Trying to do the right thing

The development of moral agency in Israeli-Palestinian peace activists as they construct counter-frames against a discourse of 'treasonous' radical alterity.

Photo by Daniel Rolider, Shepherd's accompaniment in the Jordan Valley February 2020

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Abstract

This thesis aims to understand peace activists in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, within which peace activism can be seen as an act of treason. It shows how individuals, through emotive experiences, are successful in critically assessing the collective within which one lives and develops. It shows how one finds a community with which to safely counter conformist and essentialized ideas on Israeli-Palestinian identities and the conflict. The alternative frames on the conflict activists construct with their community, may vary greatly and are influenced by the journey of how one became a peace activist; one's upbringing, experiences, emotions, sense of belonging, and activist community. It is emotions which appear to activate agency despite the backlash, and experiences and belonging which influence one's alternative interpretation of the conflict. Yet different interpretations among peace activists lead to competition, which gives rise to a set of new questions on how to understand peace activism in socially challenging circumstances.

Introduction

A few years ago, I saw a documentary called *Disturbing the Peace*, from an Israeli-Palestinian peace group called 'Combatants for Peace'. These activists, who formerly were IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) soldiers and Palestinian resistance fighters, in some way came to the realisation and belief that a non-violent resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could be achieved through cooperation. Yet, despite this lofty goal, their respective communities responded with indignation. "How could you work with these murderers/traitors/ terrorists!?". These responses even came from loved ones; wives, husbands, brothers, parents, neighbours and friends. This was not an entirely new phenomenon. The Israeli peace movement has been met with disdain since its inception, despite its ability to influence a 'climate of opinions' which normalized the two-state solution (Hermann, 2009). In Palestine, rather than a peace movement, there were cooperative elements in the broader resistance movement against Israeli occupation, which were not always viewed kindly (Norman, 2010). Indeed, on both sides cooperation with 'the enemy', 'the radical other', was met with suspicion. Why then, if one incurs such backlash, would one become a peace activist? Where does this backlash come from? How do peace activists fight such antagonistic narratives? These questions resulted in the following research question:

> "How do cross-community grassroots peace activists develop the
> moral agency to counter-frame a discourse of 'treasonous' radical
> alterity in Israel-Palestine in 2020?"

This is a conflict for which, currently, many Israelis and Palestinians believe a peace agreement may never be attained (Pundak, 2012). This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian peace movement as perceived and experienced from the perspective of its activists. It can be placed in an academic discussion understanding significant elements in the individual construction of meaning, as we will elaborate on in the first chapter of this thesis. This study focuses not only on how one constructs meaning and truth, but how such truths are policed. It is peace activists who construct alternative interpretations on the conflict, both because and despite dominant antagonistic narratives policed by traitor-labelling.

This study attains its social relevance due to it being a case of visceral societal debate. This is a case in which individuals seek to define and redefine a national collective, despite social backlash between society and movement, as well as between movement actors. Upon my passing through Utrecht Central Station in early June this year during an anti-racism protest, I saw a boy holding up the sign: "Silence is Betrayal". Indeed, racism is a currently ongoing tumultuous societal conversation. This study may contribute to our understanding on how dominant narratives in society, and internally in

social movements, are contested and policed by narratives of identity, loyalty and betrayal. As well as why people speak out, despite harsh reactions.

The first chapter will discuss the presuppositions, analytical frame of 'moral agency' and 'framing', as well as the methodology of this thesis. The second chapter will unpack a discourse of 'treasonous radical alterity'. In this thesis, it refers both to the traitor-labelling and treason discourse peace activists are confronted with, and to the broader discourse traitor-labelling is meant to police. Namely, two antagonistic, competing national narratives, which require conformism of its subjects. 'Radical alterity' is another way of saying 'radical otherness' - which is what these discourses produce. The third chapter will try to discern the development of moral agency, that is; the development of how one becomes a peace activist. It looks at both Israeli and Palestinian respondents and finds common stages in the development of one's moral agency. In the fourth chapter, we will explore how this journey, when shared with a like-minded community, results in a 'frame', a collective alternative interpretation of the conflict which counters (aspects of) the discourse of 'treasonous radical alterity'. The fifth chapter explores an unexpected phenomenon; an internal treason discourse in which the different frames delineated, the different stories about the conflict, engage in an intellectual competition about their differences which provides us with questions for further research. Lastly, we summarize this thesis and answer the research question

Chapter 1: The research

1.1. Justification for qualitative research

This study is a qualitative study as we aim to interpret the significance of our empirical complication (Ragin & Amoroso 2018, pp. 65-66). Qualitative studies are more detailed and aim to find the commonalities between a select group of cases, but lack generalizability (Ragin & Amoroso 2018, pp. 62-63). This fits with what I want to know: how do these select groups of peace activists dissent and counter the dominant ideas proposed by the collective to which they belong? To answer this 'how' question, I need to discern a common pattern in their stories of dissent. Indeed, the strategy, or methodology, of one's research is chosen based on the goal (Ragin & Amoroso 2018, p. 66).

Goals, aims or functions of research, on which one chooses their approach, are categorized differently across the social sciences. Namely, Ritchie & Lewis (2003) defines "functions of research" while Mason (2018, pp 11-12) defines it as "aim" which she links with a type of "puzzle". When defined according to function, this research has a contextual focus, as I aim mostly to "describe the form or nature of what exists", by mapping the dimensions of this phenomenon, describing the meaning people attach to this phenomenon, and identifying and defining typologies of common developments (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Defined by 'aim' and 'puzzle', this research is both a developmental puzzle as well as a processual puzzle. It is a developmental puzzle, as I want to know 'how and why peace activists develop their moral agency' and contest the views of their society (Mason 2018, p. 11). It is also a processual puzzle: how activists use their moral agency to 'continue, change or influence' a discourse of 'treasonous radical alterity' (Mason 2018, pp. 11-12).

In short, this research is a qualitative, contextual, study analysing developments and processes, as I aim to describe the nature of what exists, to understand how my select groups of cross-community peace activists develop their dissenting stances, to continue change or influence the collective dominant discourse within which they live. This is done by finding common patterns among cross-community peace activists, further explored in the methodology section.

1.2 Ontological and Epistemological presuppositions

An ontological position questions the unit of analysis. It asks: what is the primary driver of social life? These may be structures; institutions, regulations, or rules which guide social life; interactions or relationships; actions or individuals; meaning or symbolism, and many more (Demmers, 2017; Mason, 2018, p. 5). This thesis argues from the perspective of individual peace activists and thus we take the ontological positions of 'agency', which posits individuals and their actions are the primary drivers which create social life (Demmers, 2017). This thesis is also concerned with 'meaning', as the

peace activists actively challenge dominant ideas of antagonism and conflict for which they are labelled a traitor. In other words, these peace activists engage in a battle of meaning and interpretation over the current conflict and what could be done about it. Meaning, in turn, is another possible ontological position (Mason 2018, p. 5). We combine agency and meaning and take the position these peace activists have made choices based on what is meaningful for them and aim to understand this process of individual meaning construction.

Epistemology refers to "how do you know what you know"; it questions the nature of knowledge. The epistemological assumption, in this thesis, is that action is derived from shared ideas and rules of social life, and the construction of meaning is historically and culturally specific (Demmers 2017, p. 37). Therefore, this study focuses on the (Israeli-Palestinian) context integrated with the "self-conscious perspectives of the informants" (Demmers 2017, p. 37). I do *not* assume that their choices can be explained, predicted, or are subjected to a "combination of causal laws and regulations", discovered through analysis of a representative sample (Demmers 2017, p. 37). Indeed, the latter, which claims knowledge means to discover representative mechanisms, would require a more generalizable study. Rather, this study aims to observe context-specific detail of development and processes of meaning construction.

In conclusion, this study takes the ontological positions of agency and meaning, or jointly: 'agentic meaning construction', where the knowledge gathered is considered context specific. These ontological and epistemological presuppositions consequently inform the choice of analytical frame.

1.3 Analytical frame

The analytical frame must help us analyse how people develop dissenting interpretations, based on what is meaningful for them, leading them to become activists. Furthermore, it must help us understand how this influences a collective, in a manner which considers its context-specific nature. For the former, we discuss 'moral agency', for the latter, we combine moral agency with 'framing'.

Moral agency may help us understand 'meaningful actions', as moral agency is one's' "understanding and experience of themselves (and others) as agents whose morally relevant actions are based in goals and beliefs" (Pasupathi and Wainryb 2010, p. 55). Moral agency thus is a process of individual realisation which makes and allows one to act out 'meaning'. For instance, in our case, this is the process which allowed for Israelis and Palestinians to reassess the ideas of their respective collective and act out their (new) beliefs and goals in their peace activism (despite social backlash).

One strand of research is mainly concerned with the *action* part of moral agency, focusing on the behaviour. Bandura et. al. argue that a "complete theory of moral agency must link moral knowledge and reasoning to moral conduct. This requires an agentic theory of morality rather than one confined mainly to cognitions about morality" (Bandura et al. 1996, p. 101). The processes from moral reasoning, moral agency to moral conduct, is a "continuing interplay between moral thought, affect, action, and its

social reception is personally transformative" (Bandura et. al. 1996, p. 110). Moral agency requires continuous moral engagement, which includes the continuous taking of responsibility for one's own moral conduct. For example, one of the psychological mechanisms for this, is the potent effect of humanization, leading to the refusal of people to behave cruelly even under strong authoritarian pressure (Bandura et al. 1996, pp. 109-110). In other words, moral agency here is a *process leading to action*, which is in continuous interplay with the social and its reception, yet can also overcome the social.

Weaver (2006) focuses on what constitutes, and how one develops, a sense of what is 'moral'. Weaver states that, part of the interplay from moral reasoning to moral choices to moral conduct, is the construction of a moral identity, as "questions of how to act are, at least in part, questions of how to live out the narratives in terms which one's life is defined" (2006, p. 344). Thus, Weaver focuses on the development of a moral identity, or what it means to *be* a moral agent (2006, p. 341). Moral identity is "about actions that human beings perform in harmony of those actions with one or another ethical principle of the social norm" (Weaver 2006, p. 341). As such, a moral agent is one who has a moral identity, i.e. "having one's self-concept centrally oriented toward a collection of moral traits that both define who one is and yield tendencies toward paradigmatically moral action" (Weaver 2006, p. 345). In other words, building on Bandura et. al. (1996) emphasis of moral agency as 'process to action', Weaver (2006) emphasises that this process includes and is facilitated by, the development of a 'moral identity'. Peace activism is not only an activity but also an identification, which reveals something about how one 'makes sense' of the moral ideas surrounding them.

Moral agency develops situated in the community. Indeed, both Bandura et al. (1996) and Weaver (2006) mention moral agency and identity occurring in the communal, social, or "the [collective] narratives in which one's life is defined" (Weaver 2006, p. 344). Krettenauer and Hertz concur, stating "human motivation entails a fundamental duality between agency and communion", which is only overcome by "prioritizing one motivational system over the other or by reconciling the two" (Krettenauer and Hertz 2015, p. 140). Walter posits that "in moral maturity, agency and communion do become meaningfully integrated" (Walter 2014, p. 513 cited in Krettenauer and Hertz 2015, p. 140). Thus, the development of moral agency includes a dialectical relationship with the communal when developing a sense of 'what is moral'.

We observe the individual development of 'what is moral' by looking at one's life story, or as one narrates their morality. One's moral identity is lived out in one's commitment to ideals, fidelity in action and concern for self-consistency as the most important aspects of their sense of self (Krettenauer and Herz 2015, p. 140). This creation of a sense of self happens through life-stories, with which individuals "manage to connect past, present, and future; they create a sense of unity across varying social role contexts and situations" (Krettenauer and Hertz 2015, p. 148). The telling of such stories is a form of discursive self-reflection by which one defines the scope of one's moral responsibilities and therefore the platform from which action occurs (Krettenauer and Hertz 2015, p. 149). Indeed, narrative approaches may be uniquely suited to examine moral agency, as the creation of narratives in

conversation with others, is paramount to the development and formation of one's sense of self (Pasupathi and Wainryb 2010, p. 64). When people engage in narrating morally relevant experiences, they "engage in constructing an account of actions and consequences that includes beliefs, desires and emotions" (Pasupathi and Wainryb 2010, p. 65). Thus, ideas on 'what is moral' can be discerned by looking at narrations of beliefs, desires and emotions.

In short, moral agency is a process in which an individual creates a 'sense of self', defines 'what is moral' to subsequently turn this into morally relevant action. This process is inherently situated in the communal. This development can be observed through narrations of life-stories, as these represent the process in which collective and individual, past and present and future, become meaningfully integrated. A narration of morality includes beliefs, desires and emotions which eventually constructs the platform from which one may act.

The above research, however, hails from social psychology, which has the epistemological premise that social life can be understood as a collection of mechanisms; a fixed, representative, and repeatable process. This research starts with the presupposition meaning generation is contextually specific. We, therefore, integrate the frame of 'moral agency' with 'framing', which also argues from the position of agentic meaning-construction. Yet, 'framing' can be used to observe the contextually specific battles of interpretation between groups, and individuals. The analysis of 'framing' is often used to analyse the alternative interpretations on particular issues social movements put forward and indeed can be used to track 'framing contest[2]', in which hegemonic, or dominant, frames square off with counter-frames put forward by the social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000).

According to Snow and Benford, the act of framing is "an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (Snow and Benford 2000, p. 614). What one creates is 'a frame'[3], which "helps to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organise experience and guide action" (Benford & Snow 2000, p. 614). Whereas moral agency purely looks at individual meaning construction, a 'frame' is the result of a collective endeavour. Through the concept of 'framing', we connect the meaning construction of one peace activist (moral agency), to how they then come together in a social movement to construct an agreed-upon construction of meaning; 'a frame'.

Entman states "to frame is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote particular problem definitions, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendations" (Entman 1993, p. 52). In other words, 'framing' is about selection and salience, to make a particular set of opinions, values and facts more important than others (Entman, 1993, pp. 52-54). A frame means to communicate and convince the receiver or audience of such a frame; of how to (1) define a problem (2) diagnose its causes, (3)

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[2] Framing contest: the "square-offs between movements and their detractors" expressed through "counterframing […] and opponent's counterframes, in turn, often spawn reframing activity by the movement" (Snow and Benford 2000, p. 626)

[3] A frame is a "schemata of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large" (Benford & Snow 2000, p. 614).

make a moral judgement, (4) and suggest and justify treatment for the problem (Entman, 1993, pp. 52-54). Our peace activists construct frames, a collective definition of a problem, diagnosis, judgement and remedy, which counter ideas on the conflict and suggest how it can be resolved in a peaceful manner.

Such a frame can subsequently be communicated to its audience through a dramaturgical performance (Benford & Hunt, 1992). Benford & Hunt argue manifestations of frames, such performances, inherently comment on current power relations and are an enactment of power by a social movement (Benford & Hunt 1992, p. 36, 45). Rather than a spontaneous occurrence, manifestations of frames, such as protest, are staged, scripted, performed, and interpreted, and thus internally coordinated (1992, p. 38). In other words, the morally relevant action that our moral agents, or peace activists, may choose to enact, also serve as a physical manifestation, or performance of the frame they aim to convey to their audience. These coordinated physical manifestations of a frame require in-group solidarity, loyalty, and commitment to the script and performance (Benford & Hunt 1992, pp. 45-47). Peace activism then, is the coordinated physical manifestation, a performance, of (counter-)frames by peace activists, of their alternative interpretations of meaning.

In short, framing is an agentic construction of meaning, in which several individuals or groups battle for the said definition of meaning, which assumes that meaning is context specific. A frame is the collective definition of a problem, and in the context of social movements serves to define a problem, diagnose its causes, make a moral evaluation and suggest remedies. These collective definitions of the movement may involve a new interpretation on power relations, and when manifested physically, through for instance protests, are a performance of power in order to communicate the frame and sway an audience.

To conclude, moral agency refers to the collectively situated individual, which develops an independent assessment of 'what is moral' which becomes its platform for action. The assessment of 'what is moral', when joined with like-minded individuals, becomes a 'frame'. This includes a collective assessment which 'defines a problem', 'diagnoses causes', creates a 'moral evaluation' and suggests 'remedies'. The individual, and the social movements with which one constructs its frames, interacts with the 'communal' through a performance of power, hoping to sway its audience to their side and counter particular hegemonic ideas.

For this case, this means we (1) observe the 'communal' within which the peace activists is situated, (2) try to understand the development of moral agency, by having peace activists narrate their understanding of morality and journey towards peace activism, and (3) aim to observe the collective definition of the conflict, its problem definition, diagnosis, moral evaluation and remedies and how they 'act this out' through morally relevant conduct, which can also be understood as a 'performance'. This corresponds with the constituent parts of our main question: (1) a discourse of treasonous radical alterity, (2) peace activists development of moral agency, (3) the counter-frames they construct against a discourse of treasonous radical alterity. The method of this analysis is presented in the next section.

1.4 Methodology

This study aims to analyse the development of moral agency, and the process of how moral agency interacts and counters with the communal discourse of treasonous radical alterity. For this, it uses the (1) constant comparative analysis, to allow for an analysis of the processual part of the puzzle, as constant comparison allows transparency in how certain codes and categories are connected, and (2) the narration approach, for the developmental part of the puzzle, as moral agency literature suggested the observation of narration on 'morality' is particularly suited to observing how individuals come to a conclusion of 'what is moral'.

The constant comparative approach is a variation of grounded theory as it aims to analyse inductively. Tesch (1990, p. 96 in Boeije 2002, p. 392) argues comparison is the researcher's main intellectual tool, as it is used in virtually all stages of research. Through comparing, the researcher may "develop theories, more or less inductively, through categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them" (Boeije 2002, p. 393). The constant comparison of phenomena under a certain category allows for the conceptualisations and theoretical elaboration of this category to emerge (Bryman 2012, p. 568). This is predicated on theoretical sampling; in which theoretical provisions provide the researchers with the 'what and where' to gather data next (Boeije 2002, p. 393).

The systematic application of the constant comparative method is to provide transparency and validity to the analysis of qualitative data. According to Boeije (2002, p. 392) "researchers often describe at great length how their studies were carried out, but remain vague when it comes to giving an account of the analysis. Issues such as the subject of the comparison, the phase of the research in which it took place, the reason for the comparison and the results of the comparison remain unclear. It is this lack of explanation and account that reduces verification and therefore the credibility of qualitative reports". The step-by-step description of the comparisons in qualitative research improves its traceability and credibility (Boeije 2002, p. 401). Thus, this methodology not only provides information on when data was collected but also when it was analysed.

In the narrative approach, one allows people to talk, to see how they "make sense of things" (Bryman 2012, p. 582). Indeed, narrative interviews focused on an individual's self-image (Mason 2018, p. 111). This approach allows me to trace the development of moral agency, as respondents narrate their journey from their upbringing to the meaningful events and occurrences which generated their dissenting beliefs and how they view their own moral agency, identity and responsibility now. The constant comparative approach and narration approach are operationalized in the following steps.

1.4.1 Method

The following paragraphs are the steps within which I conducted my research; when and which data was gathered and when it was analysed. These phases and its steps are not linear, rather cyclical, as

the constant comparative method continuously moves between data and comparison in the attempt to saturate and test the analysis. A depiction of this can be seen in the figure below:
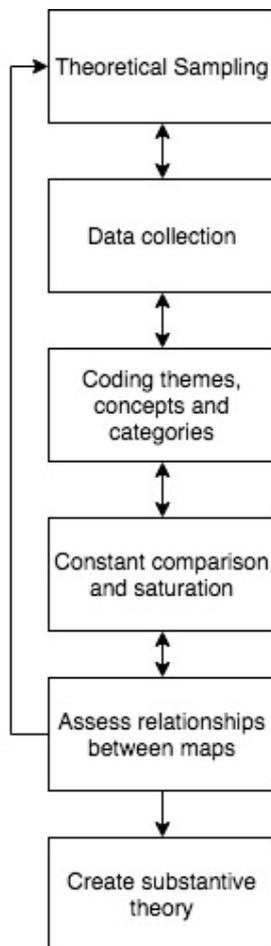
Figure 1: Method, Author's elaboration.

