundaries shift. The Israeli process of 'contrasting' is often placed in the context of 'threat' and the need of 'protecting the own group' as can be seen in the example of Joshua, '*our turn to protect*'. As a result it makes that inner group categories become less momentous and the separation from the Palestinians as a category turns into an essential factor in the creation of the belief of being a substantial and robust entity that is stronger than the enemy. Baumann and Gingrich (2005, 26) define this process as 'orientalization' in which differences between the groups are pointed out, and the own/inner group is framed as superior, while the outgroup seen as an enemy.

The same process of 'orientalization' can also be found within the Palestinian society where in general Palestinians from the West Bank are not necessarily seeing themselves as the same as Palestinians from the Gaza strip. Amir repeated several times: '*do not compare Palestinians from the West Bank with those in the Gaza strip. It's not the same*' (Amir, Palestinian informant from Jericho, 25. February 2018). However when the conversation shifts to the ongoing gaza protests and the many injured Palestinians at the frontier, Palestinians shift their boundary of identification towards defining themselves as one collective entity, segregated from the Israeli. As one identifiable group, Palestinians present a powerful entity. Kelman (1999) analyzes the Israeli-Palestine conflict and concludes that the creation of an enemy is one way to show loyalty to one's own group. He argues that a softer practiced presentation of the groups enemy²⁴ or even cooperative behaviour with the 'other' could threaten one's membership to the collective entity (Kelman 1999). We will return to this issue in the following chapter and will focus exclusively on the separation that is created between both parties in order to create a separate identity that clearly distinguishes 'us' from 'them' and creates categories between being Israeli/Jewish and being Arab/Palestinian.

²⁴ Under a 'softer practiced presentation of the groups enemy' could be understood the process of cooperating with the enemy, becoming friend, intergroup-marriage, participation in bi-national 'peace' movements.

2. Narratives in the use of ‘othering’

2.1 ‘Othering’ in the frame of the Israeli military service

The Israeli military service plays an important role in the feeling of belonging to a collectivity by creating a meta-category of ‘national identity’ within Israel. Serving in the army is mandatory for every member of the Israeli society, and refusing is punished with imprisonment. Most of the informants consider becoming a soldier as something positive: *‘I know that it is hard, but our country is just so strong because we have such a strong army. I am having a try out soon for a special unit, and I am practicing already for a year. You start with a physical test the first days, and then they will check if you're psychological hard enough to take it’* (Tomer, Israeli informant). Tomer, among other informants, claims that Israel is strong, because of the authority of the army. Being proud of being a part of such a strong entity reflects also the pride of being Israeli, and shows the loyal attitude one has towards their own group (Kelman 1999). These findings are consistent with Newman’s (Newman 2000, 10-12) understanding of the army, he sees the army as an institution that is justified because of its necessity. In other words, without believing in the importance of the army, it would be seen as redundant and therefore not stimulate the feeling of having to work together as one entity within Israel. The army reflects the need of the process of ‘othering’ in order to create a strong feeling of belonging together.

As Auterresse presents in his narrative analysis, stories about the ‘other’ can influence one's own identification. Or as Jenkins (2014, 103) states, framing the ‘other’ is a process of discovering *‘what we are in what we are not’*. Many of the informants see every unknown foreign Palestinian as a ‘potential terrorist.’ A wall of mistrust emerges through narratives, which creates presumptions, ideas and stereotypes about Palestinians in the West Bank (Gandolfo 2017). These narratives as Itay explained during an in-depth interview are strongly advertised by the army:

‘They tell them: ‘You can not rely on Arabs, they are the enemy.’ racist stuff. [But how do they start believing that?] ‘Once you get to the army, they bring you all these soldiers, who had experiences like their friend died or they got shot in their leg, or they tell you these crazy stories that they got into Gaza, and then this kid throw a block in his head. And you know it becomes your enemy because they are just giving you that point of view.’

(Itay, Jerusalem, 26-03-2018).

The Israeli informants mention that the Israeli defence force (IDF²⁵) created an image of ‘enemy threats’ during their participation. In this report, no judgements are made on the accuracy of these statements, they are solely used to show the different views of the Israelis towards the Palestinians and how these statements aid the creation of the boundaries between the two societal groups. Eriksen (2010b) and Kelman (1999) state that when a constant threat is perceived, the urge of belonging to an entity becomes even more relevant, causing certain aspects of self-ascription and ‘othering’ to be over- or under-communicated to strengthen a social identity as is the case in the military service.

2.2 ‘We are the victims’ - ‘they are the threat’ - The use of Palestinian narratives

Taking the opposite viewpoint, narratives concerning Israeli soldiers among the Palestinian population can also create a feeling of being unsafe. Hayaa’, who grew up in the village Kufr Qaddoum village which is part of the Qalqilya district in the West Bank, explains: *‘They [Palestinian parents] keep their children inside at a young age, because they are afraid of the IDF and that they would lose their permits. Children from small on learn already the narrative of being afraid. But also the narrative of hating the ‘Other,’ because the other is the reason for our suffering’* (Hayaa’, Palestinian Informant, 14-03-2018, Kufr Qaddoum). This influence of narratives also becomes apparent when we visit Susya, a town in the Jordan Valley, where Palestinians live side by side with Israeli settlers.

One day I met Hamudi, a agile and football fanatic little Palestinian boy, who spoke some broken English words. After a few hours kicking the ball together and picking flowers from the little green spots next to the sandy road, Hamudi came running and screamed " ima, ima (trying to pronounce my name 'Emma.') Then he shows a little Israeli flag he is holding in both hands. Afterwards he turns towards the settlement just a few kilometers further, points towards it and screams ‘Israel bad.’ He drops the flag on the ground, steps on it and screams: ‘lo [No] Israel, Palestine, Israel bad!’ I was wondering how such a young boy of five could already understand so much of the whole situation and where he got such strong political loaded ideas from.

(Susya, Territory under full Israeli control in the West Bank,

²⁵ IDF is the short form for the military defence force. The army of defence for Israel is mandatory for female and male Israelis

10-03-2018, Emma van Heeswijk)

One likely cause of these ideas are indeed the narratives as they include stories of Israeli destroying houses and carrying weapons that are passed on from generation to generation. These narratives are strengthened by the remains of the demolished houses and the almost completely burned-out car, all caused by the IDF, in the middle of the village (see image: 1 & 2). They remind



Image 1: Little boy playing in a demolished car, as a result of IDF force, in a Palestinian village.

the villagers of the pain the IDF soldiers have inflicted on them and highlights ‘being a victim’ as the self-describing category among the villagers. The scattering narratives become collective narratives, which are used to contain and strengthen the image of the Israelis being the threat to Palestinian existence. Telling these negative narratives from a very early age are causing the behaviour towards the Israelis to change, making the separation between the two societal groups even bigger.

Thus, narratives are used to construct an idea or image of the other, whether they are true or not. The narratives are passed on from generation to generation and as a result they shape self-identification and authentication of the Other (Gandolfo 2017). Collective narratives influence the way one acts and self-identifies within their environment. In the context of Israel-Palestine, identity boundaries are invigorated, and a clear distinction between the two groups is made.

2.3 Negative Interdependence

Palestinian informants often used the words '*occupation, demolishing from Israelis, threat, soldiers, trapped, settlers*'²⁶, when talking about their Palestinian identification and their lives in the West Bank. The negative terms are all connected with the Palestinian relation to Israel

²⁶ The words '*occupation, demolishing from Israelis, threat, soldiers, trapped, Zionist, settlers*' were taken out of interview with Palestinian informants based on their repetitivity.

and are used, manipulated and applied to frame the Other in a negative light. Talking about social identity with the Palestinian informants shows how the feeling of belonging exists by relating to the other. Kelman (1999) offers an explanation by defining the process as a 'negative interdependent identity formation'. A process of presenting the 'Other' in a bad light for a greater success of self-fulfillment and the preservation of the collective. His analysis focuses on the requirement of negative negotiation of another's group's identity for one's own group identity assertion (Kelman 1999): *'How can you appreciate the good man if you don't have a bad man?'* (Adam, Israeli, in a conversation about the bad images of Palestinians). One way for people to be considered as 'bad people' is to have fear for these people. The narratives not only show that the other group is bad because they destroy certain property, they also portray the other group as being scary, therefore creating fear within the own societal group. The following section will elaborate more on the inter-relational identity construction by analyzing how Palestinians and Israelis frame each other as a threat, what results into fearism of the other group.

2.4 Unexpected Encounter on the street filled with stereotypes

While walking around with a group of Palestinian boys in Jerusalem, during an encounter meeting organized by a joint left-wing organization, a stranger steps toward the group and asks for a lighter. Suddenly he turns around to the boys and says: 'You are not from here, you do not look like someone from here.' I look at the boys, then at the stranger and just think to myself: I can't see any physical difference between them. The boys make some awkward body moves backward, and Mosh pulls me on my arm closer to the group. 'Where are you guys from?', the stranger asks almost screaming.' Mosh answers: 'We are from Palestine.' At that moment the man's eyes brighten and a wrinkle shows up on his forehead. The stranger distance himself a little bit from the group. The Palestinian boy quickly ensured him, that he doesn't have to be afraid with their hands waving. 'I knew it; I saw that,' reciprocates the stranger. Mosh lights up the lighter in his hands. He launched over to the stranger and offers him the fire, as a sign of showing respect within the Arab culture. The man grabs it with both his hands and burns his finger in the flame. It doesn't seem to bother him, and he just says roughly: 'How do I know that it will not explode in your hands. I prefer doing it myself!'