1.4.1.1 Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling is to have theory guide you on where to gather data next, which in this research was a continuous endeavour. First, the generation of a research design, which included; a preliminary literature review, the formulation of a research question, the choice of ontological, epistemological positions and the choice of the analytical frame - guided me on what and where to gather data. Secondly, throughout the process of collecting and analysing the gathered data, new themes would come up which required further theoretical inspection which deepened the focus on particular relevant themes and concepts. For example, continuous theoretical sampling led me to further investigate themes of identity, nationalism, victimhood and anti-normalization[4], as they came up repeatedly in conversation, interviews and literature about the conflict and the peace movement.

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[4] Other avanues also include: Israeli and Palestinian nationalism, Zionism, Arab Nationalism, Treason, Collaboration, Encounter-work, Israeli Peace movement, Palestinian Resistance, 'Other", Victimhood, Threat, Legitimacy, Anti-normalization, people-to-people, Humanization, and Emotion work

1.4.1.2 Data collection

This phase will outline the sources and techniques with which I have gathered data. As previously stated, the list of literature expanded as themes from other data collections techniques emerged over time.

1.4.1.2.a A literature review

The literature review started with the 20 highest cited articles in *Scopus*, using categories on the conflict, peace and identity to give me a somewhat representative idea of the main discourses on symbolism, meanings, events and perspectives prevalent in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This also provided me with further themes for research, mentioned in the previous phase. As the topics became more specific, I used *Google Scholar* as this is a larger database. It is also during this time I started with the most recent topic-related articles on 'treason discourse', peace movements, and the origins and development of the conflict. This way I hoped to understand the interaction between the conflict, hegemonic narratives, peace groups and treason. When coding the interviews, the repeated theme of 'anti-normalization' came up and thus I acquired literature on this theme as well.

Books that were particularly helpful to understand the progression of the conflict are: "A history of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" by Mark Tessler, as well as "The Question of Palestine" by Edward Said. The "The Israeli Peace Movement; A shattered dream" from Tamar S. Hermann gave a good topical overview of the peace initiatives which delivered Oslo and their obstacles. A journal of particular importance is *Palestine-Israel Journal on Politics, Economics and Culture*, as the journal has frequent contributions from local academics, civil society, activists involved in a varied range of peace initiatives.

1.4.1.2.b Media and online content

The initial empirical complication featured a cross-community peace initiative and thus I focused my attention on grassroots peace initiatives who also presented Israeli-Palestinian or Jewish-Arab cooperation or contact. Subsequently, I looked for those who I could reasonably have access to. The websites and media material of those who responded to my fieldwork requests are part of the data collected. Furthermore, most organisations are present on Facebook, send frequent newsletters detailing their activities, some have documentaries about their work, and with COVID-19 entering the consideration in March 2020, several Zoom lectures and workshops have also taken place.

1.4.1.2.c Participant observation

To understand the motivations, conduct and goals of the peace movement and its activists, I did participatory observation with the selected and responding grassroots peace organisations. Here I observe the moral conduct in the form of a frame's physical expressions; protest, slogans, events, art shows, and lectures published during my time there. I will also engage in, what Mason calls, informal

interviews; i.e. a 'conversation with a purpose' with attending participants or over the phone (Mason 2018, p. 110). These 'conversations with a purpose' occur when I participate in the organisations' proposed activities to learn about the explicit and implicit meaning and workings of their activities (Musante & DeWalt 2010, pp. 1-3). For instance, I joined lectures of Breaking the Silence, participated in a Shepherd accompaniment, observed a protest against administrative detention, and visited an art-show on feminism and the occupation. Even when not all activities are explicitly used as examples, they are part of my larger frame of reference.

1.4.1.2.d Interviews and interview sampling

In qualitative works, the purpose of sampling is generative (Mason 2018, p. 55). Here, the point is that the selected sample is sufficiently 'telling' for the particular question and context of one's research puzzle (Mason 2018, p. 57). As such, the key question for qualitative selection and sampling is "how to focus, strategically and meaningfully, in ways that are appropriately generative, rather than how to represent" (Mason 2018, p. 72). Then, one can sample people, organisations, texts, settings, objects, events, in which one needs to consider the time, space, the number, and even-handedness of one's samples (Mason 2018, pp. 62-67, 68-73). Cooperative grassroots peace organisations became my sample frame: "a resource from which you can select your smaller sample" (Mason 2018, p. 77). Using a combination of googling and assessing NGO forums of which a host of peace initiatives are a member, I picked those who explicitly stated cooperation was important for their work, or has Israeli-Palestinian, or Arab-Jewish in the name. I started emailing with fieldwork requests after which I was able to speak to some activists. These became my first respondents.

Subsequently, my data collection of interviews was through chain sampling or networking: organisations and individuals would refer me to the next (Boeije 2010, p. 40). To safeguard the variety of perspectives, I spoke to both men, women, Israelis and Palestinians of a diverse set of peace initiatives, leading to respondents of different political and social convictions. The respondents were approached based on their activism, not based on their exposure to treason discourse. The possibility for activists to state they did not encounter my phenomenon at all and give an entirely new perspective was thus left open. Eventually, despite the COVID-19 outbreak which severely impeded the progress of my research, I ended up with 26 interviews, of which one was with two respondents at the same time. I settled on this number for practical reasons. I aimed to speak with relevant respondents in the time and space allotted, hoping to strike a balance between trying to saturate my data set with perspectives and time-management.

In my epistemological stance, I have elaborated that this research assumes that context is highly relevant and thus consider the context of the interviews to produce situated knowledge (Mason 2018, p. 110). Furthermore, I recognise that interviews are inherently interactional, meaning that I may spark new consideration and reflections in the participant during, or when the interviewing is done (Mason 2018, pp. 112-114). As such, the interviews are constructing data (Mason 2018, p. 117).

The puzzle-statement has three constituent parts: (1) treason discourse, (2) the development of moral agency, and (3) the counter-frames one constructs. Based on the preliminary research on moral agency, framing and the conflict I decided upon the themes of the interview. These themes were: "treason, backlash and labelling", "belonging and identity", "upbringing", "motivations", "meaningful occurrences and events", "worldviews and analysis of the conflict", "goals" and "values and beliefs". The interviews are thematic and topic-centred where one can explore possible unexpected themes (Mason 2018, p. 110). This is congruent with theoretical sampling as emergent themes informed other data collection methods such as literature and media.

1.4.1.3 Coding of themes, concepts and categories

I started with a thematic transcription of the data, per unit (i.e. mostly interview). Subsequently, I used 'open coding', as to be detailed and exploratory (Corbyn & Strauss 2014, p. 70). The aim is to "develop categories and label them with the most appropriate codes" (Boeije 2002: 395). The interviews, although already having themes of discussion, were now coded according to content. For instance, where we spoke of upbringing, I coded how the respondents characterised one's upbringing. The results are thematic maps per interview which were then sub-divided between codifications particularly 'telling' about (1) "treason discourse" (2) moral agency or (3) counter-frames.

1.4.1.4 Constant comparison and saturation

In this phase, I aim to understand the relationship between the concepts and categories. I compare within categories and as such use axial coding to observe the development and processes at the core of my question. I aim to map out the context, where I link action-interaction within a framework of sub-concepts (Corbyn & Strauss 2014, p. 156). One tool to do this is the paradigm approach in which you analyse the data based on conditions, action- interaction and action to an outcome, or; you check for particular similar phrases and words that denote these processes (Corbyn & Strauss 2014, pp. 156-157). For instance, a particular group of respondents developed from 'already left-wing' which supposedly made them already receptive to a peaceful message (condition), after which they experienced a racist interaction, came to see this experience as a structural problem and joined a group of like-minded individuals to engage in activism.

In other words, I compared the concepts, themes and categories placed under (1) treason discourse to each other, (2) moral agency to each other, and (3) counter-frames to each other. The process of comparison may yield new or re-named concepts and categories. This revealed the constituent parts of treason discourse which make up chapter two, the developmental stages of moral agency which make up chapter three and the language-clusters or different arguments which denote the counter-frames of chapter four.

Included in this phase is the attempt to saturate categories. This is based on triangulation as 'corroborative logic' (Mason 2018, p. 41), in which I continuously move between concepts, categories

and data. In this step, I aimed to ascertain whether the concepts uncovered in the initial analysis of data, truly cover all the phenomena observed. If needed, I proposed new categories and/or concepts.

1.4.1.5 Assess relationships between maps

In this phase, I compare the maps between respondents and between categories and subcategories. Indeed, this is the second round of axial coding to make connections between categories to look for commonalities (Bryman 2012, p. 569). Here, I aim to ascertain how (1) treason discourse and moral agency relate to each other, (2) moral agency and counter-frames relate to each other and (3) how counter-frames relate to treason discourse. In other words, how does moral agency influence the counter-frame, and changes or continues treason discourse and vice-versa? This is both analysed as a whole and per interview.

Including this phase is a repeated step to saturate categories, in which triangulation with the literature review which took place in earlier stages are incorporated. When needed, categories may be adjusted, and new avenues explored. For instance, the first analysis gave three counter-frames, while further inspection and the re-reading of thematic transcripts eventually provided me with four.

Indeed, a new phase of theoretical sampling may follow this phase based on the explanations on processes by respondents. The discourse around anti-normalization is an example of such a later addition. Anti-normalization did not come up in my initial research about treason, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and peace, rather my respondents brought this up which lead me to investigate this concept further.

1.4.1.6 Create substantive theory

This phase is a synthesis of all previous comparisons and analysis. It is here the gut-story of the thesis and the individual chapters is formulated in its final form. The outcomes of the constant comparative method and grounded theory are concepts (from open coding), categories, properties, hypothesis and/or a theory [i.e. a set of well-developed categories] (Bryman 2012, p. 570). As such, in this step, I aim to do 'selective coding', in which I select the "core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (Bryman 2012, p. 569). The core category is the conceptualisation among which all other categories revolve (Bryman 2012, p. 569). In other words, in this phase, I develop the theory on how the emerged categories relate to each other, presented in the conclusion. The constituent parts of this final conclusion are made up of the intermediate conclusions or core categories ending each chapter.

1.5 Limitations and ethical considerations

In the field, one has a responsibility towards the one's respondents. Particularly as the work of my respondents already puts them in a position of social backlash, and this social backlash was the subject

of my interest, their safety had to be considered. Indeed, the majority of the respondents requested anonymisation. Eventually, I decided to anonymise all of my respondents so identification through association would not be possible. This included the numbering of respondents rather than divulging a name, but also to refrain from giving details which would reveal a person's identity. As Ragin & Amoroso state I am to shield respondents from the 'worst-case scenario' (2019, pp. 93-94). Most organisations itself, however, are mentioned by name as most information about them is public information and can be found in a plurality of documentaries, newsletters, websites and on social media.

A limitation of this research is that the individuals are situated a longer history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, different national contexts and different groups within 'the peace movement'. As relevant as these larger structures are, my focus remains on the individuals and their construction of meaning, and less on the evaluation of these larger structures. Particularly the discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its nationalisms and the peace movement within it, remains limited to how they influence and contextualise treason discourse and the meaning-construction of the respondents. Despite the interest in normativity of this study, it is not an evaluation of the conflict as a whole, or an attempt to critically ascertain who is 'right' or 'correct'.

Another limitation occurred due to COVID-19. At five weeks in Israel-Palestine, the COVID-19 pandemic forced me to return home after a tumultuous period of contradictory information, insecurity and diminishing fieldwork opportunities. I first called all respondents I had planned on meeting, and who organised the activities I was supposed to join and was notified all were cancelled until, almost, the end of my research there. Upon my return, I contacted these same activists immediately and asked if instead, they would be willing to be interviewed digitally and if they could refer me to further respondents. The majority of my data collection now consisted of interviews. This limited my ability to understand from 'within', as I now had limited opportunities to immerse myself into the context of my respondents and situate their stories within it. This reduced the qualitative value of my research and made the comparative aspect that much more salient. Indeed, the comparison of the interviews is the bulk of this research's validity. Interviews then attained dual importance; as both providing subjects and contexts.

Chapter 2: A discourse of 'treasonous' radical alterity

Virtually every respondent, when asked: "are you ever called a traitor
for your work?", responded with: "Of course!".

This chapter explores the different types of accusations, repercussions, and purpose that constitutes treason discourse. Then, it will explore what is supposedly "betrayed", both in Palestinian, and Israeli nationalism, as well as the 'resistance and peace movement' in which our respondents are situated. Lastly, this chapter ends with why such a betrayal is relevant and significant. Collectively, this discourse produces radical alterity, radical otherness, between Israelis and Palestinians and the penalty for breaking such discourses is to become another radical "other" in one's own respective collective.

2.1. Treason Discourse

2.1.1 The accusations

My respondents receive numerous accusations due to their activism, namely: naive, irrational, normalizer, unpatriotic, sell-out, selfish, whore, Arab lover, collaborator, anti-Semite, self-hating, to traitor. In this section, we cluster all these accusations and interpret their meaning. I argue these accusations (1) question one's ability to appropriately assess the conflict, (2) question one's moral character: motivation and commitment to the respective collective, and (3) challenge one's belonging to the collective and cast one out of the collective. These accusations are not mutually exclusive and are often levied simultaneously.

The most common accusation heard by respondents is some form of naivete or cynicism[5]. It may come in the context of a warning, respondents heard: "how can you be so foolish to trust them", "it is not safe"[6]. From strangers to loved ones, respondents have been reminded 'the other' can't be trusted", as "they'll stab you in the back"[7]. Another respondent's mother warned him saying: "do not eat with them [Israelis], they will kill you". Hermann (2009, p. 4) explains how peace activism was considered politically naive *at best,* with activists being characterised as frivolous or irrational. In sum, the accuser does not believe the respondent had adequately considered the risks as he/she is working with 'the other'. If one counters such a notion, one is not believed or ridiculed. For example, one Palestinian, when he tries to convince his friends to join his reconciliation program, received the

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[5] Present in author's interview with Respondents 8, 10, 12,14, 16, 18 19, 22

[6] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[7] Author's interview with Respondent 8, 10, 12,14, 16, 18 19, 22

response that "your nice Israelis are not representative"[8]. Another respondent heard: "How can such a good woman have this defect?"[9], from her colleagues. In other words: one is not considered to be able to appropriately assess the conflict, showing scepticism or cynicism of the accuser.

Secondly, the next often heard accusation is that of 'normalizer' or being 'unpatriotic'. In these accusations one's motivation and commitment, or loyalty to "our respective tribes"[10], as one respondent calls it, is called into question. Rather than a legitimate standpoint, respondents may be accused of having ulterior motives. One respondent says that if she were to share her experience of her participation in a dialogue program, "they'd [her friends and family] think I joined the Mossad"[11]. Another accusation is that one is an 'Arab lover' or 'agent for the other side' whose supposed real interest is in money or self-preservation (Hermann, 2009). Particularly "normalizer" is heard by most Palestinian respondents interviewed[12] and has been cited as hindering cooperative peace initiatives (Hassouna, 2015; Barakatt & Goldenblatt, 2012; Amihai, 2013; *Disturbing the Peace*).

Normalization (*tatbi'a* in Arabic) is defined as "the process of building open and reciprocal relations with Israel in all fields, including the political, economic, social, cultural, educational, legal, and security fields" (Salem, 2005). The anti-normalization movement then, which gives the accusation of 'normalizer' its negative connotation, argues for complete disengagement from the Israeli society, which in practice refers to negotiations (politically) or dialogue (socially) (Salem, 2005). Many respondents name the BDS [Boycott, Divest, Sanction] movement, one of the organisations spearheading the anti-normalization campaign, as severely damaging the reputations of those who they consider to 'normalize' with Israelis, to the point where some feel their lives and livelihoods may be at risk[13]. By calling someone a 'normalizer', respondents explained, one is implying the Palestinian individual in question has given up on the Palestinian cause and identity, after which Palestinian respondents often try to convince the accuser that they have not[14]. Whether normalization may occur for ulterior (selfish) motive or something more sinister, the key cause for indignation is that someone is supposedly complacent with the occupation. One is 'uncommitted' to the Palestinian cause. One who is 'uncommitted' to one's own ingroup, and complacent with injustice, is considered to be of flawed or suspicious moral character.

Thirdly, the most aggressive accusations are 'traitor', 'self-hating', 'anti-Semite', 'whore', 'collaborator', 'sell-out' and the like[15]. According to Benski, the violent slurs of 'whore', 'slut' and 'traitor' are accompanied with emotions of outrage and disgust (2007). While contempt relates to a

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8 Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker

9 Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

10 Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9 Tel Aviv, Israeli peace activist.

11 Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian dialogue participant.

12 Author's interview with Respondents 11, 15, 16, 17, 21, 26

13 Author's interview with Respondents 11, 15, 16, 17, 21, 26

14 Author's interview with Respondents 11, 15, 16, 17, 21, 26

15 Author's interview with for instance, respondents 1, 9 and 16

feeling of moral superiority, present in the naivete accusation, disgust is a response of socio-moral violations of social solidarity (Benski 2007, pp. 65-67). The first thing one anti-Zionist Jewish respondent said was: "what is important, I am not an anti-Semite!"[16]. Indeed, Finlay argues how critics of military actions or advocates for peace and sympathy with Palestinians, are resented as those committing an act of aggression against "Jews" as they have allied themselves with "those who would kill the Jews", i.e. "showing shocking solidarity with those who would kill their brethren" (Finlay 2005, p. 216). Similarly, Owen (Owen, 2003 cited in Hermann 2009, p. 1), had stated that "there is no real difference between the peace activists who are defending the murderers and the murderers themselves", as peace activists "legitimize antisemitism" (Finlay 2005, p. 215). Subsequently, they are not considered "authentic Jews" any longer and the aggression they endure serves to symbolically cast them out of the collective (Benski, 2007; Finlay, 2005).

For Jewish *women*, protesting takes on another gendered dimension. They are often called 'whores', 'sluts' and sexual slurs, for protesting[17]. Sexual intimidation and insults aimed at the female gender appear, very much, a part of the treason discourse. Women in Black, of which respondents are included in this study and the subject of Benski's (2007) ethnography, are a feminist, anti-occupation protest group holding solidarity vigils for Palestinians every Friday afternoon. Benski (2007) elaborates that for women, whose traditional position remains in the private sphere, to not only claim public space but to do it on a Friday afternoon in which traditionally they 'should be' preparing the Shabbat at home, was the subject of a significant portion of insults. To subsequently not only leave the private sphere but to speak about peace and security issues, which is traditionally seen as a male space, shows dissent on multiple fronts (Benski, 2007). One feminist reported that Israel "is the only county in which the liberation of women is considered a threat to national security" (Sharoni 1995, p. 40).

While for Palestinians, to be a 'collaborator', 'traitor', 'working for Israel', or 'sell-out', are the most aggressive comments[18]. This accusations of being a 'sell-out', suggests they are giving information or helping Israel, actively aiding Palestinian oppression (possibly for personal gain)[19]. Such accusations are often combined with the 'uncommitted' accusation. For instance, similar to the contemporary anti-normalization discourse today, all Palestinians in the First Intifada were called upon to "disengage from Israeli institutions, the Israeli economy and thus Israeli control" (Dudai & Cohen 2007, p. 41). All those who did not follow such instruction were not only under social suspicion, but some were actively expelled from the collective. For instance, when they called upon Palestinians working in Civil Administration to resign their jobs in protest, all those who remained were considered to still 'work for Israel', labelled traitors and some executed (Dudai & Cohen 2007, p. 41). Those who 'actually'

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[16] Author's interview on 06-03-2020 with Respondent 3 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[17] Author's interview with Respondents 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10

[18] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[19] Author's interview with, for instance, respondent 16 and 21

collaborate with Israeli security forces are relocated to Israeli territory for this reason (Sigad & Nour, 2019).

2.1.2 The repercussions

Treason discourse has consequences. The repercussions are usually social, rather than political nowadays, with the exception of Gaza - where an accusation of 'normalization' with the 'Zionist enemy' leads to a $ 5000 fine or prison time[20]. This is evident in the recent jailing of a Gaza Youth leader who was photographed while in a Zoom-chat with Israeli peace activists (Halbfinger & Abuhaweila, 2020). Indeed, Gazan respondents are cautious when discussing the ramifications of their work, but state they are interrogated a lot[21]. Furthermore, for some, they are continually threatened by the violent parts of their own respective community, and even international activists, to the point their life is threatened and one has to request security from the authorities[22]. Still, for most the repercussions remain social.