(25-02-2018, Jerusalem, Emma van Heeswijk)

The excerpt gives one example of how Israelis and Palestinians are suspicious of each other. Encounters between the two groups can be uneasy and unfriendly. This situation is mainly the result of the stereotyping of both groups towards each other, such that they are even wary of asking the ‘Other’ for a lighter. The stranger framed the Palestinians as the ‘other’ based on a physical appearance, indicated by the words: ‘*You don’t look like someone from here*’. He believed to see that the group of boys could not be locals from Jerusalem, something that is hard to determine by an outsider. The circulation of stereotypes, as Eriksen (2010a, 278) and Jankes (2014, 152) explain, are oversimplified portrayals of cultural features in other groups which are habitually believed to exist. Stereotypes are often applied to whole ethnic groups and can be used to morally condemn the other, such as ‘never trust an Arab’ (Eriksen 2010a, 278). However, when these stereotypes are seen as granted, they can restrict some groups from excess to resources, prevent neutral/positive encounters between different groups members and rigidify the boundaries between the groups with the result of unequal power relations. Negative stereotypes are used to justify a monopoly over certain resources and help collectivities to bind resources, such as land, to their identity. The process of framing the other shows, how collective identities are highly interrelated with negative images of the ‘Other.’ and therefore the outwards use of circulating narratives influences vice versa the collective identity of the ‘other.’

Gandolfo (2016) describes, how the extensive destination and process of othering can result into ‘fear’ of the other. This situation is mainly the result of the stereotyping of both groups towards each other, such that they are even wary of asking the ‘Other’ for a lighter. The stranger framed the Palestinians as the ‘other’ based on a physical appearance, indicated by the words: ‘*You don’t look like someone from here*’. He believed to see that the group of boys could not be locals from Jerusalem, something that is hard to determine by an outsider. This section focused on the process of ‘othering’ through narratives and stereotypes. The process results in the creation of imagined boundaries. Framing the other group shows how collective identities are highly interrelated with negative images of the ‘Other.’

3. Self-defining through intergenerational narratives

The following analysis demonstrates how the history of the Jewish people is passed on from generation to generation. The process of self-definition creates a feeling of belonging to a collectivity. Self-definition requires the construction of internal narratives that strengthen a collective identity and reinforces a shared history or common ancestry. The focus of the

following paragraph will outline the Israeli experience of constructing an internal narrative.

3.1 Holidays, Belonging, and Remembering among israelis

April holds many different holidays and memorial days such as Passover²⁷, Yom Hazikaron²⁸ and Yom HaShoah²⁹, which remind the local [Israelis] people of a ‘dark’ history and the



Image 2: Israeli flags on memorial day. A day to remember the fallen soldiers on a national level

suffering of their ancestry. The historical narrative of Jews is connected with the Holocaust and the slavery exodus, and even the young generation seems to carry the self-definition of being a vulnerable group with them: *'During Pesach we are memorizing the liberation of the Jewish slaves in Egypt, that's why it's forbidden to eat bread, because the people in that time also didn't have time to let the bread rise during their escape'* (Boas, Israeli

informant, 30-03-2018, Jerusalem). The history narrative of the Jewish people shows a lot of repression from outside/foreign forces, while living ‘outside of their homeland, as the excerpt from an interview with Boas shows. the young generation, however, did not go through the experiences of the Slavery and the Holocaust and often had no first-hand experiences with the first and second intifada. Yet, they still feel the urge of contributing to the safety of their community by protecting the space that is self-ascribed to the Jewish people in order to prevent a repetition of the past events such as the Holocaust: *'My grandparents were Holocaust survivors and build up that nation from nothing, I have to keep it going'* (Efraim, Israeli informant, combat in the IDF, 25-03-2018).

3.2 ‘This is the only place for us’ - Collective memory within Israeli society

Israel is a young nation, marked by a collective narrative of suffering. This often comes to

²⁷ The Passover story is to find in the Biblical (of Exodus). The story concerns the time when Jews were hold under the enslavement in Egypt and how the story of the liberation from that time. The story is an important part of the torah (bible) and takes in a major role within the Jewish history. Passover is also a story of foreign oppression and the desire for freedom. Further does it underline the Jewish community as a strong and resilient entity, that has to g through a lot of suffering, but is not destroyable. <https://www.vox.com/cards/everything-need-to-know-passover-moses-seder/what-is-the-passover-story>

²⁸ Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and all Israeli victims of terrorism

²⁹ Also known as the Holocaust remembrance day

show during interviews with Israelis in Jerusalem: *'This is the only place for us to go, just this little country, no one else wants us.'* (Boas, Israeli informant, 15-02-2018). By trying to understand where the idea of being hated by others comes from, Israelis from all backgrounds functioned as informants. However, they all shared the same opinion; that Israel



Image 3: A group of Jewish from America honoring the Israeli state in Jerusalem close to the Damascus Gate.

is the only place where they can feel home, the only place where Jews can be Jews and where they don't have to hide their identity. In Israel, Judaism is not just a religion but also a part of the culture, and everyone has this one characteristic they share with each other. Boas indicates that an Israeli state is a homogeneous religious and ethnic group, that includes Jewish people and distinguishes clearly from non-Jewish people. This does not concern religious Jewish people or people who are actively practicing Judaism, but people who can prove that they are Jewish among their ancestors family tree. Israel is often presented under the slogan: *'the promised homeland for all Jews'* (Balfour Declaration of 1917³⁰), and the state was established as a safe place and as betrothed compensation for the suffering of the ancestors (Fenster, 2004). Adam, a 23-year-old ex-soldier who considers himself as non-religious, but feels a strong connection to Jerusalem. demonstrates how history and narratives are strongly interrelated with boundary drawing with another group:

'It started all so many years ago. Like 4000 years. My father of my father has been here. And when someone tells you a story like this you immediately feel belonging. Because this is my past. Because of so much war for this place, this area, this country. We need to keep it, safe! And we never forget where we came from, all the world has a lot of space, and we just have this. It's more than strong. Like a diamond.'

(Adam, Israeli informant, 08-04-2018, Jerusalem)

³⁰ The Balfour Declaration supported the establishment of a Jewish-national-home under the British Government. Before that time was referred to that land with Palestine.

The example shows, how the feeling of belonging to this specific place (Israel³¹) is highly connected to their parents' experience in the past. Historic narratives that demonstrate widespread suffering create emic and etic stereotypes such as: 'Everyone hates Jews' (emic stereotype category), and 'Arabs are killers' (etic stereotype category). Categories which are passed on from generation to generation and can fuel a political agenda. Negative stereotypes and a collective history reinforce an existential threat. The perceived threat can be used reinforce and promote a political narrative which promotes segregation and self-preservation by all costs.

4. Physical borders

4.1 Hostile land claims and the process of border drawing

The suffering of the ancestors in the past seems to become a part of the Israeli collective identity and could indicate an explanation for their strong feeling to protect their nation. The creation of a threat image of the Palestinians, for example as a terrorist, is clearly visible within the Israeli population. The findings we presented frame Palestinians as an enemy and threat that tries to take over their land. The same mechanism is found when Palestinians construct an image of Israeli soldiers. The determination of seeing Israelis Soldiers as a threat is a practice of 'collective punishment'.³² The image of two enemies strengthens the separation and boundaries between both parties. When two groups possess negative images of the other, the result could be the drawing of physical borders (Baumann and Gingrich 2005, 26). Kelman and Rabinowitz (2001) argue that it becomes difficult if two groups that feel essential different from each other and perform a strong boundary between them claim the same heritage. This land claim turns into a rivalry between Israelis and Palestinians. The distinction between 'us' and 'them' could be better rephrased in 'us against them.' Kelman (1999) describes the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis as a 'Zero-sum' conflict³³. The presence of another collectivity is a threat to the existence of another collectivity. This issue lays profoundly within the same heritage and land claim which both groups are making as the following citations of Ismad and Lora show:

³¹ referred to as Israel based on the Israeli participants definition

³² Based on interview with Hayaa', Palestinian informant

³³ Concept of zero-sum: The drawn metaphor is borrowed from the economic field and game-theory, which describes a 'situation on which participant's gain or loss of utility is exactly balanced by the losses or gains of the utility of the other participants.'

'We became refugees in our own homeland'

(Ismad, Palestinian informant, 25-03-2018)

'I just want to add, that we are not new immigrants, It's not that we are new here, but we returned back.'

(Lora, Israel informant 26-03-2018)

The land claims are drawn into reality by the separation wall, the checkpoints and fences that control access to the land. If one group takes control over the land; it can result in frustration and anger among the excluded group. The restriction goes further than just the limitation of 'free movement'. Among the Palestinian informants, the exclusion from Jerusalem and other parts of Israel is experienced as a confiscation of history and identity. This is visible by the excerpt taken from an interview with Amir a Palestinian ex-Hamas fighter shows:

'As a Palestinian, who loves so much his land and looks to his land as a part of him, when I look to the separation wall it hurts me a lot [...]. It makes a Palestine two parts. I look to this land as one part, Palestinian land. We don't want the wall [...] Also as a refugee from the first generation, that separation wall makes like a rock between me and my roots. My parents city where Be'er Sheva³⁴. The separation wall cuts off a lot of happy memories, all the memories which belong to my parents. The separation wall is like 'forget your history, forget your past, forget everything. And build a new history to you in this land now'.