These social repercussions range from family disputes[23] to losing friends[24], to verbal attacks in the public space[25], threats via social media and other public platforms[26], missing promotions[27], intimidation by taking pictures of you while demonstrating[28], and threats of personal violence from counter-protestors, bystanders or other activists[29]. This then may lead to adjusting or cancelling meetings due to threats, having lower attendance[30], or having a limited impact because participants of such programs are too afraid of social repercussions to share their experience with others[31]. One respondent, for instance, was thrown out of their neighbourhood WhatsApp group for organizing a 'Breaking the silence' workshop in her living room, which consists of ex-soldiers who served in the occupied territories sharing their experiences which some consider critical of the occupation[32]. Another respondent had a march against him, in his hometown of Jericho, where protesters said he was "more dangerous than a drug dealer"[33]. The group Women in Black reported shouting, spitting and (physical) threats (Benski, 2007).

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[20] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 and 24 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneurs and activists.

[21] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 and 24 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneurs and activists.

[22] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9 Tel Aviv, Israeli peace activist & Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[23] Author's interview with Respondents 19, 22, 26

[24] Author's interview with Respondents 15, 16, 17, 19

[25] Author's interview with Respondents 2,3,4,5, 10

[26] Author's interview with Respondents 15, 16, 21, 22

[27] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[28] Author's interview with Respondent 2 and 22

[29] Author's interview with Respondents 2, 9, 11

[30] Author's interview with Respondents 9, 11, 25

[31] Author's interview 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24

[32] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[33] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

2.1.3 Its purpose: policing and power

The reason for treason discourse is to "put you in a box", as one respondent explains, "so they don't have to listen to you"[34]. Indeed, one respondent states that by saying "all leftists are traitors", "they are making different opinions illegitimate"[35]. Self-hatred accusations, included in treason discourse, come from a conflation of right-wing Zionism with Jewish identity, in which there are "no legitimate differences of opinion among Jews", argues Finlay, but only one side representing 'authentic Jewish voices' and the enemy on the other (2005, p. 216). It must be explained here that in the Israeli political landscape, 'right-wing' is synonymous with hawkish (i.e. military strength), and 'left-wing' with dovish (i.e. peace and diplomacy, traditionally argues a two-state solution) stances on the conflict (Hermann, 2009). Right-wing Zionists state that support for Israel and Zionism are core elements of Jewish identity (Finlay 2005, p. 211) because, as also political Zionist writers assert, it is 'interdependence of fate'; of being identified as Jews by non-Jews for the purpose of persecution, that is the basis for Jewish cohesiveness (Finlay 2005, pp. 212-213).

The controversial assumption then occurs that anti-Zionism is a short step away from anti-Semitism (Finlay 2005, pp. 213-214). Yet, many Jews involved in the peace movement call into question the idea that Jewish identity is, or should be, synonymous with the hawkish Zionism or current Israeli politics (Finlay 2005, p. 214). In other words, accusations of self-hatred and antisemitism levied against Jewish activists serve the purpose of policing a definition of the collective, in which Jewish identity, Israel, and tradition are supposedly "self-evident integrated parts" (Findlay 2005, p. 210). Accusations of 'self-hating Jew' then serves to "rhetorically discount Jews who differ in life-styles, interests and political positions from their accusers, and that such misapplications of the concept result from essentialized and normative definitions of Jewish identity" (Finlay 2005, p. 202).

Secondly, Dudai & Cohen (2007), as well as Cohen (2012) emphasise the constructiveness of treason discourse and argue, taking the Palestinian context as an example of this, the role it plays in gaining power over the collective. According to Dudai & Cohen (2007), an accusation of 'uncommitted-ness' to the Palestinian cause is a necessary accusation to sustain a sufficient level of hostility and animosity for resistance. Indeed, he states: "applied to the Palestinian context, it could mean that Palestinian groups, in order to reinforce the simple structure of dichotomized enmity, have at times widened the category of 'collaboration' to include not only active military supporters of the occupation but also those who were not deemed to be militant enough against it—who, while not actively supporting the Israeli army and security services, have also not joined actions like general strikes" (Dudai & Cohen 2007, pp. 43-44). Also charges of 'traitor', 'collaborator' or 'sell-out' serve to determine what is "legitimate negotiations and illegitimate contacts", and such characterisations provide opportunities to scapegoat traitors for political failure, and police those accused of being 'uncommitted

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[34] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[35] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

civilians' (Dudai & Cohen 2007, pp. 43-44). Treason discourse is a tool, with which political opponents to sway constituents, as indeed Hamas levied accusations of treason to the Palestinian Authorities (PA) for the Oslo agreements and cooperation of security forces, which weakened the PA's popular standing (Cohen, 2012). In other words, political and civil society stakeholders fight for the monopoly over traitor-labelling. Anti-normalization discourse and traitor labelling may differ in the level of aggression, both are an expression of who has the power to decide the nature of the collective, which expresses itself towards individuals as a "question[ing of] my Palestianness"[36].

To conclude, treason discourse, and the social repercussions this creates, serve to claim the power to define and police a particular hegemonic narrative of the collective, and its prescribed conduct. In other words, treason discourse occurs when individuals break the (moral) postulates of the collective, as to either coerce the individual to re-ascribe to the hegemonic narrative or to cast them out. Importantly, whether activists 'actually' counter collective postulates is not under review, rather, the accusation of doing so is. Yet, what is this hegemonic narrative, these moral postulates, of each respective collective which is supposedly broken? In the next two sections, we will first explore the relevant moral postulates which constitute Palestinian hegemonic thought, or nationalism. Secondly, we will explore the relevant moral postulates which constitute Israeli hegemonic thought, or nationalism. As established in our analytical frame, to narrate, or in our case to create a (collective) discourse, on morality, is to "engage in constructing an account of actions and consequences that includes beliefs, desires and emotions" (Pasupathi and Wainryb 2010, p. 65). Thus, an argument on morality can be understood as the relationship between desires, emotions and beliefs, which is how we will understand the following collective narratives.

2.2 The 'moral' stakes for Palestinian Nationalism

This section aims to explore the dialectical relationship between the desires, beliefs and emotions that constitute hegemonic Palestinian nationalist discourse. Firstly, the desire for self-determination is explored. This shows Arab Nationalism gave birth to Palestinian Nationalism due to disappointment in the former, yet shares many of the same narratives, including the anti-colonial narratives. Secondly, the next sub-section elaborates on some of the most relevant narratives on Palestinian identity and nationalism. It explores how beliefs in rootedness, sacrifice and resistance are collectively shared and expected. Thirdly, the last subsection shows how the collective emotional stakes which resulted from the frustrated desire for self-determination, sustain the belief in a righteous and defiant victim.

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[36] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

2.2.1 The desire for self-determination

Arab nationalism was the primary expression of Palestinian political aspiration until 1967. As Hassassian says; "to trace the genesis of Palestinian nationalism, requires an in-depth look at Arab Nationalism" (Hassassian 2002, p. 3). The decline of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century allowed for unprecedented European encroachment into the Arab world (Tessler, 2009). This encroachment was increasingly seen as a threat to Arab civilization, identity, and politics (Tessler 2009, p. 132, pp.136-137). Increasing pro-Turkish voices in the Ottoman Empire, combined with European encroachment which was self-categorized as 'civilizing', led Arab thinkers to propose an alternative narrative which was neither Turkish nor Ottoman nor European (Tessler 2009, pp. 132-148, 155-157). Rather, Arab nationalism proposed a narrative of independence, 'restoring' bygone splendour from the Prophet's Caliphate and great Arab Empires, placing themselves in pan-Arabic, pan-Islamic, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial discourse (Tessler 2009, pp. 131, 132-148, 155-157, p. 168; Ma'iri, 2009).

Parallel to Arab nationalism, a Palestinian identity was formulated based on regional alliances in, what then still was seen as, "the most Western province of Syria" (Hassassian, 2002 Ma'iri, 2009; Nassar, 2002; Tessler, 2009, Said 1992, p. 49). Zionism was not yet seen as a threat and thus did not contribute to the creation of a Palestinian identity (Hassassian, 2002 Ma'iri, 2009; Nassar, 2002; Tessler, 2009). Arab nationalism, also in Palestine, was seen as a new 'awakening' of the region and included a negotiation between religious, traditionalist, reformist and European intellectual voices (Said 1992, p. 49, Tessler 2009, pp. 136-137). It is with this larger Islamic and Arab civilization and identity with which the inhabitants of 'Historic Palestine' mostly identified (Nassar, 2002; Nasser, 2019; Tessler 2009, p. 104). Indeed, Mi'ari states that before 1948, Palestinians primarily identified as either Arab, Muslim, and/or Ottoman (2009).

Steady Jewish immigration in the early 20th century resulted in Zionism being seen as a threat in the interwar period (the period between World War I and World War II). Palestinian identity then acquired new territorial focus, in which the different intellectual blocks of society geared all energies to opposing British rule and Jewish 'colonization', or immigration, which "solidified the Palestinian sense of belonging by whichever continuity of residence to a distinct national group with a language and specific communal sense (as threatened by Zionism) of its own" (Said 1992, p. 50). Indeed, Zionism was seen as a mere extension of European encroachment and thus "modern Palestinian social, economic, and cultural life was organised around the same issues of independence and anti-colonialism prevalent in the region, only for the Palestinians there were the legacy of Ottoman rule, then Zionist colonialism, then British mandatory authority (after World War I) to contend with more or less all together" (Said 1992, p. 50).

Yet, the interwar period also brought the fragmentation of Arab nationalism as the proclaimed 'right to self-determination' belonged to the realm of individual countries (Tessler 2009, p. 160; Hassassian, 2002). Internal concerns and threats therefore increased in salience, which included

Zionism, whereas before Jewish-Arab relations had been relatively cordial (Tessler 2009, p. 168). The first anti-Zionist, anti-Ottoman, and anti-colonial newspapers and movements began to appear, both Muslim and Christian (Tessler 2009, pp. 167-170). While some Arab-Jewish cooperation continued (Tessler 2009, pp.182-185; Jacobson, 2019), when the British Mandate made contradictory agreements with both Zionist and Palestinian leadership, both movements became increasingly militant, which lead to the first riots against Jewish immigrants erupting in 1921 in Jaffa (Tessler 2009, pp. 209-211). The civil-war-like state of Israel-Palestine, as well as a declining British Empire, drove the British out. Before leaving, they proposed several partitions before handing the decision over to the newly formed United Nations (Tessler, 2009).

After the partition plan was rejected by Palestinian and Arab factions, who viewed Jewish claims as illegitimate, the Arab-Israeli War broke out (Tessler, 2009). The Israeli-Arab war led to the Nakba, which included 780.000 Palestinians being expelled by Jewish fighters, or fleeing from their homes (Said 1992, p. 52). Defined by their refugee-experience, Palestinians had placed their hope in other Arab countries, such as Jordan and Egypt which occupied Gaza and the West Bank (Brand, 1995). Yet, the failure by Arab countries in the 1967 war cemented disappointment in Arab countries and gave rise to a particularist Palestinian nationalism, in which the identification of 'Palestinian' overtook that of feeling Arab (Mi'ari, 2009; Brand, 1995). Indeed, one reportedly felt 'abandoned' by their Arab brethren and resented the general failure of the international community to protect and guarantee their rights to self-determination and the right of (refugees to) return (Brand, 1995; Vollhardt, 2009). Palestinian nationalism incorporated most aspects of Arab nationalism, such as pan-Arabism, pan-Islamic narratives (Hassassian, 2002), and anti-colonial discourse. Particularist Palestinian nationalism nevertheless attained its own set of beliefs explored in the next section.

2.2.2 The Palestinian belief in rootedness, sacrifice and resistance

The centrality of the ongoing conflict, and the occupation "manifested itself in the privileging of national liberation not only as the primary ideology of struggle against the Israeli occupation but also as a principle discourse that shapes certain ideas and ways of thinking about Palestinian identity and community" (Sharoni 1995, p. 36). Indeed, one respondent explains these tenets to me as "glorifying resistance"[37]. When Palestinian particularism took hold, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) aimed to unite all the diverse factions in Palestinian society (Khalidi 2010, p. 183; Hassassian, 2002). The dominant narratives which emerged stressed (1) rootedness to the land of Israel-Palestine to strengthen anti-colonial discourse, (2) the need for sacrifice and community of the Palestinian people, (3) represented in the wide-spread grassroots involvement in modes of resistance.

Firstly, ancient Palestinian history and pre-48 agricultural existence emphasise Palestinian continuous rootedness to the entire land of Israel-Palestine. The 'Palestinian people' identify as an

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[37] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

indigenous population. They descend from the 'Canaanites', the first known inhabitants of the Southern Levant, the Philistines who arrived 1200 B.C.E. (roughly 100 years after the first Israelites), intermingled with Arab populations entering the region from the 6th to the 9th century (Tessler 2009, pp. 101-102; Nasser, 2019). The emphasis on Palestinian ancient history may serve as a claim of firstness to the Israelite Jewish population, according to Nasser (2019). '*Fellahin*' (peasant) resistance (Khalidi 2011, p. 89) and agricultural symbolisms such as the cactus, orange, olive tree and poppy (Abufarha 2008, pp. 346-347), serve to emphasise Palestinians have cultivated the land for centuries, and are a displaced indigenous population under threat by a colonial entity.

Secondly, Palestinian national liberation narratives emphasise the role of sacrifice for the sake of the community. Resistance, martyrdom, prison and self-sacrifice came to occupy literature and art in Palestinian culture (Banat et al. 2017, pp. 48-49). The "Palestinian fighter with his Kalashnikov" emerged to "liberate" Palestine, adopting rhetoric shared with "third world nationalist and anti-imperialist struggles" (Rigby 2015, p. 17). The martyr and their family became cultural symbols, prison a rite of passage (Nashif, 2008), and suffering and abuse were re-conceptualised as a sacrifice for the homeland, as "brave and heroic deeds" showing political morality (Jean-Klein 2000, p. 102). Self-sacrifice - in whatever way, or as Banat et. al. write "by any and all means" (Banat et al 2017, p. 49) - raises the social status of the individual and their family (Banat et al., 2017).

Thirdly, the role of each member of the community is emphasised and represented in the generally grassroots nature of Palestinian resistance. In the global Palestinian diaspora, art and literature on yearning, struggle and independence were exchanged (Hassassian, 2002), while such (global) solidarity culminated in mass civilian involvement in the First Intifada. It was also characterised by cohesive, united and unarmed resistance (Rigby 2017, p. 330). This left space for international and Israeli peace groups to get involved (Rigby 2017, p. 330), leading to the Oslo peace process (Hermann, 2009; Riby, 2017). Indeed, one Israeli respondent called the First Intifada a "wake-up call" an joined the peace movement[38]. The Second Intifada which followed after the failure of the Oslo accords was more militant, violent, confessional, and left civilians and (Israeli) peace groups in supportive or relegated roles (Hermann, 2009; Riby 2017, p.330). Despite this, non-violent resistance, mostly a pragmatic choice, occurring parallelly in the Second Intifada is what has survived past it and is mostly practised today (Norman 2010, p. 2). It returns to traditional narratives of rootedness, sacrifice and community through 'steadfastness', or 'sumoud' of the *fellahin*, a form of non-cooperation, or 'not leaving' one's land. This includes journalism, protest, and boycotts such as BDS (Boycott, Divest and Sanction Israel) and 'Stop the Wall', but also "cooperative nonviolent resistance" such as Combatants for peace (Hallward & Norman 2011, pp. 7-9). It is in this current state of resistance our Palestinian respondents are situated.

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[38] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10, Israeli activist.

2.2.3 The emotional drivers

The beliefs and desires; the resistance of the Palestinian people, is driven by emotions of loss, or grief, humiliation, and shame. Indeed, narratives constructed during a period of refugee-hood, fragmentation and occupation formulate a yearning for pre-48 Palestinian life, connecting loss, tragedy, homeland, identity and resistance (Sa'di, 2002; Brand, 1995; Khalidi, 2010; Vollhardt, 2009). Between 77 and 83 percent of Palestinians from what is now Israel proper, became refugees in the Nakba (Sa'di 2002, p. 175). A remembrance and traditions surrounding one's 'ancestral' village; from embroidery to the inheritance of house keys, expresses this new identity (Shomali, 2002; Sa'di 2002, p.181; Brand, 1995; Lacey 2011, p. 82). The root of injustice, as several respondents explain, "all comes back to the Nakba"[39]. "Al-Nakba represents [...] the loss of the homeland, the disintegration of society, the frustration of national aspirations, and the beginning of a hasty process of destruction of their culture" (Sa'di 2002, p. 175). The resulting fragmentation and isolation of Palestinian people, and the inability to receive 'the right of return', and continuous precarious position of refugees, cemented an idea of being alone in the world (Tessler 2009, pp. 307-315, 803, 833; Vollhardt 2009, pp. 140-141, Rouhana & Ghanem, 1998).

Loss is combined with a feeling of humiliation according to Lacey (2011). Both the remembrance and thus re-experiencing past trauma and tragedy, as well as current humiliation of those living under occupation, keeps this emotion alive (Lacey 2011, pp. 78-70, 82, 85-86). Humiliation is brought on by loss and it is a loss in and of itself; of self-esteem (Lacey 2011, p. 76-79). This can create the need to 'restore' pride and demand an 'equality of suffering' by the enemy (Lacey 2011, pp. 76-78, 80). Indeed, resistance may be complemented with an ideology that *entitles* them to act out their frustrations (Lacey 2011, p. 85), in which the wearing of the victim-label provides the "assumed entitle to wreak revenge", where entitlement is "the belief that a group can override normal moral concerns and can demand special rights and privileges" (Lacey 2011, p. 81). According to Lacey, resistance brings an emotional, psychological reward to ease this humiliation, which is independent of whether the actual situation changes (Lacey 2011, pp. 88-89). In sum, resistance offers "hope, identity and a feeling of empowerment to Palestinians" (Lacey 2011, p. 85).

Lastly, where loss and humiliation lower one's self-esteem, shame creates the feeling of "lowered standing in the wider community", may this be the Arab, Islamic or wider international community (Pettigrove and Parsons 2012, p. 520). The military defeat in '48, the ongoing occupation since '67, and the perpetual state of dependency as refugees "is thought to expose one as diminished, insignificant, powerless or contemptible" (Pettigrove and Parsons 2012, p. 515, p. 520,). Shame can be a particularly salient motivator in cultures which value honour, and as such may trigger two responses: (1) to lower the standing of the one which has shamed the community, since those who are an unreliable

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[39] Author's interview with Respondents 1, 5, 10

source or contemptible, are unimportant and thus unable to shame the community or individual (Pettigrove and Parsons 2012, p. 520), or (2) to characterise the one who has shamed the community as particularly wicked, which enforces a dichotomy between villain and innocent victim which may turn shame into the 'righteous anger' to 'restore pride' (Pettigrove and Parsons, p. 520). 'Righteous anger', then, is how innocence is maintained, as only "true victims may be righteous in their quest to quell injustice" (Pettigrove and Parsons 2012, pp. 521-524).

In short, Palestinian view themselves are the rightful owners of the land of Israel-Palestine, in which they emphasise their ancient rootedness. Their (partial) expulsion and continued occupation have created emotions of loss, humiliation and shame. The victimized community, in all its diversity, set upon the task of resisting their predicament, in which grassroots and full community participation and sacrifice was not only encouraged but required. Suffering became an act of resistance in itself. Humiliation and shame may transform into righteous anger, and the urge to 'restore' the pre-48 situation; the subject of their yearning and grief. This ethos of national liberation takes precedence over all others, and the emotional narrative of retributive justice against a uniquely and unequivocal evil opponent may cause an entitlement of resistance fighters to wreak revenge. Regardless of effectiveness, it at least provides an emotionally attractive alternative to hopelessness and grief.

2.3. The 'moral' stakes for Israeli Nationalism

This section explores (1) the desires at the core of Zionism, (2) beliefs in victimization which emphasise the need for a securitized, conformist Israeli society (3) which is sustained through existential fear and 'the ego of victimhood' incurred through historical persecution. Lastly, (4) it explores the emergent, frustrated peace movement and how Israeli experiences with the peace movement generated new beliefs which self-confirm the former moral arguments of a 'besieged nation with no recourse'.

2.3.1 The desires of Zionism: belonging, security and preservation

The diverse strands of Zionism were born out of a desire for security, autonomy, cultural preservation in the face of large-scale European assimilation, influenced by utopian religious and socialist aspirations.

Jews regard themselves as more than merely a religious group - they are also 'a people'. Virtually all Jews in Israel believe in their shared ancestral roots (Cohen & Lewis- Epstein, 2019). The Jewish people entered 'The Land of Canaan' (Modern-day Israel, Palestine, and parts of Jordan and Lebanon) in 1300 B.C.E. (Tessler 2009, p. 34). The Hebrew tribes had multiple kingdoms, an exile, and sovereignty agreements, until the Romans finally ended their presence in the region at 70 A.C., naming the area 'Syria Palestina' (Tessler 2009, pp. 34-40). Over 90 per cent of world Jewry spent its Diaspora time in European ghettos, creating an inward-looking, religious, and conservative community (Tessler 2009, pp. 43- 52), in which a yearning and supposed emphatic dedication to the land of *Eretz-Yisrael*

was maintained (Tessler 2009, p. 288). Israel-Palestine was always the long-term goal of the Zionist movement (Tessler 2009, p. 87), due to historical, cultural and religious feelings which desired to belong to the land of *Eretz-Yisrael* - a belonging which was not always felt in the Jewish place of residence. In this history, Israeli nationalism constructs the narrative of 'return' to a 'homeland'.

Zionism emerged as a fringe movement in a broader intellectual renaissance in which the position and identity of Jews in Europe were debated and a lot of cultural differences between 'European culture' and 'Jewish culture' disappeared (Tessler 2009, p. 54-55). The modern era of the 18th and 19th century brought Jews increasing individual rights, yet not equal collective rights and as such Jewish populations were invited to divorce their religion from their political identity and become 'Jewish citizens' of the nation in which they reside (Tessler 2009, p. 52). The opportunity to integrate into European culture was attractive to most and thus the assimilatory and synthesis schools on Jewish identity were most popular (Tessler 2009, pp. 54-81). Yet, in the face of continued antisemitism on the one hand and criticism on cultural assimilation on the other; Zionism started to argue for a return to *Eretz-Yisrael* from religious, cultural and political standpoints, ultimately gaining critical mass in the early 20th century (Tessler 2009, pp. 54-81).

The different branches of Zionism that developed provide insight into the different desires. Eventually, Zionism institutionalized under Theodore Herzl, considered a founding father of Zionism, who argued assimilation into Europe was futile, as anti-Semitism was never disappearing and returning to *Eretz-Yisrael* was the only way to protect both Jews and non-Jews in a new utopian state (Tesller 2009, pp 75-78). The now institutionalized Zionist movement faced severe financial troubles and internal divisions on the basis of economic policy, level of religious piety, strategy and the treatment of Arabs. These differences crystallized into roughly four branches. First, political Zionism, arguing the political necessity for a state for the Jewish people, similar to European secular nations (Tessler 2009, pp. 83-90). Second, cultural Zionism, arguing for a return to *Eretz-Yisrael* for the preservation of Jewish cultural identity, which required at least some level of autonomy (Tessler 2009, pp. 83-90). Third, Labour Zionism, from which the 'Kibbutsim' movement emerged to create socialist communes in *Eretz-Yisrael* (Tessler 2009, pp. 83-90). Fourth, practical Zionism, debating method rather than principle; arguing one should simply start living there, and whose proponents had started settling from as early as 1855. (Tessler 2009, pp. 83-90). The different focuses overlapped significantly yet each had a different emphasis and its own dominant thinkers. Indeed, these discussions remain in the State of Israel today: the nature of Zionism, who and what is the 'Jewish People'', and its values are still debated by, among others, the peace movement.

The second Aliyah (immigration) created the critical mass needed to create a politically viable and independent community, which made Zionism more of a threat to Palestinian-Arabs, whereas before they were largely tolerated. A re-appearance of antisemitism in Russia & Eastern Europe, including several pogroms, massacres and restrictive laws, strongly influenced Jewish thought and was a direct precursor the First Aliyah (1882-1903) by predominantly Russian Jewish communities to

Palestine, as well as mass migration to the United States (Tessler 2009, pp. 68- 72). The second Aliyah was from 1904 - 1913, again from predominantly Eastern Europe / Russia fleeing another round of antisemitism (Tessler 2009, p. 93). This *Yishuv* (Jewish community in Israel-Palestine) would then quickly grow into what Jacobson (2009) refers as "a nation in formation". Despite the communities reaching the critical mass to sustain an independent and sovereign infrastructure, Jews remained a minority until after the establishment of Israel (Said 1992, p. 50). Jewish-Palestinian relations in the *Yishuv* were cordial and welcoming, but tense with economic angst, as Jewish settlers bought lands from absentee landlords which previously had been rented for generations (Tessler 2009, p. 168).

When Arab-Palestinians increasingly saw Jewish political aspirations as a threat, Zionists in Europe compared to the *Yishuv* responded differently. Zionists in Europe had close to no attention for Arab discontent, which was "an academic issue, while for the latter it was an issue of daily existence" (Tessler 2009, p. 173). Conversely, some Jews in the Yishuv started studying Arab culture as early as the 1880s, as they believed Jews and Arab shared pre-Islamic origins and their movements could be mutually beneficial (Tessler 2009, p. 176). In 1907 the debate about Arab political aspirations started in earnest; resulting in four schools of Zionist thought arguing for separation, integration, mitigation and liberalism, or the formation of a labour movement with working-class Palestinian-Arabs (Tessler 2009, pp. 173-180). However, violence with Arabs became a fact of life in the Yishuv since the first riots in 1921, and the conflict escalated. By that time, the first and second Aliyah had secured critical mass necessary for the construction of independent social and political institutions and self-sufficiency of the Jewish community in Palestine - which would later become the state of Israel (Tessler 2009, p. 226).

2.3.2 Nation-building: the belief in a need for unity and conformism

The historical legacy of persecution, extensive national mobilization for the purposes of defending from all-out Arab attack, and the dream of a national renaissance created a 'uniform collectivist mentality' leaving little room for nonconformism (Hermann 2009, p. 46). Indeed, after its creation the Israeli state engaged in a plurality of nation-building initiatives to emphasise Jewish - Hebrew identity, such as the [re-]naming of place and thus territorialisation of Jewish identity (Yiftachel, 2002), discouraging emigration (Cohen, 2010), the guarding of who is 'Jewish' and thus who can make Aliyah[40] (McGonigle & Herman, 2015; Wheelwright, 2012), repressing diasporic identities as Jews from Arab and other lands fled to the new state (Shohat, 1999), and politicizing archaeological findings (Gori, 2013). As well as militarization through the draft which socializes young Israeli-Jews; being a rite-of-passage leading to further employment and development (Agbaria and Shmueli, 2019). The goal of these and other nation-building projects was to condense all the varied Jewish communities, who were used to a level of insular independence and autonomy in practising their traditions, into one cohesive unit.

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[40] First this merely referred to Jewish immigration, but is now a Jewish law of return: anyone in the world who is Jewish may freely immigrate to Israel

Importantly, "the construction of an Israeli nationality has been significantly shaped by the assertion of an aggressive and highly militarized masculinity, justified by the need to end a history of weakness and suffering. Images of Israeli-Jewish men who are exceedingly masculine - that is, pragmatic, protective, assertive and emotionally tough - have been contrasted with a fairly traditional notion of femininity on the one hand, and with images of helpless and powerless Jews in the diaspora on the other" (Sharoni 1995, p. 40). Indeed, the "new Jew" needed to become the antithesis of the "weak, persecuted Jew", which is most commonly associated with the collective traumatic memory of the Holocaust (Sharoni 1995, p. 41). This, combined with an emphasis on a sharing of the burden in pre-military academies (Agbaria and Shmueli, 2019), contributes to ideas of sacrificing oneself to protect the homeland.

Victimization beliefs among Jews are rooted in centuries of discrimination, persecution, and pogroms, kept alive through family narratives and religious holidays about the oppression of Jews in ancient history (including Passover, Purim and Hannukah), as well as relatively recent experiences (such as Yum Kippur) in the Middle East including suicide-bombings, wars, a denial of Jewish ancestry and legitimacy in the region, as well as the Arab slogan of "driving Jews into the sea" (Vollhardt 2009, pp. 139-140). This has given the Israeli- Jews a 'siege mentality', which is "a mental state in which group members hold a central belief that the rest of the world has negative behavioural intentions toward them" (Vollhardt 2009, p. 140). In short, Israeli nationalism includes beliefs of constant threat, which requires the inner ranks to be without dissent, lest one falls to the constant preying enemies.

2.3.3 The emotional drivers: existential fear and 'the ego of victimhood'

Hirschberger et. al. find that 'past victimization' and existential threat of 'collective physical annihilation' among Israeli Jews positively correlated with a preference for violent measures against Palestinians (2016). A strong narrative of past victimization is the Holocaust, of which survivors live in Israel for obvious reasons, and makes the threat of annihilation remains of incredible emotional and psychological significance (Lacey 2011, p. 81). Existential concerns promote political violence when a narrative of retributive justice is activated, regardless of whether violence is seen as particularly effective (Hirschberger et al., 2015). Past victimization and loss create humiliation, which includes the feeling of helplessness, feeling a lack of control and of being at the mercy of your enemy (Lacey 2011, p. 81). Political violence is a way to rectify said feelings and (re)gain a sense of control.

The threat of physical extermination was solidified for many, as three major wars after the establishment of Israel, 1948, 1967 and 1973 were fought because neighbouring states refused to recognise Israel's right to exist, where threats to "wipe them out", or "drive Jews / push Israel into the sea", reawakened anxiety (Lacey 2011, p. 81). The consequence is rhetoric which presupposes that "this time we fight" and #neveragain (referring to ⅓ of world Jewry perishing in the Holocaust), as "Jews have paid a terrible price for passivity in the past" (Lacey 2011, p. 81). The victory in 1948 meant a

new start in Jewish discourse, a step towards processing past humiliation collectively felt; in which one will not "be pushed around anymore", defending their safe haven at all costs, as there is "nowhere else to run" (Lacey 2011, p. 81). This concern overrides all others, including the Nakba, which many may consider unfortunate, but "larger issues are at stake" (Lacey 2011, p. 82). This is what Mack (1990 cited in Lacey 2011, p. 81) calls the 'ego of victimhood', which stipulates that one's own concerns leave little room for emotional empathy with the suffering of others.

In short, the desires for belonging to the land to which the Jewish people feel historical and religious ties, as well as the desire for security and cultural preservation, motivated Aliyah's to what is now Israel. Yet, the historical persecution preceding, as well as existential wars fought after Israel's establishment reaffirmed mostly the desire for security, creating a 'siege mentality' (Vollhardt 2009, p. 140), and a conformist militarized society which might negate any suffering of 'the other', as existential fears motivate one to defend their safe haven at all costs.

2.3.4 Part of the moral discussion: the frustrated peace movement

Hirschenberger et. al. stated that those Israelis experiencing collective symbolic existential threat - i.e. they are not fearful of Jews physically disappearing as a group through death and annihilation, but rather the fear of disappearing as a culture - are more likely to be dovish (Hisrschenberger et al., 2016). Dovish here means support for the two-state solution, rather than continued warfare or a one-state solution, as to maintain the moral essence of a Jewish State. This lays the emotional groundwork for the emergence of the traditional peace movement.

The peace movements emerged after 1967 in earnest, which already ranged from religious to moderate to radical, only really got traction after 1978 when the Yom Kippur war [1973] was more in the background (Hermann 2009, pp. 62-110). The First Intifada, and a stark growth in Women's [peace] movements in the late 1980s, grew the broader peace camp (Hermann 2009, pp. 62-110). Hermann argues the peace camp's political accomplishment might paint a grim picture, but that their main accomplishment is the ability to significantly affect the 'climate of opinion' (Hermann 2009, pp. 6-7). This is exemplified by the proposed 'two-state solution' which had become mainstream by the time of the Oslo accords (Hermann 2009, pp. 6-7).

Its desires are and have remained quite focused: attaining political and human rights for the Palestinian populous and security and peace for the Israeli populous. Once also the PLO formally adopted a two-state platform in 1988, the Israeli political establishment responded (Herzog & Hai, 2005). Yet, the accord turned out to be frail, as by this time the occupation had gone on for almost 30 years, with numerous wars in between, thus, as right-wingers were against Oslo due to their belief of inherently antagonistic Jewish - Arab relations, mainstream centrist, and the left-leaning public had also remained relatively suspicious and mistrustful (Hermann 2009, pp. 111-127). Opinions also ran across diaspora-identity (and religious) lines, exasperating internal cleavages in Israel (Cohen & Lewis-

Epstein, 2019; Hermann, 2009). Furthermore, Israel still has a significant Arab- Palestinian minority, who may enjoy all individual civil rights but are "systematically and intentionally denied collective rights" and are often referred to as a fifth column (Herman 2009, p. 50). The peace movement is not a 'simple' discussion of conflict and peace, but also includes debates on the religious versus secular, European versus Eastern oriented, and ethnoreligious versus democratic ideals of statehood.

Besides right-wing and mainstream cynicism, the Oslo accords faced Palestinian, Israeli-Palestinian and radical left-leaning critique (Hermann 2009, p. 111-239). Indeed, Israelis and Palestinians were similarly both sceptical and hopeful of what Oslo accords would yield (Kaufman, 1999). After the breakdown of the Oslo accord, Palestinians blamed the (grassroots) peace movement for not being able to prevent the reoccupation of Palestinian territories, a vote of distrust which demotivated a large part of its participants (Hermann 2009, p. 6). The Second Intifada was marked by radical shift to violence and diminished non-violent/civil resistance, but also by an increasing encroachment by the Israeli government over Palestinian lives (Hackle 2016, p. 172). At the same time, Hermann records that the peace movement struggled "ideologically with the uncompromising positions put out by the Palestinians leadership and the wide Palestinian public support for the use of violence against Israelis, including suicide bombings" and largely demobilized after the Second Intifada (Hermann 2009, p. 13).

Afterwards, the Israeli government put forward that "*there is no partner [for peace]*", and that the Israelis had offered "everything and had been turned down" (Hermann 2009, p. 187). Indeed, for mainstream public opinion "the world was once again as expected, the Palestinians were attacking and the Jews were fighting back" (Hermann 2009, p. 187). The government and the peace movements' critics took the Oslo Accords' failure and the Second Intifada as proof of the peace movements' "erroneous claims" (Hermann 2009, pp. 9-13). The vast majority of Israelis did not consider Israel's role in the eruption of the Intifada and the cause for this anger (Hermann 2009, p. 188). Worse was that, in a political atmosphere in which security is the most important issue, 82% of Israeli respondents in a Peace Index survey felt the peace process had deteriorated their personal security (Hermann 2009, p. 189). What remained were smaller grassroots initiatives, as well as more radical groups, struggling to rebuild broader movements. While we do not study the 'peace movement' as a whole, this is the context within which our Israeli respondents are situated.

2.4. The competition between nationalisms

National security (Israeli) and National liberation (Palestinian) discourse are similar, according to Sharoni, in that they view the unity of the nation "as superior to the issues raised by private citizens and various social groups within that nation" (Sharoni 1995, p. 36). Yet they differ in that both nationalisms are based on fundamental differences in how they read history, and social context (Sharoni 1995, p. 36). In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the two nationalisms counter (1) the legitimacy of each other's national

desires, (2) the authenticity of each other's identity beliefs, and (3) compete for emotional victimhood status. It is in this competition treason discourse attains its relevance and significance.

Firstly, the establishment of a continuity, either real or imagined, between the ancient and the current, lies as the core of political claims to land and self-determination (Nasser 2019, p. 153). Nasser (2019) emphasises that people believe their "nation has evolved from a common ancestry and that their traditions are rooted within their ancient history", and as such "recovering the past seems vital to understanding the present, [...] which allows people to maintain a sense of coherent and continuous identity" (Nasser 2019, p. 153). Collective past turns into collective narratives, which are the building blocks of the 'imagined community' that is a nation (Nasser 2019, p. 153; Anderson, 2006). Thus, both Israeli and Palestinian nationalism argue that the other's nationalism is illegitimate by negating the historical presence of the 'other' on the land. Indeed, Nasser found that PLO published textbooks argue Jewish history and presence in the region was short-lived, sporadic, and hence negligent, while the presence and even existence of Palestinians is ignored or actively denied in Israeli textbooks (Nasser 2019, p. 161).

Secondly, despite historical claims both national identities remain a relatively new construction and this fact is used by both sides to paint the other's nationality as inauthentic. As concluded upon by a roundtable of Israeli and Palestinian scientists; as incompatible as these nationalities are with each other, these nationalities should be seen as constructs of their time, as people 2000 years ago did not view themselves in concepts of 'nation' (Bishara et al, 2002). Kelman elaborates that Palestinians are viewed as Arabs whose residence and self-identification as Palestinians is a recent and artificial creation, while Israelis are seen as Europeans exercising settler-colonialism who have no historical links to the land (Kelman 1999, p. 590). Through the claim that Palestinians are 'just' a group of Arabs, Israeli textbooks could purport that *Eretz-Yisrael* was a land without a people, for a people without a land, the *exclusive* patrimony to the Jewish people (Said,1992; Sinai, 2019; Nasser, 2019).

Thirdly, each competes over victim-hood status in which 'the other' is held responsible for aggression in the conflict. Rabieh (2013) writing as the director of a peace organisation, observed how the cycles of violence enforced each side's sense of victimhood, constructing narratives of righteousness which dehumanizes the other: "We are the good people, they are the bad ones; we seek peace, they seek war; we are the victims who only defend ourselves against their aggression; we stand alone and the entire world supports them", making "our brains selective to reinforce our views". Both perceive their 'state' to live on the edge of oblivion, indeed "the themes of destruction, of physical annihilation, and of nonexistence play a central role in their national self-images" (Kelman 1999, p. 589). Israelis have equated 'liberating Palestine' to the intention of destroying Israel, while the Palestinians see 1948 and 1967 as mere steps in the complete ethnic cleansing of Palestine of Palestinians (Kelman 1999, p. 589). Indeed, Kelman argues, the most extreme forms of mutual delegitimization are the equation of Zionism with racism and Palestinian nationalism with terrorism (1999, p. 590).

Kelman argues both these nationalities have negative interdependencies, in which the conflict, the relationship with the land, national identity and national existence is a zero-sum game (Kelman 1999, p. 588). If one national identity is legitimate, the other must not be and, thus, they "invest great energy in discrediting each other" (Kelman 1999, p. 589). Treason discourse was incurred upon both Israeli and Palestinians dissidents, who were seen to give the 'other' legitimacy through dialogue. On the Israeli side, there was a legal restriction (an official ban on contacts between 1986-1992) against "speaking with terrorist organisations", while on the Palestinian side speaking to representatives of the "Zionist entity" was considered treason and could be socially, and sometimes politically, persecuted (Herzog & Hai, 2005). In other words, it is this competition which makes the breaking of collective moral postulates relevant, it is then also what makes treason discourse significant.

It is the competition between the nationalisms, which made Oslo a break, as they created some framework of mutual recognition (Kelman, 1999; Herzog & Hai, 2005). Still, the majority of Israeli Jews support peace negotiations both after the Intifada and as of 2013 (Hermann 2009, p. 118; Pundak, 2012). Yet, similarly the continuous status-quo causes fatigue and most who do favour negotiations, are also sceptic that it is possible (Amihai, 2013; Pundak, 2012).

2.5 Conclusion and the next chapter

Treason discourse consists of accusations which question one's ability to appropriately assess the conflict, question one's moral character by doubting one's motivations and commitment to the collective, and to actively challenge one's belonging to the collective. They are accused of aiding the 'other' by destroying the narratives and existence of the 'own collective', as well as legitimizing the narratives of the 'other'. Treason discourse is part of a struggle over who can legitimately define the nature of the collective, as well as the sufficient and accepted modes of resistance and cooperation. Treason discourse then polices the nature of this collective, requiring conformism to collective narratives.

To discern the interplay between moral agency and treason discourse, we first must look at the supposed postulates betrayed. We conclude that (the different strands of) Zionism emerged out of a desire for security, belonging and cultural preservation. The violent birth of Israel, created a strong, militaristic and conformist Israeli society, sustained through emotions of existential fear, past victimization and humiliation. Palestinian nationalism, conversely, has similar desires which aspire sovereignty over the land in which they feel belonging. Like Arab nationalisms before them, Palestinian nationalism emphasises the Palestinians as an indigenous group under threat by a colonial force, requiring unity and sacrifice from all of its community members. The expulsion and suffering of the Palestinians as a result of the creation of Israel and the continuing conflict and occupation created the belief in the righteous, defiant victim, sustained through emotions of shame, humiliation and grief.