(Amir, Palestinian informant, Ex-Hamas fighter,
03-04-2018, Jericho)

4.2 Security discourse & fear

The justification of the separation wall is often covered under the omen of the need of a security discourse: *[...] the border is a necessity because otherwise, they would take over the whole country because they want it all'* (Efran, Israeli informant 25-02-2018 Jerusalem).

The state of Israel, began a sharper security discourse with the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000. Israel installed checkpoints, and the permit regulations got stricter. The 'state of

³⁴ Be'er Sheva is now considered as part of Israel. It forms the largest city in the Negev desert of southern Israel.

exception'³⁵ model, introduced by Carl Smith, offers an interesting angle to understand the security discourse, and the Israeli military response to the intifada. If the state perceives a threat against its existence a proclamation can be declared. The result is the restriction of control and movement of the Palestinians in the West Bank (Mansbach 2009, 257).

'they are literally not scared of anything. Like once, I and my commander were searching in a house for bombs and we had to search the baby, they literally put a gun into the babies pampers, how fuckt is that they are sick in their heads. If we would not have the IDF control, they would try to get the land!'

(Michael, IDF soldier serving in a special unit,
09-04-2018, Jerusalem).

The conversation with Michael, who works for a special IDF unit, justifies the border control by the IDF. Michael and many other Israeli informants confirm that they support the border measures because they are a useful deterrent. Nitay, among other Israeli informants, believes that the construction of the separation wall decreases the number of terror attacks. He believes in the positive effects of the border: *'it got more difficult for them [terrorists] to enter Israel'* (Nitay, Israeli informant, student, 16-02-2018, Jerusalem).

However, some Israelis and Palestinians use a critical reflection on the security discourse. They argue that building the wall and extending it is *'a tactic to occupy the West Bank and to practice power'* (Hilal, machsom watch member 22-02-2018). The data show, how borders in the context of Israel-Palestine relations cause a strict separation between the groups with unequal power distribution. The more powerful group, Israel, can practice force and is in control of the land. Nataly, a member from machsom watch, explains that the agreed green line *'is a joke,'* almost ten percent of the West Bank is now taken over from Israel, and almost all checkpoints are on Palestinian territory (Nataly, machsom watch member, expert interview 27-03-2018). On the one hand, the support of the security discourse does reflect the experienced 'fear' among the Israeli informants, also supported by the narratives of their ancestors suffering. A sharp security discourse is supported to realize a safe state for all Jewish people. On the other hand, it does excuse the use of violence to sustain a safe and superior position (Newman 2000, Baumann and Gingrich 2005).

³⁵ 'A 'state of exception' refers to a predicament where the legal law order is replaced by military legal order (Agamben 2005; Mansbach 2009, 257).

4.3 Power relations at physical borders

Tali Hatuka (2014) argues the asymmetric power relations between Palestinians and Israelis is also reflected in border practices. Hatuka (2014, 348) defines an imbalance of power by the process of shaping the border that separate groups. Palestinians are predominantly the ones that are restricted in their right of free movement³⁶. However, physical borders and social boundaries are influencing each other. Hatuka (2014) argues that state tactics have created sets of 'borders' for the Israelis and Palestinians of the West Bank. Consequently, they influence the way of approaching each other in narratives and framing the others. He further argues, that consequently while Palestinians are controlled and restricted to move freely, Israelis can cross borders with ease (ibid). His claim seems to be somewhat exaggerated. Observations in the field confirm his account of border relations in Israel as settlers, soldiers, and humanitarian help organizations cross checkpoints with little effort³⁷. However, as the analysis of imagined boundaries shows is Hatuka's argumentation mainly based on theory (ibid). In practice, many Israelis are afraid of coming close to the Qalandia or Bethlehem checkpoint or entering territory 'A',³⁸ which is under full control of the Palestinian authority. First of all, the Israeli law forbids all its citizens to enter these territories, which contributes to the circulating of negative stereotypes. The settlers fear the same threat, and therefore they are very dependent on the security service of the IDF. Whereby a new border around the settlements is established, and it could be argued, that in fact, settlers are not crossing the borders as discussed above.

4.4 Control over space: Permit regulation

Palestinians and Israelis feel a strong connection towards Jerusalem. However, the official status of belonging categorizes someone as legally citizen of a place and restricts others from the same space. Palestinians from the West Bank are not only restricted from becoming a citizen of Jerusalem. Their access to the city is strictly controlled. For Palestinians to access Jerusalem, a 'special reason' has to be given for their visit: *'A visit to the hospital, proven*

³⁶ Palestinians access to space is impacted by several kinds of physical borders such as checkpoints, flying checkpoints, fences and walls, military controls and roadblocks.

³⁷ The construction of settler roads made the crossing procedure for Israelis easy. There are often not even passport controls for the Israeli citizens. Dependent of the territory the Israelis are entering in the West Bank, the existence of a physical checkpoint is not even closely comparable with the checkpoint the Palestinians have to go through.

³⁸ During the Oslo Accords in 1995 signed Palestinian and Israeli representatives an agreement that separated the West Bank into three territories under different control. Territory 'A' refers to the areas that are fully under Palestinian authority control.

with an official acceptance letter', forms one of these special reasons (Nahma, member of machsom watch, expert interview 028-03-2018, Jerusalem). However, most of the Palestinians who cross the checkpoint go to work in Israel. Therefore, they need a certain work permit, which frames exactly the date, time and duration they are allowed to enter Israel.

The construction of the separation wall started after the second intifada. Subsequently, access to Jerusalem become more difficult for Palestinians (Tali, machsom watch, expert interview, 01-04-2018, Jerusalem). In 1947, the United Nations announced Jerusalem as 'corpus separatum,' a city that should not be restricted to a single nation. The 'holy land' should be accessible to different actors. However, an interview with a human right expert revealed that this idea had changed radically. Their entering of



Image 4 shows waiting people at the Qalandia checkpoint. They hang their bags along the fence before queuing up in the gates, so that their belongings do not get damaged in the crowd and they can pick them up after they crossed

the city became even more difficult since Israel's introduction of a modernized system and the 'magnetic card': *'whoever wants to cross to go to the hospital, or to church, to the mosque or whatever. They need a magnetic card. And I have to say, it's a simple but a sophisticated way, to get the rule over them, now. There are 110 different permits and the whole bureaucracy is impossible to understand'* (Halil, Machsom watch member, and advocate, 01-04-2018, Jerusalem). The Israeli state introduced a more modern and computerized system at the checkpoint, which causes several consequences. First of all are they now able to control and monitor the exact amount of Palestinians that enter the country. The computer notes every single person and logs the details into the system. Therefore the District Coordination Office (D.C.O.) can also decide to prohibit Palestinians to enter Israel if there are already too many in the country or as a result of other occurrences such as Israeli holidays.

Several observation moments in the morning hours at the Qalandia and Bethlehem checkpoints showed the power asymmetry at the border. Queues of waiting, frustrated and exhausted people, who were standing there already for hours lined up (see image 4 & 5). The

crossing procedure can take between 25 minutes and four hours or even more³⁹. A waiting Palestinian at the Qalandia checkpoint explains, that he was standing there already since four o'clock in the morning but that since hours nothing would move at the checkpoints. It shows, how every day is different at the checkpoints and the man tells, that *'it is unpredictable what will happen, but I just have to stand here patient. No other choice'*.

Subsequently, physical separation can be a powerful tactic to prevent too much contact, and mingling between the groups is also used to keep the groups separated as Amir explains: 'Also the separation wall they do not allow us to contact people. Between Palestinians and Israelis, we cannot make contact' (Amir, Palestinian informant 20-03-2018, Nablus). Meaning that personal contact between the border crossers and the soldiers is restricted. The



Image 5: Palestinians waiting to cross the Qalandia checkpoint. Queuing starts already at four O'clock in the morning.

cleanness⁴⁰ of the checkpoints causes frustration on the side of the Palestinians and helps to empower a conception of an identity and reinforce particular stereotypes of the Israelis. The soldiers are sitting behind bulletproof glass, fully equipped with weapons and the communication happens mainly through speakers. The position the soldiers are taking in contributes to the atmosphere of a dangerous space which reinforces that negative stereotype 'never trust an Arab' among Israeli soldiers.

³⁹ The time indication is based on several observation measurements at the Qalandia and Bethlehem checkpoints during the fieldwork period, as well as on reports from machsom watch.

⁴⁰ The term 'Cleanness' is often used by Israel human right activist and advocates. It refers to the strategically organized checkpoint procedures, which prevent too much personal interaction between Israeli Soldiers and Palestinians.

4. Chapter Empirical Part

Noémie Hoffmann

Bi-national movements challenging the dominant narrative of separation

In a societal structure in which interaction between both sides; Palestinians and Israelis, is prevented by governmental and military institutions, it is difficult to create a bond of trust between both groups. Interacting with 'the other side' means to step out of the threat paradigm which is created in both societies, in order to keep both societies segregated.

Bi-national movements try to counteract that system of segregation by organizing activities and meetings, in order to make people start interacting with each other. The narratives of the Israeli and Palestinian society are created and performed in a way that it justifies a separation between both collectivities. Considering this dominant narrative of separation, the interaction between Israelis and Palestinian (living in the West Bank) is not a "normal" thing. Researching the personal transformation that members of bi-national movement experience, will lead to a better understanding of the difficulties they encounter.