Yet, it is unclear to what degree activists, insofar you can speak of such a coherent collective, broke away from all collective tenets. A case study of a women's peace organisation shows continuous internal negotiations between taking an active stance for peace and retaining loyalty to their national identity (Desilvilya & Yassour - Borochowitz, 2008). The peace movement described by Hermann (2009), shows that the activists in this time-period, who did not challenge the core collective narratives of Israeli society, were thus still Zionist. This was one of the reasons why, besides [radical] right-wing distaste, they were also criticized by more radical left-wing groups for cooperating with the state-apparatus (Hermann 2009, pp. 4-9). Similar internal questions arise for the Palestinian side, where BDS, a non-violent resistance group with similar talking points to many Palestinian peace groups on Palestinian rights, is identified as a driver for treason discourse [41].

Thus, the next question remains: how does an individual become peace activists? What process, in the interlinkages between moral reasoning, moral identity and moral conduct, transformed dissenting thinkers into dissenting do-ers? What exactly, of the explored narratives in this chapter, does one dissent from? How does one, if at all, reconcile dissenting views with one's respective national identity?

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[41] Author's interview with respondents 11, 15, 26

Chapter 3: The development of moral agency

> *"I know it, in my heart of hearts, that this is what needs to be done.*
> *[...] You cannot walk around expecting, [...]wanting people to love*
> *you all the time.[...]Something inside you needs to know it is right,*
> *even if that means certain people will not love you. Others will!*
> *And you inside, will go to sleep knowing: I did the right thing."*
> *Achinoam Nini, Singer and Peace activist for Shared* [42]

Before respondents engage with treason discourse, they experience a process self-defined as 'learning' or 'transformation', which activates them into doing peace work or activism. All respondents narrate an encounter, or an event, that leads to introspection about the conflict and their respective context, the collective, in which they are situated. They subsequently join a community through which aim to treat the diagnosed problem. This is observed through the narrative approach, in which each respondent explains how they got into peace work, in which the aim is to 'reconstruct accounts of connections between events and between events and contexts' (Bryman 2012, p. 584). Moral agency is the development of individual (moral) activation and thus, observable by analysing respondents' narration of how one became involved with peace work. Indeed, this way one discerns this process of moral agency which connects moral reasoning, and moral identities, to moral conduct (Bandura 1996, p. 101).

The narration reveals five stages. Firstly, each respondent relates to their family and parents as influential characters, which made them either receptive or independent enough to choose a life of peace and activism. Secondly, each has an experience, or a series of catalysts, which leads one to identify a problem which they relate to the conflict, that informs their overall diagnosis of the conflict. Thirdly, each has an emotional reaction to the series of events, which propels them into action. Fourthly, each respondent re-evaluates their position vis-a-vis their respective collective tenets and sense of belonging. Fifthly, they form a community around them that sustains their activism and allows for the continuous process of 'problematic encounter', emotional response, re-evaluation of the collective to construct a counter-frame with an activist community. With this community, the moral agents employ, and shape counter-frames explored in chapter four.

3.1 Upbringing: Receptive or independent

Each respondent relates to their family or parents as an influential for values and identity. As far as the influence on peace work or activism, one could divide them into two categories: receptive or independent. Receptive, refers to those respondents who feel their parents, childhood and family gave them values that were already congruent with peace work or anti-occupation activism. The latter refers to those who state that their family may disagree with them but are supportive regardless, albeit to

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[42] Zoom-lecture, 18-04-2020 on *Disturbing the Peace and* Shared Memorial Day, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAvQxvzqYns.

varying degrees, as they created space for independent thinking and respect for their dissenting choices. Indeed, these activists not only have to argue for peace in the public but also in the private arena. Yet, some are not able to disclose their peace activities at all[43], even not to their family[44].

3.1.1 Receptive: "I was always raised as…"

As discussed in chapter two, in Israel the political spectrum, more than issues of education, religion or economics, is divided into left and right based on one's stances towards the conflict, with left being more dovish and right being more hawkish (Hermann, 2009). A significant proportion of the Israeli respondents state: "I was always left", meaning they got these values because they were raised as such[45]. Some of them were also raised in the kibbutz and others may not even remember the moment in which they came into the peace movement. Many such respondents state, in various ways, that they were "raised with equality, peace, empathy and social justice"[46]. Indeed, as another respondent adds, her whole family works "in one way or another, with social justice"[47]. The above, however, does not denote any further clue as to the type of work they do, the way they've analyse d the conflict, or how connected they feel to collective Zionist tenets. Some were raised abroad and were not raised with Zionist ideals[48], while another explicitly connects her Zionist upbringing with her left-leaning upbringing[49].

Other respondents refer to specific lessons and values, some religiously inspired. Particularly the Palestinians in this category often referred to more specific lessons or values with which they were raised, such as "forgiveness", "striving to be a better person", or that one "ought to contribute *positively"* and "put life first"[50]. Another answer is that one's "values were mediated to her through [the] Jewish religion as [she] understood it"[51]. Other respondents experienced Zionism, not as a political movement, but emphasised its cultural and spiritual components; as a "revival of culture, religion and language"[52]. Such respondents entered the peace movement through [interfaith] dialogue[53]. All-in-all, these respondents viewed their upbringing as fertile ground, in one way or another, for the peace work or activism they are currently conducting.

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[43] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondents 23 & 24 digitally, Palestinians entrepreneurs and activists.

[44] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian woman who participated in joined Israeli-Palestinian entrepreneurship program.

[45] Author's interview with Respondent 1,2,3,4,5 [suggested],6,8,10,13,14 respectively.

[46] Author's' interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 8 in Haifa, Israeli peace activist

[47] Author's' interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[48] Author's interview on 06-03-2020 with Respondent 3 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[49] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist

[50] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker & Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[51] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[52] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker

[53] Respondent 18, ibid.

3.1.2 Independence: I decide my identity

Another portion of the respondents state they have had significant struggles, and indeed the first social challenge was their own family. Here, it is individuality and the space to be independent which is designated as key: these respondents were raised with the space to be independent, or had to create such a space for themselves, in which the latter category advocates peace also in the private sphere.

In the previous section, it was established that politically involved, and 'left', parents in Israel may propel children in favour of peace and activism, which is similar for Palestinians. Many respondents state their parents were politically active for Palestinian rights, yet 'resistance' and 'peace' are far from considered the same thing. As such, it is not the agreement about their peace work that defines their relationship with their childhood, rather it is the space created by a supportive family to make independent choices. For instance, Respondent 26 stated that despite his father being an anti-normalization political activist (i.e. meaning he advocates for non-cooperation with Israelis), he has always felt supported in making his own decisions. "I had the free space to think", he states[54].

Others emphasise how they created such space for themselves, such as Respondent 7 who refused to go to the army, not for any ideological appeal, but rather to assert her independence and individuality[55]. Subsequently, many respondents have continuing discussions with family, to varying success, ranging from tolerance to support for their independent stances[56]. Particularly Palestinian respondents view their families' supportive stances towards their work as a 'privilege', commenting on the lack of freedom within their society, stemming not only from Israeli occupation, but also from the community's expectations[57]. One respondent has not told her family about her dialogue group at all; "Our community is very concerned, but they are very close" [...], "if you don't go out of the tradition, you know, everything is fine. You go out of this tradition, you get f*cked, simply"[58].

One respondent emphasised the move towards independent thinking and peace as 'gradual'[59] and as such many view their family's stances in the same way. They have been able, to varying degrees, to take their family with them on the journey. "It is complicated", says one respondent:

> "He [his father] very, very, strongly supports my work, even though he
> still has all kinds of prejudices about Muslims, Arabs, the Palestinian
> community. He and I have very, very vigorous debates where I disagree
> with the statements he makes about some of the groups I work with. But

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[54] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[55] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[56] Author's interview with Respondent 11, 12, 15, 19, 22

[57] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 and 24 digitally, Palestinian activists and entrepreneurs & Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 17 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[58] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian woman who has not disclosed her experiences with a joint Israeli-Palestinian program.

[59] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace worker [who journeyed from growing up religiously in a settlement to the "lefty uncle" of the family].

he is very proud of my work and very supportive, so... people are complicated, people have multiple layers…"[60].

What these respondents have in common is that, despite backgrounds that have varying degrees of support, each has experienced the space to disagree and assert independent thinking. While some have been able to take their family with them on the journey.

3.2. Encountering 'the problem'

Each respondent referred to a particular event, encounter, or a series of events, from which they narrate their journey into the peace movement. The event(s) was - or were – considered problematic and/or meaningful, after which introspection about the conflict followed.

3.2.1 Meeting the 'other'

One such encounter, respondents note, is those in which you are confronted with the 'other', i.e. a Palestinian meeting an Israeli and vice versa. It is an experience which humanizes your enemy[61]. It confronts preconceptions the respondents had about the other but also about themselves. For one, the encounter "challenged all my core beliefs!", "... it was amazing!"[62]. Palestinians living in the West Bank noted that one could only see Israelis as "soldiers and settlers" before, who are viewed as the primary perpetrators of the occupation[63]. Some expected their meeting with Israelis to end up in tears, screaming, being angry, and indeed one kept wondering "Did they serve in the army? Did they ever humiliate someone in a checkpoint?"[64]. Yet, in the end, respondents described a cathartic moment, where they could share their sadness and anger, build friendships, stating they saw "a bigger picture"[65], which one described as 'zooming out' of the experience thinking "what are we doing [fighting each other]? [...] this is so stupid!"[66]. Even those respondents who have interacted professionally with Israelis, due to their residency in Jerusalem, felt the continuous encounters created an understanding with 'the other', and oneself, on a deeper level[67].

According to Halabi and Sonnenschein (2004) a turning point in encounter-work for many Israelis is reached once they fully comprehend the suffering endured by the Palestinians. The encounter with Palestinians, in which one hears a different perspective on the same story, "shakes your

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[60] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace worker, educator and debater.

[61] Mission statements of encounters state they counter 'dehumanization', and thus encourage 'humanization' (Hassouna, 2015).

[62] Author's' interview 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[63] Interview with Respondents 15,16, 20, 23, 24

[64] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian participant.

[65] Author's interview with Respondents 20, 23, 24, 26

[66] Author's interview 29-03–2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activists when attending a shared-grieving group.

[67] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 17 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

foundation"[68]. "Before you live a bubble…"[69], yet afterwards one realises the suffering of their Palestinian neighbour, asking: "What am I *really* doing to help people like [name]?"[70]. Indeed, one respondent described her dialogue program as "realising the *weight* of coexistence"[71]. Many note how this experience made them fully realise the level of distrust and fear between the two sides. Particularly Israelis note that, in their society, one looks at Palestinians through the lens of security and threat[72].

3.2.2 Encountering 'injustice'

Another frequently heard encounter was with 'injustice', often in the form of a series of events which were considered unjust and then came to be seen as representing a larger problem. For example, one respondent was working in a [Israeli] hospital and was shocked to hear that, when she suggested she moved a Palestinian patient towards the empty bed next to the window (a desirable spot), the response was such a spot would be better given to an Israeli Jew[73]. Unsettled, she then experienced another event, in which six people were killed in a demonstration - "that's it!" she exclaimed, joining an activist group soon thereafter[74]. Similarly, another respondent chronicles the continuous settler violence endured by Palestinians in area C of the West Bank, in which settlers enjoy the full privileges that come with Israeli citizenship while Palestinians living 100 meters down the hill suffer under military law[75]. He says that frustration over these reports at one point reached a boiling point: 'I couldn't watch it anymore, I had had enough of Israeli war crimes!"[76].

The injustice that propels one to become an activist, may not even be conflict-related, as indeed one woman got into the activist community after the gang-rape of a young girl in 1992, after which the intermingling of activists and causes in her community, got her involved in peace activism[77]. Most respondents who state that encountering injustice was their primary motivator for their activism are also involved in a plurality of other issues, such as [art] projects on colonialism, feminism, sexual violence, refugee rights, minority rights within Israel, administrative detention and so forth[78].

This encounter with injustice can also come in the form of war or an uprising which 'awakens'. The First Intifada was such a moment which catalyses further introspection, as indeed Respondent 10 joined the women's movement, "which is essentially the same as the peace movement" and engaged in

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[68] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[69] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[70] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker

[71] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[72] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[73] Author's interview on 06-03-2020 with Respondent 3 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[74] Respondent 3, Ibid.

[75] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist

[76] Respondent 1, Ibid.

[77] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist

[78] Author's interview with Respondents 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10

"a process of learning" about Palestinian oppression, the Nakba, colonialism and racism[79]. For others, it was the Lebanon war, which "was so atrocious"[80]. The Gaza war is another example, causing one respondent "to lose many friends" which made a "devastating impact"[81] and for another to realise "the psychological barriers of fear and mistrust" escalating between Israelis and Palestinians[82].

3.2.3 Birth, death, prison and an accident

The above sections are not exhaustive, merely the most common. Indeed, one respondent explains he was first introduced to nonviolence and peace while in prison for his activism in the First Intifada [83], while another one called his work in a dialogue group an "accident", following a model UN exercise[84]. Yet another was initially set up to be a post-conflict organisation in response to the Oslo peace accord and ended up reinventing themselves when it fell apart[85]. Other respondents named the birth of their children as a catalyst for their peace work[86]. Others 're-prioritized' after the death of a loved-one[87]. Each event, however, had made them reflect on issues of conflict, racism, mistrust and fear of the 'other', and generally aspire for a better future for themselves and their loved ones. If no significant pattern is found in the experiences of the respondents, no experience which appears to consistently motivates one into action - what then, propels one to become an activist? What links one's moral reasoning with moral conduct?

3.3 Emotional response

The common denominator among all mentioned events and experiences was that each respondent had an *emotional* response. For example, when a female respondent protested for the first time, she felt embarrassed, exposed and immodest, which caused her to reflect and ultimately to connect her view on the occupation with militarism and feminism[88]. It is not a particular experience or event which consistently triggers change and action, it is the emotion felt and attributed to such an experience.

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[79] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[80] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[81] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[82] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[83] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[84] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[85] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9 in Tel Aviv, Israeli peace activist.

[86] Author's interview with Respondents 11 and 26

[87] Author's interview with respondent 21, and https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/personal-stories_eng/

[88] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli peace activist.

3.3.1 Outrage and disgust directed at the in-group

The respondents who designated injustices, uprisings and wars being the catalyst for their journey to activism, immediately named its contingent emotions: outrage and disgust. Significantly, this outrage is directed at one's own ingroup.

Indeed, Israeli respondents reported feeling disgusted and outraged at Israel's treatment of Palestinians within and outside of Israel proper. Respondents described it as "atrocious"[89], "shameful"[90], "disgusting"[91], and as being "horrified"[92]. This led respondents to conclude they were needed[93], or for one to passionately exclaim: "you can't keep quiet!", [...] there is justice and there is injustice!"[94]. Indeed, each respondent appears to have their 'that's it'-moment. Similarly, Hackle (2016, pp. 177-178) describes activists' feelings of guilt and indignance at what is "done in their name", after which one felt personally responsible to change the situation.

For some, these emotions of outrage were quickly followed by feelings of annoyance, frustration, to even contempt for those they considered unrepentant or ignorant of the identified problem[95]. The army, settlers, or generally right-wing or religious Israelis were most frequently named and designated as 'ignorant'. Indeed, one respondent refers to her diagnosis of the conflict as "sheer logic"[96], while another states: "I am annoyed at their [the religious right] ignorance, [...] they choose it because it is easier!"[97]. For others, this frustration stems from the feeling that 'the right' or 'religious' take unfair ownership over Jewish, Zionist or Israeli identity[98]. "I feel like this is *my* country and I want everyone to feel this"[99].

Besides plentiful stories of the outrage produced by their daily lives under occupation, and thus directed as the Israeli government or society, Palestinian respondents also experience outrage directed at their *ingroup*. Respondents mention a lack of expressive space in Palestinian society and what they refer to as victimhood-mentality which makes one passive[100]. They emphasise that "it's not *just* the occupation"[101]. One notes the lack of expressive space "makes me hate my community, somehow [...], I don't know how to say it, but it's like they are only exposing one view to us, which makes us very biased. [...] You know real life is not black and white. It is all grey. And everyone around me [...] they

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[89] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[90] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 8 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[91] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist. & Author's interview on 22-03-2020 in Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[92] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[93] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[94] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[95] Author's interview with Respondent 6,7,10 - 'ignorance'

[96] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[97] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[98] Author's interview with Respondent 6 and 14

[99] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[100] Author's interview with Respondents 15, 20, 23, 26

[101] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

are not questioning things. And I don't know if I can blame them for this. I used to be like this…"[102]. This leads some to feel caged and frustrated that (1) their resistance and opinions vis-a-vis the occupation and the conflict are restricted and guided by hegemonic thought, and (2) take up all political and societal attention, neglecting other social issues within Palestine.

3.3.2 Surprise and shock, leading to doubt and reflection

The respondents who identified meeting 'the other' as a catalyst for personal transformation also named 'shock', 'confusion', showing general distress as resulting emotions[103]. Indeed, one respondent, who came from a "soldier's home", was shocked to hear her Palestinian colleagues were terrified of soldiers[104]. One respondent describes her confusion following an encounter, thinking "they [Israel] killed my friends, destroyed my house, humiliated me at checkpoints, dropped bombs on my community", yet the Israelis now across from her were listening, sharing their perspective and building a relationship with her[105]. Indeed, meeting the other was a confusing experience which confronted their preconceptions about each other.

After initial shock and confusion, most experienced 'doubt' and 'reflection'. Indeed, one respondent said his encounter with other perspectives caused him to doubt his usual pro-Israeli opinions to become more "nuanced", concluding "there is a lot of blame and responsibility to go around"[106]. Indeed, "when you first meet someone outside your bubble, something moves, [...] and I became increasingly uncomfortable with the system I grew up with"[107]. Indeed, it is reflection which makes one reconsider their stances to the conflict as well as their own personal role in it.

3.3.3 Grief and sorrow

Another strong emotion is grief and sorrow in response to loss, reflection or a war. Some feel sorrow generally, as part of being a witness to the destruction of war, or the suffering of Palestinians. Such as Respondent 18 who felt sorrow as he reflected on the suffering of Palestinians living so close to him, which he felt took him too long to realise[108]. While another respondent felt 'she needed to do something', after feeling sorrow, grief and desperation during the Gaza War of 2014[109].

Yet mostly, these emotions are experienced by those who have lost a loved one, who have been able to forego revenge and turn this emotion into a motivator for peace. Vollhardt (2009) has argued that a shared understanding of the 'other's' victimization may bring one closer together. And indeed,

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[102] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian dialogue participant.

[103] Author's interview with respondents 14, 15, 16, 20, 23, 24, 25

[104] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[105] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 digitally, Palestinian activist and entrepreneur

[106] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace activist and debater.

[107] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[108] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

[109] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

the Family Forum is an organisation built around this very process, made up of both Israeli and Palestinians bereaved family members choosing to grieve together and strive for reconciliation together. One respondent who took part in a similar shared grieving group, says his grief made him "value [human] life more than any tangible gains". It made him prioritize and determine what he finds important in life. Indeed, "I don't want to end the conflict if it's going to make me a monster", he says, "I don't want to live as a victim, [...] in fear, [...] hating those you've never met..."[110].

3.3.4 Hope and despair

The last significant emotions are hope and despair. Hopeful events, such as Oslo, or an encounter which resulted in an unexpected positive experience, are cited by respondents as a motivator for action[111]. Indeed, many state that this is what they aim to give to both collectives through their peace work: hope. Hope that the current situation is not inevitable or never-ending.

However, despair was ever-present, particularly in the Israeli corner of the peace camp. This stems from the feeling one has too little impact. One respondent says her despair stems from exactly this feeling, stating the only reason she still participates is the solidarity she feels towards Palestinians[112]. Indeed, particularly after a failed Oslo accord and the eruption after the Second Intifada, a large part of the traditional peace Israeli movement demobilized (Hermann, 2009). The traditional peace movement delivered the two-state solution, yet this solution is considered "dead" by a lot of respondents. For one Palestinian respondent it feels like the whole "Israeli peace camp is dying!" [113].

3.4 Re-evaluation one's place in the collective

Many respondents subsequently note they parted from the collective emotions they had previously felt. Subsequently, they experienced a confrontation with their identification, re-considering and re-negotiating their place in the collective. Israeli respondents noted having let go of, or not having, fear. Furthermore, Israelis reconsider their affiliation to Zionism. Palestinian respondents note letting go of anger. Next, Palestinian respondents appear to go through a process of alienation due to backlash they receive, yet, many ultimately emerge with their Palestinian identity revitalized.

3.4.1 Rethinking collective fear, belonging and Zionism

Firstly, many Israeli respondents emphasise they have lost, or indeed never had, feelings of fear towards Palestinians or considered Palestinians a threat. For instance, "I don't feel fear for myself",

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[110] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[111] Author's interview with Respondents 9, 19 and 26

[112] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[113] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

says one respondent, "but I do fear for Palestinians"[114]. Besides no longer viewing 'the other', through the lens of security, some also noted no longer feeling threatened by 'the other's' perspective of the truth. "Their truth doesn't have to hurt me", realised one, which allowed for vulnerability and "leaving stances" to truly ask "how does the other guy feel?"[115]. In other words, to relieve oneself of fear breaks down defensiveness and allows for empathy with 'the other'.

Secondly, when fear was no longer a barrier, their dissent caused reflection on the collective labels one used to ascribe to oneself. For Israelis, this left one with 3 options, (1) become anti-Zionist, (2) post-Zionist or to (3) fight for the nature and essence of what constitutes Zionism. A first option, felt by some activists, is the need to actively break-away from certain forms of collective belonging in Israel, describing this as "something physically breaking inside me" (Hackle 2016: 178). Some note feelings of guilt motivating this choice (Hackle 2016: 177-178, Fieldnotes 15-02-2020). Subsequently, many respondents identify as anti-Zionist[116]: "I say *they* when I say Israel"[117]. A second option is to identify as simply "Israeli" or "Jewish", where one has a complicated relationship with Zionism; where one has some type of attachments to its desires; where it is not necessarily problematic but rather considers Zionism irrelevant or outdated (post-Zionist)[118]. Indeed, one activist states she agrees with a lot of anti-Zionist critiques, concerning colonialism and racism which has entrenched itself within Zionism, yet also adds concerned: "but I need a Jewish homeland…when Jews fled from World War II, no one took them in…"[119]. Another explains:

> "… sometimes I talk to my friends overseas and I'll be more anti-Zionist when I talk to them. And I'll say, it's kind of like being the devil's advocate, you know; they are all very Zionist and support Israel and I'll go; no it shouldn't be the country for the Jews anymore, it's a mistake, you know, we've become this and this and the religious are taking over, it's a bad vision, it doesn't work, you have to think about the land and…. but in Israel, I'll tend to be more Zionist! Because I'll speak to my friends, and they'll be like: I don't believe in Israel, we shouldn't have a Jewish state. And I'm like: no, but I came here because of that! So I [...], I kind of waiver"[120].

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[114] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[115] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker

[116] Author's interview with Respondents 1, 3,4,7,10 as explicitly anti-Zionist, i.e. Zionism is problematic

[117] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[118] Author's interview with Respondents 2, 5, 6, 8, 13 as on the fence, post-Zionist

[119] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 8 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[120] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

The third option is taken by Israeli respondents who feel Zionism is hijacked by the right-wing and emphasise the 'original' or 'different' components of Zionism[121]. This is what Herman (2009, p. 67) characterises as fighting for 'the moral essence' of the Jewish State, when analysing the peace movement which delivered Oslo. As one respondent states: "The anti-Zionist label breaks my heart [...], they've adopted the right-wing definition of what Zionism is" [...], getting "furious" when the right tries to "take the Jewish identity away from me"[122]. While others consider what it would mean to *not* be Zionist; "I can't be anti-Zionist, because that means [as it is interpreted now] that Israel has no right to exist and I can't say that… I can say it does not have to exist in the same way it does now …. The state is not holy, but I do believe Jewish connection to the land is holy" [123].

3.4.2 Reconsidering anger, resistance, and 'Palestinian-ness'

Palestinian respondents noted they let go of anger and resentment they previously felt. One respondent noted that before his daughter was born, "I was not for peace", rather he, coming from a "family of revolution", was still angry for the suffering he and his people endured[124]. While another noted that, before his encounter program, he got angry when in disagreement, taking it personally, or as an attack on his identity[125]. One dual-narrative tour-guide[126] remembers frustrating experiences with settlers, but experienced relief when hearing, a religious settler of all people, speak with recognition and empathy about the Palestinian experience[127]. After respondents let go of anger, many started to re-evaluate the conflict and possible ways forward.

When anger no longer enforced collective tenets, Palestinian respondents experienced a feeling of alienation of the collective. Several respondents chronicle how they might have changed through their encounter program, the community they subsequently returned to has not, making them feel alone and "caged"[128]. Indeed, one respondent said she told one friend about her changing opinions who "looks different at me now, [...] I have an inner conflict, I cannot generalize Jews and Israelis anymore [...], but who am I now, what am I doing,[...] am I still Palestinian enough?" [129].

Yet, those who successfully continued over the course of several years emphasise that their strong sense of Palestinian identity is the reason one has been able to take risks, challenge notions of Palestinian identity, and be a leader. One respondent, similarly to his counterpart, no longer views Jewish identity as a threat to his own or feels he has to prove his identity[130]. Another says the backlash

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[121] Author's interview with Respondents 12, 14, 18, 22, 25 as Zionist, some with post-Zionist elements fighting for 'their version' of Zionism

[122] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[123] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

[124] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[125] Author's interview on 23-04-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[126] A tour guided by a Palestinian and an Israeli past touristic sites, and gives information from both perspectives.

[127] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[128] Author's interview with Respondents 15, 17,20, 21, 23, 24, 26 as those either currently alienated or still evaluating notions of their [Palesitnian] identity

[129] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian dialogue participant.

[130] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

only makes him prouder to be Palestinian, sure he is doing what is best for Palestinians[131]. In response to those who would challenge their sense of belonging, plenty emphasises that their work does *not* compromise their Palestinian identity:

> "It's [the group] not changing who I am. It's containing who I am, like, I still [am] the same Palestinian [name], and to answer your question, my goal in the choir is... not like personally... my goal in the choir is.... because like, to make peace between Israelis and Palestinians is really hard, okay? But my goal as an individual is actually to live in peace, not to make peace" [132].

3.5. Finding your community

The type of groups the respondents are involved in, range from more formal forms such as an organisation, or an NGO, while others, often on the side of that, are also part of a network of WhatsApp groups, email chains, and Facebook groups in which protests and activities are posted and joined. As such, many describe their group as a community rather than an organisation. "It's a map", explains one respondent, [...] "all we do is connected", "many women cross-fertilize", i.e. invite each other to activities and causes[133]. Such communities appear to serve roughly 3 purposes: (1) facilitate a continued learning process, (2) create the solidarity to sustain activism when it becomes difficult, (3) and thus insulate the respondents from the harshest consequences of traitor labelling. These categories are not mutually exclusive, and neither are they always experienced by all. Indeed, the absence of a community around you has a profound impact and this is the case for some Palestinian respondents.

3. 5.1 The community that facilitates a process

The community you join and create "facilitates change"[134]. Indeed, one respondent explains he "keeps learning" because the choir he is part of is a "safe atmosphere" for such growth[135]. From a safe space to develop oneself, you simply "roll from one thing into another"[136]. For instance, one respondent went from joining interfaith dialogue to joining a dual narrative tour, to joining the peace movement for settlers, to organizing protests against house demolitions[137].

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[131] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[132] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 17 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[133] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[134] For instance, in Author's interview with Respondents 14, 17 and 18

[135] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 17 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[136] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[137] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

Some characterise this journey as "becoming more radical over time"[138]. Indeed, one respondent started out participating in dialogue programs, yet then felt "it wasn't enough"[139]. "The core of your analysis does not change, but you add to your vocabulary", explains another, "where I first spoke of the '67 occupation, I now speak of the '48 occupation"[140]. For one, she was impressed with the intellectual prowess of the women in her feminist group, learning concepts of 'intersectionality', 'anti-racism' and analyses on systems of oppression[141].

In other words, through activism one has experiences which add to the general diagnosis, about which one has an emotional response, and subsequently re-evaluates ones' belonging to the collective and join new and multiple activist groups. The process of moral agency is a continuous one.

3. 5. 2 A community of solidarity and friendship

These communities are frequently small, informal and interconnected. Often, when I told a respondent the other organisations I had been in contact with, they responded with recognition. Indeed, many respondents were part of multiple groups at the same time. It is this group-solidarity that helps activists continue with their work, regardless of impact, success or backlash. Most respondents refer to the cooperation one has with their colleagues and friends within the activist community, is a significant reason one is able to do this work[142].

One activist stated protest had "become a routine" for her, feeling belonging to no one but her activist group: "it is my source of strength"[143]. For many Israeli activists, this includes the solidarity and friendship they feel with the Palestinians they work with or protect[144]; "I don't have the privilege to stop fighting"[145]. When I joined one respondent in accompanying a group of Palestinian Shepherds to protect them against settler violence, I witnessed how loved he is by the community (Fieldnotes 15-02-2020). The kids would run at him from afar, and he brought cookies, sweets, sandwiches and buckets of shoes to replace the run-down ones the shepherds wore (Fieldnotes 15-02-2020 & 17-02-2020). Indeed, after getting up in the early morning and spending the whole day there, he would often distribute shoes over multiple communities in the Jordan Valley with his colleagues. They all knew him. The last day I participated, the Shepherd community built him his own tent, in case he and his colleagues wanted to sleep over (Fieldnotes 17-02-2020).

[138] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[139] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[140] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[141] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[142] For instance, Author's interview with Respondents 9, 21, 22, 23.

[143] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[144] Author's interview with respondents 1, 4 and 10

[145] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

3.5.3 Protection against treason discourse

Although virtually all respondents are familiar with treason discourse and public backlash against them and their stances, personal repercussions are not evenly divided. This is largely interrelated with the previous section yet warrants a separate emphasis. One activist stated she has worked in social change organisations all her life, and thus "stays in circles where people are like-minded", feeling she has not paid "a heavy price" for her activism[146]. Plenty others also classify their experience as no "real" backlash[147]. This does not mean they don't experience things such as verbal abuse, but rather one says: "I wear it as a medal"[148].

3. 5.3.3 The absence of protection

Yet, this is not the case for many Palestinian respondents who feel less protected against treason discourse and its ramifications. Palestinian respondents often note that they wished their community could provide a better psychological support system for the backlash they receive[149]. When I asked one respondent if she experienced support in her dialogue project from her fellow Palestinian participants, she explains: "we are afraid of each other, [...] they can rat you out, [...] but there is also a cultural barrier where you don't talk about your emotions"[150]. She now feels more connected to the Israeli participants of the program, as they are "the only ones who know what's really on my mind"[151], yet a barrier remains, as another says "I still don't feel equal [to Israelis]"[152]. As such, Palestinian respondents are often left to rely on their individual resilience. "The minority is always going to get pushback from the mainstream", concludes one respondent, "but that never stopped me", because "we don't need a majority, but a strong minority"[153]. A strong sense of one's Palestinian identity "allows me to take this risk", another agrees[154].

3. 6 Conclusion and the next chapter

In this chapter, I have analysed the different stages of the moral agency journey- what activates one to become a peace activist- present in each respondent.

Firstly, most respondents relate to their family and parents as influential characters, which made them either receptive or independent enough to dissent and work in peace activism. Indeed, for more independent respondents it often included an attempt to take their family with them on their journey to

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[146] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 8 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[147] For instance, Author's interview with respondents 3,4 and 5

[148] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[149] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[150] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian peace participant.

[151] Respondent 20, Ibid.

[152] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneur.

[153] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[154] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

varying degrees of success, showing treason discourse can also appear in a relationship between loved ones.

Secondly, each encounter a problem, a catalyst, a particular (series of) events which leads them to introspection and a particular diagnosis of the conflict. Experiences mentioned are racist interaction, a war, uprising, a death or birth, or a meeting with 'the other'. The experiences made them reflect on things such as; the racist language and behaviour in their society, the mistrust between the two sides, or how one stays in a particular 'bubble'. Yet no pattern in the type of experience which propelled action could be found.

Thirdly, it is the emotional reaction to the named catalyst event(s) which propel respondents into action. Those who encounter injustice as the primary catalyst for introspection often respond with outrage and disgust, of which some also report annoyance and frustration with the supposed 'ignorant' parts of society which appear unable or unwilling to see the injustice they see. Those who encounter 'the other', as a primary catalyst for change often denote shock, confusion, alienation and subsequently doubt and reflection. Those who have 'paid the price', and lost a loved one to the conflict, state they re-prioritize and reflect on "what is important". Hope is an emotion many respondents found and aim to pass on to both sides with their work.

Fourthly, each re-evaluates their position vis-a-vis their collective tenets and sense of belonging. Interestingly, it is not the *beliefs* or *desires* the respondents usually break away from, rather one most often breaks away from the *emotional* collective tenets - letting go of fear or anger respectively. Yet, some do break away from collective identities and beliefs altogether, no longer feeling or wanting to feel belonging to the in-group. This is most often the case with Israelis, who've identified the problem as an inherent flaw within the structures of Israeli society, who then identify with anti- or post- Zionist labels. Others view their dissent as an opportunity to hold on to, and learn about, their identity.

Fifthly, they form a community around them that serves three purposes. It (1) facilitates a continuing learning process; leading to experiences, subsequent emotions, and evaluations of their collectivities which add to respondents' diagnoses, (2) sustains their activism and peace work through affective ties of solidarity, and (3) insulates them from the worst of treason discourse. This community allows for the continuous development of moral agency as well as the collective construction of counter-frames explored in chapter 4. Indeed, how do these transformations translate into the counter-frames the respondents use in response to the treason discourse with which they are confronted?

Chapter 4: The counter-frames

The development of moral agency starts with a respondents' upbringing, after which a cycle of experiences and events, one's emotional response to said experiences and events, a re-evaluation of one's place in the collective and the joining of an activist community produces an evolving diagnosis of the conflict. Or as one respondent described it, "a growing of one's vocabulary"[155]. With one's activist community one provides a remedy for the diagnosis one made of the conflict. Indeed, a frame is a collectively agreed-upon definition of a situation, which includes a problem, a diagnosis, a moral evaluation which in this case in the judgement that hegemonic frames as immoral and need countering, and subsequent suggested remedy (Entman, 1993).

More precisely we look at the collectively constructed counter-frames, which aim "to rebut, undermine, or neutralize a person's or group's myths, versions of reality, or interpretive framework" (Snow and Benford 2000, p. 626 as qtd. from Benford and Hunt 1994). It is through these counter-frames, i.e. dissenting interpretations of meaning, respondents act out their moral agency in the world. Thus, for each counter-frame, the subsection will (1) define the frame; its diagnosis and what it counters, (2) how respondents conducting this frame arrived at such a diagnosis by showing the commonalities in their moral agency development, (3) explore the proposed remedy of morally relevant actions, or in other words, how this frame is performed, and lastly (4) how the previous points relate to treason discourse.

4.1. The Social Justice frame: we stand in solidarity with the oppressed

4.1.1 The Social Justice counter-frame

The social justice frame diagnoses three structures which cause the current problem, the conflict, namely: colonialism, racism and sexism. It signifies these structures as unjust, and states 'social justice' is required to remedy the situation. The language which makes up this frame is "system", "(inter)connected", "(social) justice", "racism", "apartheid", "colonialism", "feminism", "sexism", "protect", "solidarity", "anti-Zionist", "ignorance", and "anti-occupation". This counter-frame rebuffs tenets of Israeli nationalism as explored in Chapter One, deeming ideas of return untrue, are critical of the idea "Israel had offered everything for peace and had been turned down", and calling and the need for a militarized nation as Israel would be under siege "a big lie".

Firstly, this frame emphasises the influence of European colonial discourse on (political) Zionist thought and the behaviour of Israel towards Palestinians which they find reminiscent of, for instance, US and Australia's treatment of indigenous populations. An example of this is the 'Balfour declaration' which is characterised as a European power clearing the indigenous population for European (Jewish) settlement,

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[155] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

rather than a 'return' (Said 1992, p. 53). Another example is the "colonial racism", which allowed for the expressions of "a people without a land, for a land without a people", because the people that were there, were not 'really' considered people[156] (Said, 1992; Sinai, 2019). While for some respondents this reading poses no contradiction to her/his Israeli identity, as "no one is asking anyone in the US to give back land to the native Americans"[157], others may view this as delegitimization of Israel's right to exist.

Secondly, this frame emphasises the racism suffered by Palestinians and other oppressed groups, that is supposedly so exclusivist it counters the notions that Israeli hegemonic tenets favour democracy or peace. Indeed, states one respondent, Israel has a *policy* of Palestinian expulsion of ethnic cleansing[158]. He explains: "the core of all trauma comes back to the Nakba[159]", and "the Nakba is still going on!"[160]. This 'racist' expulsion and disenfranchisement of (many) Palestinians makes that "Israel is *not* a democracy"[161], as ethnoreligious exclusivism and racism supposedly inherent in Zionism contradict starkly with the supposed 'myths' of Israel's liberal democratic ideals (Sinai, 2019). The insistence of a *Jewish* state, rather than a civil state, is then reflected in the type of political insults present in the current debate. Saying "he will talk to Arabs" is a political insult, explains one respondent, as "we are surrounded by racist language all the time"[162]. Even the centrists will openly say "they [Arabs] can't be trusted!", exclaimed another[163]. Indeed, most respondents in this frame identify racism and the dehumanization as one of the structures opposing a peaceful resolution[164].

Lastly, militarism and male chauvinism are considered the last defining oppressive structure. Indeed, it is the army who protects settlers, in Area C of the West Bank, who chase and harass Palestinians, which one respondent considers the biggest obstacle to his activism[165]. He details how shepherds in Area C, living mere meters away from settlers who enjoy full Israeli citizenship, have neither Palestinian nor Israeli rights and live under military law - calling this situation "apartheid"[166]. Indeed, Israel has full (military) control over the entire area of Israel-Palestine, yet not everyone within its borders has Israeli citizenship or full allocation of rights, which connects to the aforementioned argument "It [Israel] is not a democracy"[167]. The justification for this status quo, the idea that Israel would be 'under siege', one respondent calls "a big lie"[168]. Militarization then is seen as an expression of sexism and patriarchy. The issue of security dominates Israel's political landscape and is traditionally seen as the domain of men, thus

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[156] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[157] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[158] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel-Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[159] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[160] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel-Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[161] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel-Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[162] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[163] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[164] Author's interview with Respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10

[165] Author's interview on 7-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel-Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[166] Respondent 1, Ibid.

[167] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[168] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

the militarized state of Israeli society is seen as a reinforcement of the patriarchy. As mentioned in chapter two, women who stake a claim in security-discussion receive gendered insults, slurs, threats and at times get physically assaulted or spit on (Bensky, 2007). Many of the women, consequently, identify as feminists[169]. One respondent explains: "The women's movement *is* the peace movement"[170]

Respondents in this frame emphasise "it is all connected"[171]. Respondents explain through concepts of the 'intersectionality' [172][i.e. interlocking systems of oppression] of these social issues, naming, for instance, administrative detention [the jailing of Palestinians for an indefinite amount of time without charge] as "one of the octopus's arms"[173]. The core argument here is that all oppression stems from an inherent contradiction in *the system*. Structures of colonialism, racism, and sexism, are believed to be inherent to the 'Zionist system' which is contradictory to 'justice', as well as its self-image; which beliefs in the notion of 'return', democracy and a 'land under siege'. These structures are believed to be at the core of oppression and marginalization in Israeli-Palestinian society generally and the conflict in particular.

4.1.2 The development of moral agency and the Social Justice frame

Respondents constructing this frame showed commonalities in their moral agency journey. This frame is constructed by respondents who developed a diagnosis which posits the cause for the conflict as structural, i.e. structures of colonialism, racism, and sexism or militarism, as they encountered a series of events; racist interactions, wars, repressed protests, and sexist slurs, which they characterised as interconnected and unjust. Most of the respondents constructing this frame were Israeli (although cooperation with mainstream Palestinian non-violent resistance groups is mentioned[174]), were already raised left-leaning, and usually stated a series of injustices left them feeling outraged at their own ingroup for perpetuating such injustices.