In this chapter, it will be argued that making the choice to become a bi-national activist means to create a new identity of activism⁴¹ which stands in opposition to the order of the prevailing society and the dominant narrative. How this process of transition and change of identity and perspective takes place, will be analyzed in the following section. The analysis is based on the experience of members of the bi-national movement members, Combatants for Peace, Tiyul-Rihla, Parents Circle Family Forum, Women Wage Peace and people who chose to be active in their own way. The status that the new formed bi-national groups form in society will be discussed with three major theoretical concepts in mind; Liminality, 'rite de passage, and Appadurai's majority-minority discussion . The last section will focus on the motivation of members of bi-national movements pursuing their joint actions even though the experience of fundamental changes in society are for most members not apparent. Analysing the motivations of members, shows the personal stimulus to build up personal relationships and to create a transcendent identity (Kelman 1999) in order to cope with the conflict situation and to counteract the dominant narrative of separation.

⁴¹ By using the term 'Identity of activism' we intend to illustrate that being an activist in the conflict society of Israel/Palestine does not only imply to express a political standpoint. It is rather a fundamental process of identity transformation.

1. The process of personal change

'I was a commander. I remember that we went to Palestinian towns and when we saw graffiti slogans on the walls of a house, we stopped and pulled the families out of bed in the middle of the night. They were scared as hell. We did it under the mission 'Fighting Terror'. It took me years to understand that what we were doing, was not 'Fighting Terror'. Think about it. The people who spray the graffiti on the walls, are not the ones who live there. They are radicals who want to make the house owners angry, to get them involved in a terror organization like Hamas. So the story, if you analyze it correctly, is not about fighting terror. It is about creating terror to a certain level, in a structured way, so that we have a justification to keep the army in this area. We create enough fear and terror to carry on.'

(Noas, Israeli
member of CFP, 26-03-2018)

The above mentioned personal story illustrates an example of realizations which occurred after a conversation with a Palestinian CFP member about the purpose of the graffiti on Palestinian houses. Understanding the effect of certain 'Fighting Terror' mission, and in a broader sense the impact of the occupation on the personal lives of Palestinians in the West Bank, was for most Israeli members a turning point to start becoming active in a bi-national movement. Ran, co-founder of PCFF, explains that the process of taking personal responsibility for past and future actions is highly important: *'Once you accept that thought, slowly a wall begins to crack'* (Ran, 04-02-2018). Making the decision to get active in a bi-national movement is explained by Elia as a frightening process:

'You decide to go against your own social system and to connect with "the enemy". But after having connected you can not be afraid anymore, because you know the other side, which supposed to be so frightening! And then question after question develops in your head

(Elia, Israeli member of CFP, 15-03-2018).

1.1 Creating awareness among civilians

Personal realizations and change of performances are mostly a result of an external trigger, as a new encounter or a visual experience, which develops into a process of questioning one's

own attitude within society (Goffman 1961). Lio, a 67-year-old Israeli member of CFP, is a good example which illustrates this significant change in attitude towards the IDF and the territorial occupation of Palestinian territories:

'When my kids had to go to the army I definitely thought it is something they should do. However, the years of being active in CFP has made him open his eyes to several things: 'Before I got to know CFP I had never seen the settlements in the West Bank, and when I saw that, it was clear to me; We have to do something about it'. And then, when I got to know non-violent resistance, I knew this is the answer'

(Lio, 22-03-2018).

Going to the West Bank is an easier process than for Palestinian crossing the border to Israel. In the case of Palestinians, coming into contact with Israelis is more difficult because of practical reasons, such as not getting a permit to travel to Israel and because of not wanting to meet 'the occupiers'. Aabid, Palestinian member of CFP and ex-Hamas fighter, explains that his ex-girlfriend

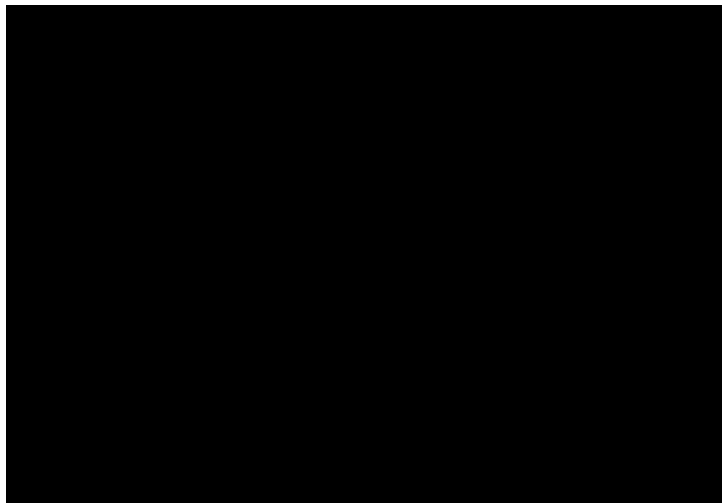


Image 6 Demonstration march by CFP members in the West Bank

by accident heard of a group of Israelis who wanted to meet with Palestinian ex-fighters and pushed him to go. He refused for a long time, but finally accepted to go, with the thought to give the Israeli participants a moral lesson. The first meeting led to an immense confusion, as Aabid didn't know about Israelis who were also fighting against the occupation as he was.

These two examples, illustrating that both sides don't know much about 'the other' and shows that stereotypes and a certain ignorance is created in order to prevent people to cooperate. Bi-national movements try to disturb the existing unawareness, for example, through bringing Israelis to the illegal construction sites of settlements within the Palestinian territory. As Uri argues: *'The reality of the conflict mostly occurs and continues to evolve in the West Bank. And if you don't go there you don't see it and you will not understand it!!* (Uri, Israeli member of CFP, 02-04-2018). This argumentation is in line with Hatukas analysis that 'appearance, identity and space work together in the encounter at the border

[...]'(Hatuka 2012, 348). He illustrates with it, that increasing civilian consciousness about the capacity to act as a civilian and the perception of borders as a public space, leads to a development of a growing civil activism (ibid.) Bi-national movements in Israel use border space for creating awareness among civilians, in order to disrupt the negative stereotypes of 'the other'. By doing so, the negative interrelated identity is tried to be shifted towards an awareness, that civilians can have the power to jointly act against the system of inequality.

1.2 From a 'good fighter' to a responsible activist

The military service forms a major aspect of the Israeli identity. The idea of "being a good soldier" presents a clear role model for young Israelis. Going to the army is therefore not only an obligation by law but much more guided by the feeling of wanting to belong to that strong national entity, and wanting to give back to society. Eva, coordinator of the Jerusalem-Bethlehem group of CFP explains her motivation and feeling at that time with the words: *'There were other soldiers who risked their lives, and now it is my turn to protect my society as well [...] Nowadays, I think differently'* (Eva, 13-03-2018), she says. However, the decision to make the step and start becoming active in CFP was challenging and scary for her:

'It was strange for me. I felt out of my skin. I identified with the goal but I had no experience of being in the Palestinian territory, I didn't know any Palestinian. The language was not the language I used, the phrases they were shouting not mine, [...] I needed a good answer for everything I was doing and shouting. So it took me around two years to check in with myself, if the ideology of CFP is really what I want and if I feel comfortable with it'.

(Eva, 13-03-2018)

Also Aabid, now being an active member of CFP, often gives speeches about his personal process of transformation from being a Hamas fighter to a non-violent activist.

'I used to be a violent guy who liked to fight. I had so much anger and hate in me [...] After getting active in CFP I got very reserved and calm. It is a process' he says *'and in the beginning, it was not easy. I had a lot of conflicts within myself'.*

(Aabid, 13-04-2018)

Aabid is a good example who shows that through belonging to a different group, the identity and behaviour of a person can totally change according to the new position and role one

adopts in society. The encountered personal conflicts of Eva and Aabid strongly illustrate how a role conflict and personal identity change goes hand in hand. Van Gennepe's concept of *rite de passage* can be applied for this illustrated personal transformation. The feeling that Eva describes; 'being out of your skin', exemplifies Van Gennepe's first stage of separation from the previous comfort zone (Van Gennepe 1960, vii). The phase in which unknown people, spaces and language are encountered, forms the second space of transition of Van Gennepe's model. In the last stage of re-aggregating to a new social unit, the individual join the movement and the process of transforming old identity patterns towards a transcendent identity develops.

1.3 From a particularistic to a transcendent identity

I am sitting in a room with Noas and Aabid (Israeli and Palestinian member of CFP) and a group of young future military officers from America. It is a Dialogue meeting of CFP (see image 7) in which both members tell their personal story and the philosophy of CFP is presented. Noas explains: 'We all went through a brainwash sort of thing through being a soldier, fighter, [...] We have been manipulated from our leaders, both sides. What we (the members) share in common is the willingness to take responsibility for our past and future actions and to question them all.'

(Noas, Jerusalem, 13-04-2018)

Noas exemplifies that through unraveling shared aspects of identification; the willingness of personal responsibility and recognizing a manipulation from leaders, the current narrative is being challenged by a collective narrative, focusing on inclusion rather than separation.



Image 7 Dialogue meeting organized by CFP

Kelman proposes in his analysis a 'transcendent identity of 'civil identity' which assumes equal citizenship for majority and minority' (Kelman 1999, 586-587). However, a critique point in his analysis is that Kelman bases this hypothesis only

within Israel. We argue that the potential of bi-national movements lies in their approach to try to stretch the concept of a transcendent identity by including the West Bank as well. Their overarching aspects for the creation on a transcendent identity is based, one the one hand, on an emotional level, and on the other, on their ideological aim. Accepting shared experiences of hate and pain forms the emotional level on which CFP and PCFF try to create a human bond between Palestinian and Israelis. On the other hand the, their ideological aim is to use the power of civil resistance to achieve equality between Israelis and Palestinians. Through these aspects bi-national movements try to establish a transcendent identity, in order to move away from the paradigm of separation.