As the diagnosis stipulated the problems originate within the hegemonic Zionist collective frames, or moral postulates, most respondents have a tense relationship to Zionism. They identify as either anti- or post-Zionist while feeling more belonging to the activist community they have joined. This space often provides an alternative form of belonging which they do not feel with larger Zionist society - "I don't feel belonging to anyone but my friends"[175] - and is said to be a space of learning after which some said they had become "more radical"[176]. Indeed, many state they started their journey as a left-leaning Zionist before they became critical of the system[177]. Usually these respondents are also involved with other social issues besides anti-occupation work, such as refugee rights, minority rights, women's right, sexual violence, anti-

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[169] Author's interview with Respondents 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10.

[170] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[171] Interview with respondents 4, 7 and 10

[172] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[173] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[174] Indeed, many respondents in this frame had cooperation with Palestinian resistance groups employing the same frame on social media in which they criticize settler-violence, Zionism and the occupation in defense of the indigenous Palestinian. The focus however remains on the Israelis employing this frame, as Palestinians employing this frame are not countering collective tenets with such a frame.

[175] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[176] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[177] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

racism, anti-colonial activism, the Palestinian right of return, administrative detention, Druze- and Bedouin rights and climate activism believed to be caused by the same structures[178].

4.1.3 The remedy: activities against oppression

Respondents who've emphasised structures of colonialism, racism and sexism in their analyses often state the *"exposing" and opposing of said structures* is at the core of their activities or is what is most relevant to do. Respondents "expose the layers"[179] through art and journalism, attempting to give voice to underserved groups[180]. They join local workgroups on social change organisations[181], frequently engage in protests against the occupation, or adjacent issues such as administrative detention. Furthermore, one aims to show solidarity to Palestinians by accompanying them while they graze their sheep[182], provide judicial assistance, and replant crops destroyed by settlers, such as olive trees[183].

According to Hackle (2016) activities, such as accompaniments, in which Israeli civilians put themselves between security forces and settlers, and Palestinian shepherds and farmers, is a way to use the privilege of citizen rights imbued in Israeli bodies to equalize power relations. Indeed, most of this frame's activities are very public, thereby performing power through protest in a public space which comment on power relations, as Benford & Hunt (1992) would argue. Notably, dialogue focused on individual transformation, or shared memorials were considered by some respondents as "waste of my time"[184], or "not enough"[185]. Only collective performances which serve to alter oppressive structures were considered to be morally relevant.

4.1.4 The relation to treason discourse: those of the oppressive structure are not relevant

This frame is critical of the supposed structures within Israeli society, and respondents who primarily drive this frame have, at best, a tenuous relationship with the Israeli collective. Many have broken away from collective forms of belonging with Israeli society. As a result, they are both unimpressed by and dismissive of treason discourse. When asked about traitor-labelling or backlash, most respondents who construct this frame say one "ignores" abuse, or rarely encounters it by staying within their respective activist community[186].

Yet, some also air frustration over their separateness, which is mostly aimed at those who they consider to perpetuate the oppressive structures and hold the most power over the collective: the religious

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[178] Summarized issues taken from respondents 2,3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

[179] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist and radio-artist.

[180] For instance, respondents 1, 4 and 7

[181] For instance, respondents 2, 6, and 8

[182] For instance respondents 1 and 10

[183] If interested, you can read an account of Shepherd-accompaniment here: *https://afcfp.org/walking-with-shepherds-in-the-jordan-valley/?fbclid=IwAR2OfMZlpbkUFskw9j-H6cQpMgNu22hB38CfWH9KtgQpFgM_eJQNdxLNOPg*

[184] Author's interview on 17-02-2020 with Respondent 1 in Tel-Aviv/Jordan Valley, Israeli activist.

[185] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 5 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[186] Interviews with respondents 2,3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10.

right. The disdain is very much mutual, as one states that they [religious right] may hate her, but she hates them too for their supposed 'ignorance' and for "ruining her country"[187]. Most find it both irrelevant and exhausting to try and change this part of society, as "ignorance is a choice"[188] and "you either have trust in your heart or you have fear"[189]. Indeed, "peace" is considered a *naive* term by one respondent, rather she says activism "is putting out fires"[190]. "If people would be willing to listen, they would know we are not traitors", so "if they come to talk to *us* we talk", then they will know "we are not against Israel, we just want peace"[191]. As engaging the accusers of treason discourse is deemed exhausting to irrelevant, while also designating them as the actors keeping the system in place, many state they are pessimistic and in despair over the future[192].

Despite incurring significant, and particularly harsh, backlash - "they would kill us if they could"[193] - one respondent argues that they are not the primary focus of those constructing treason discourse. She argues; "they are not our audience and we are not theirs", as "we are beyond traitor-labelling, they focus on the left-wing Zionists", as to leverage their patriotism against them, "because they care and we don't"[194]. Indeed, left-wing Zionists are still fighting for the right to define the nature of Zionism, while [most of] these respondents have abandoned this altogether. A challenge to your belonging makes no impression if you feel little to no belonging to the collective.

4.1.5 Social Justice in Palestine

The social justice frame by Palestinian activists can be used in two ways: (1) a way to denounce and analyse Zionism and the occupation, as the [Israeli] respondents above do, and (2) to analyse Palestinian society internally. As the latter has a rather different relationship to treason discourse, it merited a separated paragraph. Indeed, using the social justice frame to denounce the occupation and Zionism is an often-used method in non-violent resistance movements in Palestine, but does not significantly challenge any Palestinian collective narratives - which also criticizes Zionism as the cause of the conflict, placing it in anti-colonial discourse - and as such encounters no treason discourse.

Social justice internally in Palestine is a different story, as it says "it is not just the occupation"[195], which is the problem. It is self-critiquing, which can be considered a violation of socio-cultural solidarity and conformity. The main complaints are the lack of expressive space[196] and as such most "politically

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[187] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[188] Respondent 6, Ibid.

[189] Author's interview on 01-03-2020 with Respondent 2 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[190] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[191] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 4 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[192] Author's interview with Respondent 2, 4, 5, 7 and 10

[193] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[194] Respondent 10, Ibid.

[195] Author's interview. on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[196] For instance, interviews with respondents 20, 21 and 26

critical activist live abroad"[197], the media's (both Israeli and Palestinian) unsupportive stance towards cooperative peace projects[198], and the corruption of elites in Palestinian civil society[199]. "We are behind on human rights"[200], says one respondent. He continues that the "corruption of the peace industry"[201] and relatively high salaries of Palestinians employed in NGOs compared to the rest of the Palestinian population "creates resentment", leading one to conclude "we need social justice also within Palestine"[202]. The lack of expressive space and treason discourse makes it harder for respondents to do their job, as "even if I convince someone they often will not take public action because of societal pressure"[203]. Although using similar language to the social justice frame, the frame which better encapsulated the message of these respondents is the 'empowerment frame'.

4. 2. The Empowerment frame: hope, dignity and opportunity

4.2.1 The Empowerment counter-frame

This frame diagnoses economic destitution and hopelessness as one of the main causes for the continuation of the conflict, as a lack of tangible change for Palestinian lives provides little incentive for Palestinians to work for peace. The proposed remedy is (economic) empowerment and dignity, and thus key words are "empowerment", "a better life", "choosing life", "success stories", "tangible", "livelihood", "interest", "needs", "self-interest" and "investment"[204]. This frame counters emotions of humiliation and despair that underpin ideas of Palestinian victimhood, which is considered counter-productive, and encourages a pro-active attitude. A self-assured, empowered people, the argument goes, may see that peace can be in Palestine's' 'self-interest'. Indeed, one respondent states the lack of grassroots support on the Palestinian side for Oslo is one of the reasons it failed[205]

Firstly, most respondents emphasise they "cannot win a discussion without tangible change"[206]. As, "one cannot ask two people to make peace when they are not equal"[207]. Thus, those enacting this frame focus on "building", and "creating a stronger community", after which the "mindset of Palestinian will follow tangible change"[208]. Indeed, many note how particularly Palestinian youth, are cynical and desperate due to the lack of opportunities and are in need of mentorship[209], as well as opportunities to travel and speak

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[197] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally & Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian activists.

[198] For instance, interview with respondents 16 and 19

[199] For instance, interview with respondents 15 and 16

[200] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[201] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[202] Respondent 26, Ibid.

[203] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian activist.

[204] Summarized from respondents 9, 11, 15, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24 and 26.

[205] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11, Palestinian peace activist.

[206] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[207] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneur.

[208] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[209] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondents 23 and 24 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneurs.

freely to "widen one's' window"[210]. "First, you need to build a life, then people can think about peace"[211], says one respondent. "We need to create hope"[212], says another, after which one can focus on "what matters most", which is "rebuilding"[213]. In other words, the Palestinian people need to support and opportunity to become equal partners in peace.

Secondly, after the provision of opportunities, a proactive attitude is needed to create what is called the 'infrastructure for peace', implying peace requires an internal change in attitudes. Respondents emphasise the individual's *own* role in grasping opportunities. "People have no hope, [...] so "people are expected to do nothing!"[214]. Indeed, several respondents say they "don't want to live as a victim", and desire to see this in their fellow Palestinians as well.

> "I don't want to say the word developed, [but...], I want to see a society that is responsible for their actions. [...] I want to see everyone being responsible and stop being victims… victims of the situation, victims for the occupation, victims for the lack of opportunities, victims for the corruption of the PA, start taking action and feeling responsible that can, kind of, decide their destiny. So of course, I'm not saying that they can, you know, change the world because we [do have] all those limitations. But I think it's just like, the mindset of people that they feel that they can blame others and can play the victim card, to kind of allow themselves not to do things" [...] "I think that we as victims... [we are also] acting as victims, most of the Palestinian people, and I think that's really one of the big, big, big, challenges and barriers for us to reach whatever we want to achieve"
> [...] I want to see people that are responsible, that are being proactive, and not just passive waiting for [what] others will do to them"[215]

4.2.2 The development of moral agency and the Empowerment frame

This frame is mostly constructed by Palestinians, but also some joint Israeli-Palestinian economic and environmental programs. Such respondents most commonly note they have had the support and space from their family to think independently or were able to take this space. These respondents most commonly had a meeting with "the other", lost a loved one, a birth or death which made them re-prioritize what is important. Emotions of doubt and a series of reflections followed after which, despite many suffering from

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[210] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Palestinian dialogue participant.

[211] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 24 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneur.

[212] Author's interview with respondent 19 and 24

[213] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[214] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 digitally, Palestinian entrepreneur.

[215] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15, Palestinian peace activist.

the occupation, respondents concluded "not everything should be focused against the Jews"[216]. Some went through a period of alienation after their meeting with the 'other' but asserted their Palestinian identity stronger as they came to believe peace, tangible change and empowerment is in Palestine's' self-interest. The communities and organisations they form are often local and focused on economic empowerment. Messages of peace may be left in the background as it (unfortunately) is particularly Palestinians who feel their activist community does not sufficiently provide a psychological support system to cope with backlash[217].

4.2.3 The remedy: activities that empower

The activities which these respondents have undertaken involve starting [social] companies, running youth groups for the disabled and vulnerable, providing material aid to underserved Palestinian communities [in Area C]; like installing solar panels and water systems and providing internships for young people in a cooperative environment[218].

The peace aspect in such activities is not on the forefront per se, although there is usually [necessary] cooperation with Israeli institutions or financial aid with such projects. When Israelis and Palestinian cooperate in empowerment project, as equal partners, working together for each's self-interest, trust-building is a welcome extra. Mainly, it provides the dignity from which Palestinians will be ready to carry the responsibilities which peace implies.

Public performances, such as protest, of this frame, are not common. The focus is not a wide public audience, but a local audience. Respondents neither aim to convince, but rather deem 'acts' to be most morally relevant and provide opportunities for others to act in ways which are constructive to build up Palestinian society. "Results motivate me", explains one respondent[219]. The frame is introspective and believes in the power of the individual and the local.

4.2.3 Treason discourse and empowerment

This frame incurs treason discourse for its "cooperation with the enemy" and/or the countering of victim-hood postulates in hegemonic Palestinian narratives. The language and acts of empowerment directly tie into treason discourse, as one respondent says "we survived the Second Intifada because we empower our staff", so "they can defend themselves from these charges" [of treason][220] by pointing at concrete measures in which peaceful cooperation betters peoples' livelihoods. His colleague agrees, saying: "peace is not a favour for Israel, but a must for Palestine"[221]. They focus on ensuring the story of 'self-interest' will ring true for both sides.

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[216] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[217] Author's interview with respondents 15 and 20

[218] Summarized from respondents 9, 11, 15, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26

[219] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15, Palestinian peace activist.

[220] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9, Israeli peace activist

[221] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11, Palestinian peace activist.

Yet, as mentioned before, most Palestinian respondents have noted little (social) protection from treason discourse and as such aim to avoid engagement with accusers, at least publicly. One needs to "stay under the radar"[222], "cautiously select media"[223], does not "publish activities in advance"[224], "pick our fights"[225]. Personally, one may "use different CVs[226]" , where one includes the peace work and the other does not, depending on the job application. Other strategies involve using diplomatic language, and following international guidelines in their organisation policy[227].

Most commonly, respondents state they utilize their personal network. One respondent says only the personal approach works to avoid both the treason discourse that would be levied as his address as well as the person who he addresses[228]. While another states he "has a patriotic CV"[229], and thus uses his personal credentials which he leverages in his benefit. Another layer is that his family is countered among the PA supporters and he has family connections with the PLO, he may request security when needed. Or he may call his friends still involved with BDS, which he was a part of too before his transformation. All in all, he says, "I know how to talk to my people"[230].

4.3. The Complexity frame: respect for pluralism

4.3.1 The Complexity counter-frame

This frame diagnosis the conflict as being caused by political polarization both *within* Israeli and Palestinian society and *between* Israeli and Palestinian society. Respondents focus on a discourse of 'fear and mistrust' as the driving emotions of this polarization. "Complexity", "It's not black and white", "layers", "pluralism", "understanding", "diversity", "nuance" and "respect" is the language which makes up this frame[231]. This frame counters essentialized versions of Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian identity which they believe drive internal polarization, and the idea peace is unattainable and there is "no partner for peace" which maintains the polarized status-quo between the two national political communities. The identified remedy is respect for nuance and complexity, to create a space for pluralism internally to get peace on the table, and humanization between the two communities.

Firstly, the supposed 'with me or against me' attitude within both societies is tackled, a political problem which requires institutions, leaders and civil society to promote plurality. With plurality, I mean a

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[222] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21, Palestinian peace activist.

[223] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9, Israeli peace activist & Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11, Palestinian peace activist.

[224] Respondents 9 and 11, Ibid.

[225] Respondent 9 and 11, Ibid.

[226] Author's interview in respondents 15 and 21

[227] Respondents 9 and 11, Ibid.

[228] Author's interview 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[229] Author's interview on 8-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian activist.

[230] Author's interview on 8-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian activist.

[231] Summarized from Respondents 12 (I), 13(I), 14 (I), 15 (P), 17(P), 19(P), 22(I), 23(P), 24(P), 25 (I)

legitimization of difference and disagreement. Israeli respondents fear "we are losing our democracy"[232], finding the polarization in Israeli society alienating[233]. As such, they aim to use inclusive language, attract people from all over the political spectrum and shed labels, to de-essentialize the Israeli-Jewish identity. "Labels are ammunitions"[234]. One respondent explains: "I stay away from labels because they don't embody complexity", which is how she attracted some right-wing or religious Israelis to the organisation "Women wage Peace"[235]. A diverse set of women in the organisation helps create an opening, reach more people, as they are not afraid to be [argumentatively] attacked, she continues[236]. The word "against" doesn't help, says another, "I never use it"[237]. "We target hard areas, [...], we target fear, [...] initiate dialogue, to overcome the psychological barriers", [...] "our language penetrates the public", [...] and that way "we got peace back on the table" [politically][238]. "A conversation is a start", "and disagreeing is okay, most people don't look for a fight"[239], "being different doesn't mean being wrong"[240].

Secondly, the idea that 'the other' is not interested in peace is directly countered. "We fear connection", one respondent explains, "We only know Israelis as soldiers and settlers", [...] but "in Oslo, the people came out of their houses and began shaking hands with soldiers!", so he knows it can be different[241]. Respondents state that "it is not black and white", "the solution is more trust-building"[242]. Indeed, one respondent explicitly mentions she does not believe the problem is racism or faulty ideology, rather its concerns over security and mistrust, which requires understanding, hope and a break-down of prejudice and stigmas[243]. The idea rather is to humanize each other, realizing "we are all the same"[244].

4.3.2 The development of moral agency and the Complexity frame

This frame is constructed by the most diverse range of respondents, both Israeli and Palestinian. This frame is also employed by most respondents, and the most often *combined* with other frames. This is reflected in the moral agency development that most commonly precedes the construction of this frame. Respondents were both raised left-leaning, right-leaning, came from supportive to unsupportive families, were given independence or had to take it. Commonly these respondents had a meeting, in one way or another with 'the other', which caused shock, doubt and reflection after which they attained "a bigger picture"[245]. It

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232 Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

233 Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

234 Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

235 Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

236 Respondent 13, Ibid.

237 Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

238 Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

239 Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

240 Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

241 Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

242 Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 8 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

243 Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

244 Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 24 digitally, Palestinian activist.

245 Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

'humanized' the other, i.e. they were able to see the other as a human being rather than an enemy or stereotype. The respondents who use this frame still feel belonging to their respective in-group and it is this ingroup that is the primary audience for this frame. The community of solidarity they construct, which also may include other social issues, provides the support they need to engage with treason discourse.

4.3.3 The remedy: performing pluralism

The activities respondents - those who construct this frame - usually engage in are, what I would call 'performances of pluralism'. The central mission is to provide a different perspective and different possibilities for the future. For instance, this is achieved through encounters (momentary dialogue meetings), lectures of personal stories of change, documentaries and visits to *show* the reality of the other. Indeed, 'exposure' helps, says one respondent[246]. A personal story serves to build rapport with the audience, showing that once the lecturer and the audience were in the same position, sharing the same (mis)conceptions, but that "there is another way", as the slogan for Combatants for Peace goes.

Indeed, one respondent says her encounter-program taught her "true equality" by "seeing everyone on eye-level"[247]. Other examples would include the joint Israeli-Palestinian personal-story lectures and protests from Combatants for Peace, the inclusive political protests for 'agreement' by Women Wage Peace, the tours to the West Bank by Breaking the Silence, or the dual narrative tours by the Holy Land Trust, and the various dialogue and joint activity programs, which do *not* necessarily have a particular political goal or solution as their primary mandate, such as the Teacher's Lounge, Our Generation Speaks, the Jerusalem Youth Choir. In other words, they aim to counter concepts of 'inevitability' of antagonism, by showing that 'the other' is similar to you, challenging one's conception of the 'other' but also *one's conception of oneself*.

4.3.4 Treason discourse, complexity and re-definitions

This frame directly attempts to open the space for a redefinition of the collective, hoping to steer the collective away from collective postulates which support or entrench the ongoing conflict. As such they push back against the boundaries treason discourse seeks to police.

One respondent explains that 'complexity' is what the accusers of treason discourse, such as BDS for one respondent, do not understand[248]. It is exactly because this frame aims [re-]open the discussion on the nature of the collective, they not only are targeted with treason discourse - accusations of being naive, unpatriotic, or a traitor - they also have the most emotional reactions to it, ranging from frustration, sorrow, anger, to disappointment. The *Disturbing the Peace* documentary trailing Combatants for Peace activists, it is said how particularly difficult it is to "be called such by people you love", as indeed it may be your own family who disapproves. Many describe a desire to 're-define' Zionism to its "original form" which

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[246] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[247] Respondent 12, Ibid.

[248] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

"included minority rights and so forth"[249], or state their work is patriotic[250] or an expression of their Palestinian pride[251].

Yet regardless of complexity and humanization, many respondents still hit a wall. At the end of the day, "rights are rights and we both deserve our nation"[252]. Indeed, this frame is often combined as most respondents consider humanization and pluralism project the first step. For instance, another respondent concludes: "I cannot invalidate the fears [of the Israelis she speaks with], as bad things *have* happened"[253]. Indeed, other respondents cite that the memories of stabbing, suicide bombings, shootings, checkpoints and the like are difficult to manage[254]. Thus, after one has agreed to speak with 'the other', many add another frame.