Polletta and Jasper (2001, 290) argues, that the motivation of people performing collective actions is never purely based on the ideological interest but rather on the emotional satisfaction they get from the collective identity. This argument is truly recognizable in the way the bi-national members interact with each other and in the way the movements present themselves to the public. Ran, co-founder of PCFF, preaches that the strength of the movements lies in *'the shared pain of having lost a close family member, and that using the energy of the pain will create a psychological and political change'* (Ran, 04-02-2018).

However, recognizing common aspects of humanness, does not intend to create a cultural assimilation. In contrary, the urge of these bi-national movements is to create acceptance for cultural and personal differences. Sending messages of support between the Palestinian and Israeli members on memorial days on each side, is one example which shows how members within the movements express their acceptance and compassion towards one another. These small actions of empathy and compassion are a first step to create a collective base on which a transcendent identity of cultural acceptance can develop.

After having discussed the personal identity changes and the creation of a transcendent identity within the movements, the following part will illustrate how these personal changes lead to new struggles and shift of position within their social environment.

2. Interactions between bi-national movements and their social environment

'When you start becoming an activist you really fast became an enemy of your own army, or other parts of your own society. Even if you just go to pick olives in the West Bank [...] And two years before I was a soldier in the same army!

(Uri, Israeli member CFP, 28-03-2018)

This quote illustrates that through adopting a new identity as a bi-national activist, individuals find themselves in a position of being suddenly expelled from certain groups, they belonged to before. Bi-national movements in the Israeli-Palestinian context, take an active role against a system of inequality and segregation. Various problems are therefore encountered on different levels. The differences in living situations, social statuses and positions within and outside of their society, makes a comparison of the encountered difficulties by Israeli and Palestinian members very difficult. In the following part, attention will be given to both groups, in order to clarify the different struggles members faces through the belonging to a bi-national group and the new occurring identity of activism.

2.1. The majority-threat of the Israeli society

For most Israeli members, being part of a bi-national movement creates new encounters with members of different sub-groups within the Israeli society, as well as with people from the Palestinian side. The personal identity of new becoming members of bi-national movement is through the new belonging, suddenly enriched by an identity of activism, which the individual embodies and to which his/her surrounding react (Hall 1996; Goffman 1961). Through an activism-identity the contact to more radical right wing people and the military increases, because of the interactions at demonstrations, discussions and political gatherings. Some Israeli members find themselves being seen as an 'enemy' from certain groups of their own Israeli society which can lead to a feeling of expulsion and threat in their own previous "safe" environment. As Lio, Israeli member of CFP explains: *'The chance that I will get harmed by a radical Israeli is way bigger than that I will get attacked by a Palestinian'* (Lio, 22-03-2018).

Even if right wing groups do not directly get affected by them, they experience a threat for their position in society and for "their" national identity (Falah and Newman 1995, 694). This example can be clarified by Appadurai's majority-minority theory, which points out that a majority feels threatened by a minority in terms that the urge of a national completeness is disturbed and the purity of their identity threatened (Douglass 1966; Appadurai 2006, 1).

Furthermore, the complex positioning and interrelations between these different sub-groups, shows the strongly insufficient categorisation of the accustomed division between Palestinian and Israeli, as two opposed groups. It is through the process of becoming part of a new social group, that these "classic" distinctions appear to be fluid and self-constructed, and

with it a new process of re-positioning and reconstruction of the surrounding social groups set up (Barth 1998; Eriksen 2010). It is in this process of creating new relations and cutting off others, that the dissimilarity of groups and contrasted ideologies present itself (Appadurai 2006). This new position in society let members critically reflect on the classical separation between “the” Palestinians and “the” Israelis.

Israelis that interact with the other side, are often accused of acting against their own society through their effort in reaching equality between Israelis and Palestinians. The process of reaching a one-state or bi-national state solution with equal political, human and economic rights for both society, seems far. Many Israelis are afraid of losing their “safe” superior position as majority and therefore do not act in the favor of equality (Newman 2008). *‘Many people in Israel think that the occupation is a result of how Palestinians act, so we have to control them’* explains Eva, a young Israeli member of CFP (13-03-2018). Because of this dominant narrative, many of the Israeli members of bi-national movements experienced accusations of being a traitor to the Jewish state, even though most of them clearly want Israel to stay a Jewish state.

The major problem lies in the negative interdependence of the Israeli and Palestinian narrative, as have been explained in chapter three. The fear of losing the national Jewish identity and Jewish state character does not accommodate the idea of fully accepting a Palestinian state.

‘On a personal level people have an emotionally accepting attitude towards Palestinians. In my environment people have Arab friends, drink coffee with them etc, but if I tell them about my actions at CFP they call me a traitor. This is why I say that people are propaganda brainwashed’.

(Elia Israeli member of CFP, 15-03-2018)

On the base of the experiences of Israeli members of bi-national movements, it can be argued that interacting with Palestinians on a personal level, is socially accepted and even accommodated in the daily life of some Israelis. However, working together with Palestinians towards an empowerment of their community, is experienced as a danger for the Israeli identity (Kelman 1999).

In the context of conflict society, going to the Army is portrayed as an essential part of the Israeli identity and is furthermore an obligation to become a good citizen. On the one hand, an immense pressure lies on performing that role, and on the other hand, going to the Army is something young people just want to do, as Eva, Israeli member of CFP explained:

'All my friends went to the army, so why not going as well? I felt that I have to give something back to my society. In Israel everyone tells us, other soldiers died for your security, so now it is your turn. It is just part of being an Israeli, you know'

(Eva, 13-03-2018)

The personal involvement in the system of the occupation, that comes along with joining the military service, is often neglected. This unawareness of personal actions is the dominant narrative in Israel. Nurit (18-year old Israeli member of CFP) challenged that dominant narrative through denying the military service. She spend four months in prison because of her resistance. The four months of prison, illustrate that in a conflict situation, citizens are directly punished for “abnormal” behavior in order to keep the social structure stable and the national Identity unstained (Douglas 1966; Falah and Newman 1995).

2.2. The empowered and excluded position of Palestinian members

The Palestinian member faces more fundamental problems with their environment by choosing to be a member of a bi-national movement, as will be illustrated in this section. The status as ‘occupied people’, living under the Israeli military rule, means to them being trapped in their ‘own country’. Palestinians often see themselves as having the status of refugees in their own territory.

This refugee position means not being able to cross the border without a permit, being afraid of openly discussing political topics and not being able to choose their own way of life (Newman 2008; Mi’Ari 1999). One of the most popular non-violent way of resisting the status quo of the occupation, is through boycotting any kind of interaction with the Israeli side (Awad, 1984). Being active in a bi-national movement means to cooperate with the occupiers and because of that, many of the Palestinian members get accused of *'tatbia'*⁴² by their own social environment, which brings them in personal troubles. The concept of normalization has different meanings for Israelis and Palestinians. The Israeli perspective refers to a basic cooperation with Arab countries in different fields; economic, political and social. On the Palestinian side however, no attempt of normalization will start, before the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories has ended and Palestine gained an equal state status (Mi'Ari 1999, 342). Cooperating with Israelis through being active in a bi-national

⁴² *Tatbia*: Normalization in Arabic

movement therefore has fundamental effect on the personal life of the members. Raafat, Palestinian woman and participant of Women Wage Peace explains: *'My husband did not talk and interacted with me for a month because of my participation in a demonstration of the joint organization women wage peace'* (Raafat, 17-02-2018). Aabid, Palestinian member of CFP explains that his village organized a demonstration march against him because of his actions with Israelis. These are only two example of how the social environment reacts to cooperating activities of some Palestinian members. *'People in the West Bank see working together as the other side of a boycott. You cannot work together and disagree'* explains Aabid. This is an internal obstacle for the creation of a collective narrative between Palestinian and Israelis.

The above given examples illustrate, that some Palestinian members of bi-national movements get excluded by their own society, which is a result of their new position in society and their new adopted identity as activist. The excluding aspect is manifested through personal accusations of being a traitor to the Palestinian nation, or even through psychological and physical harassments. This position can be analysed as a liminal position, which is on the one hand excluding, but on the other hand also empowering (Turner 1969).

Van Gennep's and Turner's analysis illustrates that the individual, after the process of identity transformation, reaggregate to their social environment with a new position and status (Van Gennep 1960, vii; Kurki 2014). It is even argued that the liminal personage gets a new position and status which is most of the time socially more expected than before. For most members of the movements this is however not the case. In the case of Aabid, he illustrates that after his first years at CFP, he had adopted a new identity and found a new position as a treasurer at CFP. However he has never gained back total acceptance of his new position in his prevailing environment. Donnar and Wilson (1999, 113) refer to these people, who stay trapped in a liminal position and are excluded from the social order, as liminal outsiders. However, the position that Palestinians gain through becoming a member of a bi-national movement is more complex. Their new position empowers them to get more freedom of traveling and being less isolated in the West Bank, as they get facilities for their work to travel to Israel and International countries and to get in contact with people from different cultural groups. This interconnectedness creates more "external" independence, however within their own society they remain more isolated. This is a controversial position which dispute the analysis of Turner (1969), Van Gennep (1960) and Donnar and Wilson (1999) as explained. This betwixt and between position of being empowered on the one side, and excluded on the other, is a consequence of the complex asymmetrical power relation

between Israel and Palestine. It again shows the significance that studying social processes of transition and identity change can only to be understood in to its context, which is in this case a conflict society. It is in these small examples of people crossing the lines of separated groups, identity and statuses, that the complexities of the context come to surface.

After having discussed the relation between a member of a bi-national movement and its environment, the focus will now be turned to the interrelation between members within a bi-national group. These interpersonal processes within the bi-national movements are important social phenomena to look at, in order to understand the discrepancy between sharing the same ideology on the one hand, but on the other, facing totally different life situations and living conditions. These “external” influences have great impact on the formation of the group and on the interaction and understanding of each other within the group.

3. Asymmetrical power relations within bi-national movements

‘I don't feel that we are equally accepted’⁴³

We are sitting with a group of Palestinians and Israelis on the stone steps of an old amphitheater in Jerusalem, sharing our impressions and ideas about the trip of the last two days. Aamir raises his hand ‘I want to share something’; ‘I liked the trip, it was nice to get to know all of you wallah...but I don't feel that we (Palestinians) were equally accepted



image 8 Gathering of Tiyul-Rihla participants after a joint trip in Jerusalem, 24-03-2018

from the Israelis and the Internationals.’ The Israeli members are shaking their heads, looking confused. He continues to talk about things he liked; walking through Jerusalem, getting to know Jewish history,... After Aamir’s speech has ended, Duli, an Israeli participant jumps forward ‘I would like to react’. He starts; ‘Aamir, I am really sad to hear that. Why

⁴³ The vignette describes a gathering with Palestinian and Israeli participants of the Tiyul-Rihla project. The scene illustrates a discussion between a Palestinian and an Israeli participant who reflect on their joint trip in Jerusalem (24-02-2018). See image 7.

didn't you say that before? Now the trip is over and we cannot change anything about that! Duli goes on: 'I have to say I am really proud of the weekend. I will go home to my friends and I can tell them, I met Palestinians! And there were really nice! I will encourage them to come with me the next time.' Next to me sits Avi, organizer of the trip. He rolls his eyes and whisper *'This are the reactions that I am always afraid of. Duli feels super liberal, acceptant now and good over himself to have met Palestinians and that's it! He has, in his opinion, "done" something and can continue with his normal life now. Exactly because of these reactions I sometimes really question the project [...].'*

(24-02-2018, Jerusalem,
Noémie Hoffmann)

This situation gives a clear example of an interaction between Palestinians, Israelis and Internationals and illustrates how each person takes in relation to the others a different position and role. Aamir, young Palestinian member of Tiyul-Rihla, points out the asymmetrical power relations and inequality that Palestinians often experience in relation to Israelis. An unequal position, in terms of political and economical aspects, is surely present in the daily life of Palestinians. However the experience of being a victim has also a lot to do with the cultural narrative that has been passed on since the Nakba in 1948 (Newman 2006, 2008; Kelman 1999).

Aaron, Israeli member of Tiyual-Rihla, shared his personal impression about the Palestinian complaints in an interview after the trip:

I felt many complaints from the Palestinians side. Everyone knows that their lives are harder than ours. But we are not here to hear these complainings. We are here to hear about their lives and about how they are as a person. We want to understand we want to trust, but with these complaints,... We know that they grew up on complaining, this is their program. But we also grew up on hate. So we put our shit aside and they should put their shit aside, and then we talk.

(Aaron, Israeli member Tiyual-Rihla 25-03-2018)

Aarons statement shows that among the Israeli members a willingness and interest to connect with Palestinians is present. However the different living conditions and political situation in the West Bank, which effects Palestinian way of interacting with Israelis, is often not taken into account by the Israeli members. One can argue that empathy and

acknowledgement for the fundamental differences that living in the West Bank bring along, are missing in the interaction between Palestinian and Israelis. This underlines the argument of Polletta and Jasper (2001) that an emotional bond is needed in order to create a social change. The different life situations and motivations of participants to join a bi-national trip has to be understood, in order to unravel frustrations and misunderstandings between the members.

The motivation for most Palestinians to participate in the joint trip was to get a permit to be able to go to Jerusalem, which is for most of them the only possible way to see Jerusalem. Furthermore, most Palestinian expressed a desire to have fun, to relax, to meet new people, discuss their situation with the Israelis and to enjoy time together with a drink. As Muzhi, a Palestinian and Hebrew-Arabic translator of the joint Tiyul-Rihla trip, explains: *'They (Palestinians) have been living through shit, so they try to explain their life (to Israelis)'* (Muzhi, 26-02-2018). According to him, Palestinians concentrate more on daily life, because of the occupation issue. This sometimes clashes, according to Muzhi and to my own observations, with the motivations of the Israeli participants of the Trip. Most of the Israeli participant are scholars and highly educated people. Their motivation for joining is mostly based on their wish to get to know more about Palestinian history and Arab culture on an academic level. Furthermore, the Israeli members are mostly a lot older than the Palestinian participants. As has been showed, these differences in age, motivations for joining a bi-national project, and life situations, influences the interaction between Palestinian and Israeli participants. The ignorance for the life of the other, expresses itself in misunderstandings and frustrations⁴⁴ between both sides. Such frustrations influence the new created image of 'the other' and lead again to a stereotyping process. In that sense, the effectiveness of bi-national trips challenging cultural boundaries can be questioned. However, active members of bi-national projects explained that interactions on a regular base between members of both sides lead finally to a process of challenging their own stereotypes of 'the other'. As Muzhi, pointed out in an Interview: *'I noticed, that people who continue joining the Trips eventually make friends and see reality through their eyes (...) They have to experience daily life of the other and understand their fears. Than eventually they understand that everyone is true about his life'* (Muzhi, 23-02-2018).

⁴⁴ One major frustration for some Israeli participants was that Palestinian participants came to the Trip because of the possibility to go to Jerusalem, and not because of their interest to discuss peace solutions with Israelis.

4. Coping strategies and personal motivations for social change

It is all crap! - So, Why do you carry on?

'You know, we are really close Aabid and I. If he stays over illegally (in Israel) he always stays at my place. I am as an uncle for his children.'

(Lio, Israeli member of CFP, 22-03-2018)

Within the studies of social movement, many Sociologist and Anthropologist have dedicated their attention to the question of why people join collective efforts (Polletta and James 2001, 289). Bi-national movements do not continue to exist because of their great impact on the structural level of the conflict, but rather because of the created identity which encourages members, and gives them a feeling of belonging to a new small community. Polletta and James (2001) argues that people's prior bonds lead to a feeling of moral obligation to perform solidaristic behavior towards others (Polletta and James 2001, 289). Our findings however have shown that in a conflict society, the belonging towards a bi-national movement is, to a certain extent, a personal coping strategy against the created threat of "the other". Being part of a bi-national movement facilitates getting in contact with "the other", which enables people to discuss the ongoing acts of violences on both sides and gives them emotional support for daily life experiences.

Observations and interviews have shown that most members lost hope in the effectiveness of bi-national movements to create a fundamental change of the status quo of the separation. As Lio, Israeli member of CFP, says: *It's all crap! But you know, I like to be with my friends and it is my new small family'*. Even if an expected macro-level change is not visible, personal interactions and friendships are the result of the joint actions of the movements. These new created bonds are a prove that bi-national movements do challenge the political attempt to keep a separation between members of both societies. Bi-national form a small minority within the Israeli and Palestinian society and are, paradoxically, a separated unit which is positioned between the Palestinian and Israeli society. We argue that with the creation of such bi-national groups some personal cultural boundaries are broken down, however others, new ones are created within the Israeli and Palestinian society. A reason for the external position of bi-national movements is according to Lio, that *'CFP is too radical for the Israeli society and not radical enough for the Palestinians'*. This is the reason why Ram, actor and DJ in Jerusalem, explains that he wants to create interaction between a wide range of 'normal' people, which are not particularly active in a movement or

already politically left leaning. Therefore he argues *'meeting the other side and creating interactions between Palestinians and Israelis has to be combined with fun'* (Ram, 14-04-2018). His idea is to connect people through Mizrahi electronic music, which has a Jewish and Arabic background and therefore, attracts people from both sides. *'When people have fun they forget about who they are and where they come from. You just share a drink, dance together [...]'* (Ram, 14-04-2018). In that sense, a simple interaction can counteract the stereotypes and fear of the other. This example shows the relevance of Goffman's (1961) analysis who tries to emphasize that gatherings/encounters let people reflect on their own images, roles and status in relation to a new encountered other. Therefore, the strength of encounters lies in the power of creating a role conflict, which challenges indoctrinated/ rigid images of "the other". Creating such a space of new encounters is the aim of bi-national movements, which is a challenging mission regarding the power of the dominant narrative of separating people through the creation of fear. As Noas, Israeli member of CFP explains:

'If people are able to neglect the external created image of 'the other', they will always find a wonderful person inside. It is about creating a pure interaction between humans'.

(Noas, 13-04-2018)

Conclusion

Emma van Heeswijk & Noémie Hoffmann

In the previous two chapters, we have illustrated and analysed how borders and boundaries separate groups, yet simultaneously could moderate a space for encounters and interactivity. The combined research illustrates the processes of categorization and interaction which occur among and across borders and boundaries. However, this research emphasized the opinion that both processes should be studied in a combined framework. By looking at the paradox of separation and interaction among borders and boundaries, this research adds a micro-analysis about the complexity of the social organization within the middle eastern context. Therefore, the concluding chapter combines the two processes and discusses the interrelation between them. As discussed in the previous chapters, the appearance of borders and boundaries is a fluid process, changing and moving constantly. It moderates negotiations between the various actors. The combined analysis revealed a discovery of various border/ boundary types within and between the Israeli and Palestinian societies. By combining both aspects, different stages of borders and boundaries evidently stood out. The following section will elaborate on the different stages of separation and interaction, which interplay with the process of new identity formation.

The Israeli and Palestinian societies consist out of many different sub-groups and can therefore be analysed as highly segregated. This ‘inner societal separation’ forms the first boundary stage of our findings, whereby negotiation of categorization within the Israeli and Palestinian society takes place. These boundaries are mainly conceived and accomplished between the actors of each category, whereby categories such as right wing, left wing, Mizrahi or Ashkenazi are discussed. This process of categorization happens through the channel of self-ascription and othering.

However, the Israeli society is most often presented as a strong collective entity which stands in opposition to its surrounding Arabic neighbours. This strict separation forms the second phase of analysis and illustrates that the intra-societal divisions (first phase) are, when seen in the light of the “enemy”, not of major concern anymore. Regarding the history narrative, a sharp separating dimension between Palestinians and Israelis is apparent. Namely, both societies firmly hold to their own stories, which either contradict with the narrative of the other, or denies its existence. The narrative transmission, which creates a feeling of belonging in the in-group while simultaneously creates a boundary to the outer

group, is deeply rooted within the past and present events. This shows how history narratives are shaped in a functional way for the in-group and, furthermore, how it results into a hostage between Israelis and Palestinians. Past events are therefore still a relevant factor for the creation of a collective identity. As has been described in the chapter of three the perception and the identity of Palestinians and Israelis are strongly influenced by the negative aspects of each other (Kelman 1999). This negative interdependence of the Palestinian and Israeli identity is a major struggle which leads to a process of simple accusation towards the other, in order to keep the own identity superior to the other (Kelman 1999, 595).

The process of categorizing separated identity collectivities is strongly based on an ‘us’ against ‘them’ level, whereby revaluation and hostility is presumed. Constructing the image of a “strong enemy” gives a good reason to control and structure the social group. The structural implementation and security measurements are therefore justifications in order to keep the in-group safe. In this conflictual context, people feel existentially threatened by the other side, which is in some way created but also truly experienced through the stereotypes and narratives that both sides have of one another. On a structural as well as on a social level, both groups are torn apart and a status quo of separation exists. It has to be mentioned that contact between the groups (besides movements) occurs, however as the analysis shows, these encounters mainly occur during soldier-Palestinian controls, checkpoint crossing procedures or in the work field. This shows that interactions between Israelis and Palestinians do not occur on an equal power level, but rather take place in a restricted and controlled manner. Stereotypes and narratives create an invisible wall between the groups, referred to as imagined boundaries, limiting open minded interactivity between the groups.

The described paradigm of separation is challenged by bi-national movements aiming for interaction between members of both societies. However, the research has shown that through the interactions, created by bi-national groups, the segregation is not disrupted on a structural level yet challenges a personal level. The new bonds/friendships/relationships between members and the realization of a new identity of activism are the prove for the challenging characteristic of encounters/ interactions.

In every society, citizens are “expected” to live up to a certain position/ role in order to keep the in-group structured and safe. As discussed earlier, the military service plays an important role in the Israeli society by showing loyal attitude towards their group.

Within the Palestinian society, boycotting or denying the existence of Israel, form an important factor in showing loyal membership. As has been illustrated, getting active in a bi-national movement therefore leads to a denial of the socially expected roles and therefore

poses a threat to their own group, through the created identity of a bi-national activist (Newman 2006b; Douglas 1966). On a personal as well as on a collective level, a role conflict emerges, as the individual finds itself in tension with old and new role model and role expectations. Linking that process back to the debate about borders/boundaries, we argue that through the new created identity and belonging to a bi-national activist group, new separating lines on an intra-societal level emerge, while a boundary on an intercultural level fractures.

Through that paradox of fractured and re-shaped boundaries, new interactions and encounters take place. We argue in our analysis that bi-national movements and activists interact within a liminal space, which is characteristic for its existence outside of social orders (Turner 1969; Kurki 2014). As has been illustrated, the liminal space gives on the one hand, an empowered position for the members, and on the other hand an excluding status from society. The findings show, that the Palestinians are stuck in a ‘trapped (minority) position, whereby it is impossible for them to fully penetrate the boundaries and integrate into the more dominant Israeli identity. The attempt of cooperating with the ‘enemy’ and therefore to be part of the more powerful group, results not into an equal power position, but rather in a between and betwixt position.

The empowering aspects of that position lies in the possibility of critically reflecting the dominant social structure (Turner 1969). Even if the membership of joint groups, does not automatically lead to an equal power position for Palestinians, our observation shows that some Palestinian members are creating international relations which gives them the opportunity of escaping the ‘trapped minority position’ of living in the West Bank. The participation in movements can be seen as a chance for Palestinians to change their livelihoods by making contact with the more powerful Israelis and International actors. As a result, young Palestinians experience more support from international organizations/institutions, however mostly not from their own social environment. Some of the Palestinian informants receive scholarships for participating within activities organized by the bi-national movements and others just take advantage of the possibility of getting permits, that allows them to leave their experienced ‘trapped situation’.

Our last stage of analysing borders/boundaries emphasises again the inner group separation. However, this stage will illustrate the relation of divided sub-groups towards the new formed social entity of bi-national groups. Bringing back the analysis of intra-societal boundaries is of great relevance as it gives an understanding why some groups can join the bi-national movements and others not. The possibilities and personal motivations of joining,

tells a lot about the social status of the various identities, as for example being an Arab woman or young Israeli soldier. As has been argued by many informants, one of the major struggles of bi-national movements are, reaching the wide spectrum of the population and creating an equal balanced group of interaction.

In our combined analysis we pointed out three major aspects which make the interaction between both sides a rare happening, and which is the reason that bi-national movements still lack a more unequal balanced member attendance.

The first aspect concerns the economic and political asymmetric power relations between the dominant structure of the Israelis and the occupied position of the Palestinians. This unequal relation has practical and mental results: Not being able to get a permit in order to join a bi-national activity for Palestinians (practical), and not wanting to go, because cooperating stays in relation of normalizing the occupied position of Palestinians (mental).

The second aspect regards a mental dimension, and originated from our observation that most members of bi-national movements are from an older generation. We found out that the absence of the younger generation lies in the fact that most of the young people are indoctrinated in the army or still have unprocessed memories of their military service. Therefore many young Israelis are mentally not in the state and mood to confront themselves with the conflictual situation on a regular base. The collective identity that is present and performed in the contemporary time, lays much within the threat idea, which gets confirmed through first-hand experiences in the army service. However, the ability to reflect on these experiences and the circulating stereotypes are difficult in a stage, where one may just feel the urge of stability. As Eriksen (2010b) argues, in a time of struggle a collective identity, a place *within* a society, can be of great importance. As Jenkins (2014) and Eriksen (2010b) state, holding on to stereotypes and categories can help human beings organize their environment and to make sense of the chaos. Serving in the army or experiencing life under military occupation leaves its marks on the young generation. There is still a lack of attitude and narrative change that could help to step over the roadblocks that guide to more trust between the two groups.

The third dimension concerns the motivational aspect of counteracting the dominant narrative of separation, and demonstrating an active attitude to create a state of peaceful coexistence. At this point again, a distinction between older and younger Israeli generations has to be made. The motivation to create social and political change within the older generation originates, according to our informants, through their experience of having constructed the Israeli state. Their relation and identity connection to the Israeli territory is

stronger than that of the younger ones. In other words, the older Israeli generation is more conscious of the land claim, and does not see the Jewish state as self-evident. The younger generation however, were born into an pre-established state and therefore reflects less on the history about the creation of the Israeli state. Another major difference lies in the totally different realities both generations grew up in. As most of the older members pointed out, their experience of Palestinians and Israelis living together and shaking hands at the Oslo Peace Accords gives them the motivation and hope to be able to re-establish a peaceful state of living. In contrast to that, the younger generation experienced a conflict reality from childhood on, deriving from the second intifada and enforced structural implementations by the Israeli military. It is therefore not uncommon to see, that many younger Israelis chose to go ahead with their personal lives and to not confront themselves with the conflict on a daily base. Compared to the Israeli participants it is to observe that more young Palestinians are involved in bi-national activism, for encountering the 'Other' and challenging the separation. An explanation for an active younger Palestinian population can be found in the empowering effect that being member of a bi-national movement has for them. The older generation however is losing hope, as in their opinion the state of occupation has not changed since the Nakba in 1948.

Within this research, the asymmetrical power relations between Palestinians and Israelis, the deconstruction and reconstruction of borders and boundaries through the creation of new social groups and collective identities have been analyzed.

The five described stages form an analytical frame for the findings of our combined research analysis. These stages have to be understood as spaces which are created and re-created in response to one another, rather than in a hierarchical/vertical line. The stages are intended to give a more structural understanding of the interwoven processes of multiple aspects of separation and interaction we found in the context of Israel. However, these stages have to be understood as a simple tool for understanding, and form just *one* manner of analysing the chaotic and intertwined phenomena in that field. The controversies and paradoxes within the context of Israel formed the challenge of this research, which however also gave us the possibility to provide a complex analysis, which are of major importance in our world of categorization and interconnectedness.

Discussion

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The asymmetric relations within the border/ boundary maintenance brings to light that each actor brings different motivations, problems, ideas, experiences and fears to the conflict. We should start looking more narrow at the fundamental goals of the actors by maintaining and challenging borders and boundaries. The analysis showed how both groups are living alongside with the images of threat and fear. However, these images are also used in a functional way to reach political and economical interest of the authoritarian leaders of both sides. Therefore, a bottom-up analysis about the experienced fears of both sides has to be done in order to understand the paradigm of separation.

In the context of Israel-Palestine we can see, that academics often use the concept of unequal power relations, whereby one group is defined as superior and the other as inferior. This given framework is thought to find answers for the ongoing conflict, by judging the different power roles of the actors, and giving political advices for the creation of responsibility and political change. However, as the analysis has shown, further research from an interdisciplinary field is needed, which combines the analyses of a macro and micro level, in order to frame the concept of 'power-relations' in the context of Israel-Palestine more precisely. The starting point of a research about 'low and high power positions' should be made with the question of who is framing the dominant narrative and the therefore used terminologies and concepts. By looking back to the field, it evidently stood out that the conceptualization of power was very context dependent among both parties. Generally spoken it can be said, that both groups are feeling as having a 'low power', or victim position. Claiming the victim role and making the other side responsible for the own position and actions, conceptualize the negative interrelation of the Israeli and Palestinian national identity (Kelman 1999). Therefore it is apparent that the Jewish and Arab fates are closely connected to one another. This interdependence results in a threat paradigm which does not allow for positive development and fulfillment of both societies. The connectedness of both fates has to be acknowledged and turned into a positive relation, because only if both sides feel safe, both sides can flourish. The first step towards an acceptance and acknowledgment of the other side, is to take responsibility for the own actions. Developing an equal interconnectedness on

an economic, social and political level, instead of denying the relations between Palestinians and Israelis, could transform the zero-sum situation⁴⁵ into a win-win situation.

The strength of this research lies in the approach of analysing a conflict society with the lense of borders/boundaries and the creation of a new bi-national identity. Many scholars have looked at borders and their effect on society. However, as this research has shown, the origin of the border/boundary creation has to be emphasised in order to unravel the effect of borders/boundaries on the society. This research furthermore illustrates that borders/boundaries in a conflict society have different purposes and effects, in comparison to stable societies. The political and economic instability in the context of Israel/Palestine forms even a more complicated case. We encounter an all-embracing asymmetrical power relation. The process of a new identity formation, which appeared during our research to be a major element for members of bi-national movements, is closely linked to the fact that our research took place in a conflict area. The research has shown that the feeling of belonging to a bi-national identity is a coping strategy for the created threat paradigm in society.

This research therefore illustrates, that both phenomena; border/boundary creation and the formation of a bi-national identity are processes, which stay in close relation to one another in the context of Israel/Palestine, and therefore also have to be understood in a combined analysis.

⁴⁵ The zero-sum concept is explained on page 40.

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ANNEXES

RESEARCH SUMMARY- HEBREW (LOCAL RESEARCH LANGUAGE)

שמתקיים הטרור לדוגמא, החדשים הגלובליים והאיומים ליברלית-הניאו המדיניות, ביטחון חוסר. אונטולוגי ביטחון חוסר של קולקטיבית לתחושה גורמים, ישראל בארץ או מסוימת חברתית לקטגוריה להשתייך הרצון את לחזק יכול ופסיכולוגי גופני או קיומם על להגן יש שבו לסכסוך להוביל עלול זה ביטחון חוסר. מסוימת לקבוצה הסכם נוצר אוסלו הסכם במסגרת. קולקטיבית זהות זהות לבניית נכנס אשר. גופם על ומדיניות טריטוריאלית חלוקה על הוסכם במסגרתו, לפלסטין ישראל בין שלום עמוקות מאוד השפעות יש שנבנה שלגבול ספק אין. ההפרדה חומת בצורת ביטחונות שנה שלושים כמעט, זאת עם. ישראל בארץ שקיים ישראלי לסטיניפ הסכסוך על בינתיים. השלום בתהליך מספקת התקדמות ראינו לא ועדיין, אוסלו הסכמי מאז חלפו מפנה זה מחקר. מתמיד בסכסוך חיים. מתח של במצב הצדדים שני תושבי מתגוררים תיאוריה בגישת שימוש תוך, לפלסטין ישראל בין המתמשך לסכסוך הלב תשומת את הפרט ברמת ניתוח ולספק להבין מנת על אנשים של בחוויות מתמקדים אנו. מקורקעת ביצוע כיצד להבין יסייע המחקר. זה במחקר אליו להגיע שאפשר ביותר הקטן או המתנגדים קולקטיביים נרטיבים. לצאת חדשים קולקטיבים מאפשר ההפרדה המוצגת המסגרת. החברתי המבנה או פליקטהקונ של הקיים הנרטיב על תיגר קוראים אנחנו. יותר רחב במובן גבולות ועל גלובליזציה על חושבים כאשר להתאים נועדה גבולות. מדינות או תרבויות, אנשים בין מפרידים רק לא שהגבולות להראות רוצים זה: למחקר המנחה השאלה היתה לכן. אינטראקציה של שלישי סוג על להקל יכולים מרחב יוצרים הם ואיך להפרדה מסגרת מהווים והגבולות הגבולות צדכי"

"?וישראלים פלסטינים בין לאינטראקציה נתונים נאספו שבועות עשרה במשך. 16.4.2018 - ועד 1.2.2018 בין נערך המחקר את ונושמת שחייה מקומית ואכלוסיה מקומיים צעירים בקרב היסוויק ואן אמה ידי על.. סביבותיה וכמובן ירושלים העיר במרכז שקיימת ערבית / תהישראלית התרבות התרכזה הופמן נומי. יומיומי בסיס על המפלג בהיבט התמקדו אמה של מחקרה של לאומי-הדו התפקיד את משקפים שנאספו הנתונים. השחקנים בין באינטראקציה שאני המ לכל ומעל, לקורא ממליצים שאנו מה. פלסטיני-הישראלי בסכסוך התנועות המורכבות של תמונה להציג הוא האקדמית לקהילה ולהעביר לתרום רוצים חוויות על המבוסס, הוליסטי באופן בה התבוננות תוך, הסכסוך בתוך והפרדוקסיות ישמנו, ראינו, חווינו. ראשון ממקור

משנה קבוצות ידי על נבנית והפלסטינית הישראלית החברה כי, הראו המחקר ממצאי את מהווה זו "פנימית חברתית הפרדה". כהפרדה לראותה ניתן ולכן ושונות רבות החברה בתוך סיווג על ומתן משא מתנהל שבו, שלנו הממצאים של הראשון השלב כישות ומוצגת בעיקר מבוצעת הישראלית החברה, זאת עם. והפלסטינית הישראלית

הפרדה. אותה ותהסובב הערביות לשכנותיה בניגוד העומדת, חזקה קולקטיבית חברתיות-הפנים החלוקות כי וממחישה האנליזה של השני השלב את יוצרת זו קפדנית היוצרת, הנרטיבית התמסורת. דאגה עוד ולא "האויב" לאור נמצאות (הראשון השלב) באירועי עמוק מושרשת, החיצונית לקבוצה גבול ובמקביל, בקבוצה שייכות תחושת הן אך, מורשת מרחב אותו את טוענות הקבוצות ישת. ימינו עד ונמתחת העבר סיפורו את מכחישות ואף, מתמיד רחוק ומרגיש אופציה לא הוא שהחיבור מרגישות על, "הם"ה נגד "אנחנו"ה על רבה במידה מתבסס הסיווג, שטוענים כפי. ,האחר של "חזק אויב" של דמותו בניית. ועוינות השתקנות משתקפת פיהם

ההפרדה לאומית-דו קבוצה בתוך הגומלין יחסי באמצעות כי, ראהה המחקר, זאת עם קשרים יצירת באמצעות, אישי באופן מתערבת אלא, המבני במישור מופרעת אינה שלה האזרח חברה בכל. אקטיביזם של חדשה ויצירתזהות, חברים בין חדשים אישיים הצבאי השירות. ובטוחה מובנית הקבוצה על לשמור כדי. מסוים תפקיד לבצע "צפוי" וכלפי לעצמו, לעם נאמנות פעם מראה שהוא בכך, בישראל חשוב תפקיד משחק מהווים, ישראל של לקיומה התכחשות או החרם, הפלסטינית החברה בתוך. הקבוצה לאומית-דו בתנועה ההשתלבות, שהודגם כפי. נאמנה חברות בהצגת חשוב גורם הקבוצה על לאיום ולפיכך, חברתית מבחינה הצפויים התפקידים להכחשת מובילה ברמה גם כמו, האישית ברמה. לאומי-דו פעיל של המכוננת הזהות באמצעות התנגשות של במצב עצמו מוצא הפרט שכן, תפקידים קונפליקט מתגלה, הקולקטיבית הזהות באמצעות כי טוענים אנו. תפקידים ציפיות לבין וחדש ישן תפקידים מודל בין חדשים מפרידים קווים מופיעים, לאומית-דו פעילים לקבוצת ושייכים שנוצרו החדשה הלימינל מרחב. שברירים תרבותית-הבין ברמה גבול ואילו, הפנימית החברה ברמה. מהחברה כולל לא מעמד - שני ומצד, לחברים מעצימה עמדה, אחד מצד מעניק להם פשרא אי לפיה, מאתגרת בעמדה תקועים שהפלסטינים, מראים הממצאים לשתף הניסיון. יותר הדומיננטית הישראלית בזהות ולהשתלב הגבולות לשבוראת הישראלית מהעוצמה חלק להיות ולכן "האויב" עם פעולה