4.4 The Recognition frame: reconciliation

4.4.1 The Recognition counter-frame

This frame diagnoses the conflict as a social problem, in which delegitimization of each other's sense of belonging and suffering and the fallacy that these would be mutually exclusive, maintains the status-quo of dehumanization and antagonism. "It is a social problem, [...], not a political one, it is about: How do you want to treat your neighbour?"[255]. Indeed, another respondent explicitly states he became frustrated with the political side of it, as he felt no one spoke a reconciliatory language[256]. Another agrees, saying "the current leaders [of the conflict] are only managing it, [..] they are not interested in solving it"[257], adding that the current elites and media "do not give the other side hope". "We need a new way, a new language"[258]. The remedy is the recognition of each other's needs - their belonging, their truth, and their emotions - in order to build a new community, where one takes responsibility for the situation and works together to solve it.

The first key component appears to be the mutual recognition of one's connection and feelings of belonging to the *entire* land of Israel-Palestine. "We both have roots here", "everybody is a little bit right and a little bit wrong"[259]. Indeed, says another respondent, "I want a Palestinian state, and I would like to live in the whole of Palestine, but I can't because the Jews also have a right to live in this land, we both

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[249] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[250] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[251] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[252] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 24 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[253] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[254] Author's interview with Respondents 9, 11, 19, 25.

[255] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

[256] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[257] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[258] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[259] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

have historical roots here, [...] we share it"[260]. There is more than 1 truth we have to include in our hearts, [...] the biblical Jews are now also a part of my [Palestinian] heritage[261].

The recognition of multiple truths, on both the history and current situation, appears to be another key component and to some the way to "make it right"[262]. The Israeli-Jews and Zionists part of such initiatives often emphasise *responsibility* as part of this recognition of truths[263]. "I don't think the Jews stole the land, we didn't initiate, [...] but that does not change we went from victims to persecutors, to occupiers"[264]. The price of peace is social change[265], to "create something new"[266]. It is from this perspective many may cooperate with respondents from other frames in protest and solidarity activities.

Lastly, a key component appears to be the mutual recognition of the underlying emotions of the 'other', namely fear, anger, grief and loss. This translates into discussing difficult subjects in the communities one builds. Indeed, as Ali Abu Awwad says in the documentary *The field*: "It can't be all hugs and hummus". As such they discuss the occupation and injustice frequently and do not avoid tense subjects. Another example is The Family Forum; an organisation built entirely on bereaved families, to which participants refer as "a second family". The two co-directors, an Israeli and a Palestinian, who both lost a daughter to the conflict[267], refer to each other as "brothers".

4.4.2 The development of moral agency and the Recognition frame

The respondents who primarily construct this frame share some commonalities in moral agency journey. Their backgrounds are diverse, but there is an affinity with religious upbringing, language and interfaith dialogue programs which are less prevalent in other frames[268]. Most commonly these respondents experience a meeting with "the other" or a loss of a loved one, after some experienced kindness from 'the other' they did not expect[269]. The most striking commonality of respondents in this frame are the emotional responses these respondents had following their catalytic experience; particularly *letting go* of fear and anger as significant emotional developments.

Consequently, some respondents appear to have acquired *peace of mind* before working on 'actual' peace. One respondent notes no longer feeling he has to "prove his identity"[270], or feel "threatened by the truth of the 'other'"[271]. Recognizing the other's narrative, *without letting your own identity go*, is what one

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[260] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[261] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[262] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[263] For instance, interviews with respondents 13, 14, 18 and 25.

[264] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[265] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[266] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[267] One lost his 14 year old daughter to a territorial attack in Jerusalem, the other lost his 10 year old daughter to a rubber bullet fired without cause from an Israeli soldier. See the documentary the Eye of the Storm.

[268] Author's interview with Respondent 18 and 25

[269] For instance, respondent 16, 18 and https://www.theparentscircle.org/en/personal-stories_eng/

[270] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[271] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

respondent called "true reconciliation"[272]. Then, one's identity no longer depends on delegitimizing the identity of the other[273]. Many respondents involved in reconciliation work explicitly note that a strong Palestinian identity is a necessity and an asset for this work. The same is true for Israelis, even though their identification appears to be phrased less and less in terms of nationalism, rather they focus on belonging and the feeling of rootedness to the land of Israel-Palestine of the Jewish people.

The community which they form is the goal of this frame. Respondents emphasise they make the *choice* to embrace each other or to 'integrate the two narratives', or 'recognise each other's (emotional human) needs'. One such vision for a bi-national community is "A land for all"[274]: an association which proposes a federalist solution to the conflict, where Jews and Palestinian each have their own culturally autonomous state, but share issues on economics, security and have free mobility. With one's community, respondents work on dialogue and solidarity actions. Indeed, together one may replant (olive) trees, start educational community projects and youth groups, and one respondent is "obsessed" with the fight against house demolitions near his settlement[275].

4.4.3 The remedy: How do you convince your accuser?

The most morally relevant action is to engage those further from peace, including accusers of treason discourse. "First we become friends, then we talk about the conflict"[276], is the strategy. This may be why this frame also includes respondents from a highly controversial, dialogue community between religious settlers and Palestinians living nearby, called *Roots*. One such respondent says these far opposite ends create more interesting dialogue and counters polarization, "because they don't start from a similar ideology"[277]. Indeed, it could be that the lack of expectations makes the finding of common ground, recognition and reconciliation that much more relieving. After experiencing recognition, the encounter "shifts opinions, values and creates new ways of thinking"[278]. These communities often grow "mouth-to-mouth"[279], are informal, and when focused on youth: aim to create a generation "of problem solvers" who can change "the discouraging status quo"[280].

So how does one facilitate transformations for others? When one, of any frame, engages the accuser of treason discourse, the answer which usually comes back is: "I don't counter", or "I've never convinced anyone", or "You can't change opinions"[281]. Yet, 3 aspects appear to be helpful: (1) who is countered, (2) who is countering and (3) listening.

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[272] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[273] Respondent 16, Ibid.

[274] Zoom-lecture on 01-06-2020, Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoMNL6Ca-tA, Website: https://www.alandforall.org/

[275] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

[276] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[277] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

[278] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[279] Respondent 14, Ibid.

[280] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace activist and debater.

[281] Author's interview on 19-03-2020 with Respondent 12 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

Firstly, respondents assess who is both safe and worth engaging. Even those who usually ignore or avoid treason discourse may address their family and friends[282]. Others may choose who to engage based on a risk analysis[283]. Most, however, note they feel they have more power to change 'the other' than their own community[284]. Indeed, one respondent noted that when he tried to engage his friends, their response was that "your nice Israelis are not representative"[285]. When another respondent showed the poor housing conditions of Palestinians to his neighbours, people were able to respond with empathy, yet upon hearing the social change necessary to improve their condition "fear takes over", saying his story "doesn't stick"[286]. Some noted the need for friends to come multiple times to meet 'the other' and participate in their activist group for the transformation to take hold[287]. Indeed, with even the more powerful meetings; i.e. where one receives compassion from an unexpected source, it may be two steps forward and one step back:

> "We're seeing a spectrum, we're talking about our process, politics was talking about stances, we're talking about movements, [...] so [name] arranged [to go] to the Frenkel[288] home for the condolences call. And that was really an amazing thing, not only to see the visit between the family and the Palestinians, each of whom, both [name] and his friend [name], had been in Israeli prisons because of activities in the First Intifada .... And the meeting between [name] and the grandfather of Naftali Frankel, who was murdered… I really, really… was deep stuff, but to see the reactions of Israelis around… all these Israeli Zionists, who, you know, you could be a settler from Hebron or you can be a religious guy from Ramat Gan or from any other place from within Israel itself, and you couldn't tell the difference! [...] their amazement, their… their emotional… [...] they were calling their friends, [saying:] you don't understand what's happening here! [...] it was so powerful. [...] but then when we joined [the Palestinians] to break fast in Ramadan [...] it created quite a stir in the community. People said: are you guys crazy?! [...] there are rockets flying on Tel Aviv!"[289] .

Secondly, respondents emphasise the need to be viewed as a trustworthy source of information. Otherwise, one's arguments will simply be dismissed as either biased or unfounded. For instance, one

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[282] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[283] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[284] Interview with Respondents 16, 18, 19, 20, 24

[285] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[286] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker

[287] Author's interview on 26-03-2020 with Respondent 19 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[288] In 2014, 3 Jewish teenagers hitchhiking in the West Bank were kidnapped and killed, prompting a "retaliation murder" of a young Palestinian boy by Jewish exteremists. These events ultimately led to the 2014 Gaza War. Frenkel is one of the families of the Jewish boys. The HBO series "Our Boys" depicts these events.

[289] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker.

respondent said that, before meeting Jewish Israelis, she "didn't even know Jews used to live here in Palestine, and if you would've told me before I would've thought it was propaganda"[290]. Another concurs stating "statistics don't change those who'd made up their minds, but "either way people should know what's going on, [...] because now people live in their bubble"[291]. Yet, he does know people who have "softened", "started to doubt", or self-reflected because they trusted his personal stories[292]. Therefore, one is *invited* to join, and to build such relationships, because "one never makes a difference if one decides in advance there is no hope"[293].

Lastly, to gauge the previous two, respondents emphasise they start with listening. Indeed, one says that teaching complexity means listening, rather than convincing[294]. This requires leaving stances as "when I make a stance, I invite attacks all the time, [...] I have to calm down the emotions first", to make them realise "it [peace work] is hurting no-one, you don't have to be so hell against it!"[295]. "We are not here to convince", we have questions rather than stances, and listening with respect hopefully will influence the consciousness[296].

4.4.4 Treason discourse: side-stepping the competition of national identities

Besides directly, and personally, engaging those who construct treason discourse, the overarching aim is to side-step the very competition between the two nationalities which creates treason discourse. "We need to stop denial-thinking", says one respondent[297]. Another agrees, stating that BDS [one of the constructors of treason discourse] and others who attack him, "confuse their opinions with their identity", meaning that when one disputes their opinions, they feel delegitimization in their identity[298].

However, as most emphasise, one only engages when one feels safe, thus only engaging in predominantly personal conversations. Many cite one needs to be cautious, by for instance filtering their posts on social media[299]. Still the risk is part of it, most say, "if you're not making waves you are also not having an impact"[300]

4.5 The commonalities and overlap of frames: language

It is important to state these frames are not mutually exclusive. The frames share similar desires and goals. Every respondent said 'human rights', 'equality' and 'justice' were part of their values portrayed with their

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[290] Author's interview on 28-03-2020 with Respondent 20 digitally, Israeli dialogue participant.

[291] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[292] Respondent 22, Ibid.

[293] Author's interview on 23-03-2020 with Respondent 14 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[294] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[295] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with Respondent 18 digitally, Israeli peace worker

[296] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[297] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace worker.

[298] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[299] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 17 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[300] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

work. Individual respondents often utilize multiple frames to counter a different part of hegemonic discourse: nearly every respondent uses at least two frames. The same can be said about the activities associated with each frame, as many may join each other's activities and use a plurality of activities for a variety of reasons.

For instance, those focusing on the reconciliation frame built a new bi-national community and from this perspective may join in with solidarity activities shared with the social justice frame, without concurring the analysis there is a fundamental flaw in the structure of society, and vice-versa. One respondent, who can be positioned in the social justice frame, emphasised she will work with anyone for strategic reasons[301]. The complexity frame which aims to counter political polarization and create space for pluralism, dissent and humanization, is used by virtually every respondent. Respondents are often more complex than any categorization can fully capture. Then how ought one read these categorisations?

The frames were clustered based on the presented analysis of the conflict, the language used, mentioned, goals and values, rather than by grouping respondents and then seeing what they had to say. I would argue, one can best conceptualize these counter-frames as a language one speaks. In which one has their native language, denoting their main diagnosis, judgement and remedy which the native language expresses, yet may learn and use another for strategic purposes or the belief they may be complementary.

4.6 Conclusion and the next chapter

The social justice frame poses the diagnosis the conflict is caused by structures of colonialism, racism and sexism present in the Zionist, Israeli system and propose remedial actions which target such structures. This includes performances of power, which address, challenge, and 'expose' the structures which create power differences between Israelis and Palestinians. The respondents who primarily make up this frame have in common that they developed from already left-leaning Israelis, experiencing a repetition of supposed 'unjust acts'; racist interactions, sexual intimidation and wars, which they state are "all connected". Many, yet not all, subsequently choose to sever ties with societal senses of belonging, forming a community of solidarity and friendship which shields them from a treason discourse which they care little about.

The empowerment frame is an introspective frame which diagnosis economic deprivation and hopelessness in the Palestinian society as limiting the road to peace. As a result, they focus on localities and individuals to give them opportunities and encourage proactivity. This frame counters victim-mentality and aims to instil hope. The respondents who primarily use this frame are a diverse range of Palestinians, who, besides suffering from occupation, are also critical of hegemonic narratives in Palestinian society which they believe make matters worse. After a meeting with "the other" or a loss, one concluded that "not everything should be against the Jews" and that one should re-prioritize and focus on "what is important", namely rebuilding. treason discourse is mostly avoided, as many note an absence of community protection

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[301] Author's interview on 12-03-2020 with Respondent 10 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

against treason discourse. When confronted with treason discourse for countering victimisation narratives, they defend themselves by pointing to self-interest and tangible changes made to benefit the community.

The complexity frame diagnoses political polarization as the problem both within and between Israelis and Palestinians. Through performances of pluralism - such as personal stories and joint inclusive protests - one shows that 'disagreeing okay', applying nuance, complexity, and respect into a polarized discussion. This hopefully humanizes 'the other' so one can counter the doctrine "there is no partner for peace". Respondents constructing this frame have diverse upbringings, as well as diverse experiences. However, each experienced a moment of doubt, shock and reflection, usually after meeting "the other", which motivated one to show others the complexity they have come to see. Many still feel connected to collective forms of belonging and therefore, by creating the space for pluralism, also open up the space to re-define the collective, emphasising dovish and democratic aspects and ideals of Zionism and Palestinian identity. As treason discourse is made to police the boundaries of an essentialized collective, and a tool for claiming power over the collective, it is directly countered by this frame. Indeed, to counter polarization is also to de-essentialize and di-dichotomize so a new alternative narrative can take shape.

The recognition frame diagnoses the problem as social; the de-legitimization of 'the other's emotional needs, truth and belonging, and counters the idea that these are mutually exclusive. In other words, this frame aims to reconcile and counter the competition of nationalisms which gives treason discourse its relevance. The remedy is recognizing the 'others' belonging, truth and emotions for 'true reconciliation' from which one can work together to create a shared community. The respondents are of diverse backgrounds yet include religious respondents more often than other frames. Experiences range from a meeting with 'the other' to a loss after which emotions of sorrow and surprise follow when they receive kindness and recognition from an unexpected source. A common theme for respondents constructing this frame is that they attain peace of mind first, by letting go of fear and anger. Importantly; respondents hold on to their sense of belonging without feeling the need to defend such an identity. Such "true reconciliation", as one respondent says, forms the basis of a new community which then together partakes in solidarity activities.

While most respondents use language that crosses frames, the diagnosis and suggested remedies which each frame consists of may give rise to tension. Indeed, some respondents state they also experience treason discourse *between* peace organisations[302]. Most of the respondents who mentioned this partook in reconciliation programs, associated with the recognition frame. For example, other organisations refused to cooperate with another respondents' initiative because they engage those considered most responsible for the conflict: *soldiers and settlers*. And indeed, some who do engage in reconciliation work do question: "where do I draw the line? Who would I not cooperate with?"[303]. In the next chapter we, therefore, explore:

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[302] Author's interview with Respondents 9, 11, 15, 16, 18, 21, 26

[303] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

what causes these underlying tensions and what does this new "internal" type of treason discourse consist of?

Chapter 5: Discussing 'Internal treason discourse'

Some respondents have noted they experience treason discourse *between* peace organisations and activists. This 'internal' treason discourse will be explored in more detail in this chapter. In the first section, we will elaborate on the accusations levied. The core argument here is that one may consider particular types of activism, such as dialogue, and the diagnosis of the conflict which precedes dialogue, to not sufficiently take into account power disparities between Israeli-Jews and Palestinians. The following section discusses power disparities, blame and responsibility present in the broader academic discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how, when such intellectual differences are *also* viewed through the prism of power relations, they provide the argumentation for (internal) treason discourse. We then reflect on the counter-frames and their differences using conflict theories, starting with the role of 'power disparities' within frames. The frames appear to differ in structuralist versus individualist approaches, as well as the respondent's belonging and emotions playing a significant role. Subsequently, these become ideas for further research, which are elaborated upon in the last section.

5.1 Accusations of 'internal treason discourse'

As said, the accusations common in treason discourse discussed in chapter two may also occur between peace (and/or resistance) organisations and activists. These accusations usually revolve around who an organisation or person has chosen to engage or cooperate with. The main accusations used is that of 'uncommittedness', or, anti-normalization used between resistance and between peace organisations. Hassouna (2015) points out that those who argue for anti-normalization say "Israeli - Palestinian cooperation is felt to ignore the imbalance between oppressor and oppressed". As such, families and communities peer pressure Palestinians to not join in with cooperative peace projects or cooperative non-violent resistance projects (Hassouna, 2015). May it be with the exception of anti- and post-Zionist solidarity groups (Salem, 2005), who join more mainstream Palestinians resistance, in diagnosing structures which cause power disparities as being at the core of the conflict.

Here, engaging in cooperation without first attaining equal power relations is felt to reify a status quo in which Palestinian rights, identity and truths are erased. This is part of an ongoing discussion on what counts as "resistance" in cooperative projects (Norman 2011, p. 2, 9). Respondents explain anti-normalization discourse was meant to provide direction and guidance in a sprawling peace industry after the Second Intifada[304], but that such direction is now absent[305], resulting in a discourse that makes "all cooperation suspect"[306]. There remained, however, distinct uniformity in how Palestinian respondents

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[304] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 16 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[305] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[306] Respondent 16, Ibid.

defined normalization: "ignoring the elephant in the room", "having to change your identity", or "being friends with Israelis who do not support a Palestinian state"[307]. In other words, normalization is seen, also by Palestinian respondents who engage in cooperative efforts, as becoming "uncommitted" to Palestinian rights. Yet, such accusations do not merely occur between Palestinian groups, but also are levied between Israeli, and by international, activists[308]. Another respondent, speaking about backlash people give to his Israeli-Palestinian dialogue community for children, explained this backlash happens because people "do not understand our impact"[309], seeing dialogue only through the lens of legitimizing a supposed enemy. Similarly, the group Roots, which is a dialogue community which involves settlers (who are held responsible for making the two-state solution improbable), is considered controversial within the Israeli peace movement[310]. Dialogue and cooperation with "the wrong people" are seen as activism 'uncommitted' to the peace or justice.

Respondents, however, push back. For instance, one respondent states that anti-normalization efforts by BDS accuses cooperative peace industry of elitism, and indeed concedes that the stark difference in salaries between the regular population and the peace industry has created resentment[311]. Yet, he warns, the leaders to BDS and anti-normalization are *also* elites[312]. Rather, he says, anti-normalization has become a fight among resistance and peace elites as to *who* gets to decide the legitimacy of cooperation and gets to effectively 'lead' the collective, for which they have misrepresented the impact of cooperative peace efforts and created a "with us or against us attitude"[313]. Most Palestinian respondents agree the term 'normalization' has to change[314], as anti-normalization activism, "shouldn't prevent people from living a better life"[315], which is what these Palestinian respondents aim to provide.

In other words, there is internal disagreement on when cooperation, and dialogue in particular, reifies current power relations and/or "actually" has a (positive) impact on the ongoing conflict. This is also a question *within* those who participate in inclusive dialogue programs. As one respondent asks: "Where do I draw the line? Who would I not cooperate with?", eventually concluding: "I do not speak with nationalists or racists, but other than that I speak with anyone"[316]. As well as one respondent exclaiming, "it is frustrating when you don't change anything, can we be more tolerant!?"[317].

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[307] Examples taking from Author's interview with Respondents 17, 21 and 23

[308] Author's interview on 09-03-2020 with Respondent 9 in Tel Aviv, Israeli peace activist.

[309] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[310] Shorashim, or "roots" https://www.friendsofroots.net/

[311] Author's interview on 07-04-2020 with Respondent 26 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[312] Respondent 26, Ibid.

[313] Respondent 16, Ibid.

[314] Author's interview on 29-03-2020 with Respondent 21 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[315] Author's interview with Respondents 15 and 26

[316] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

[317] Author's interview on 22-03-2020 with Respondent 13 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

5.2 Intellectual differences to 'internal treason discourse'

The accusation of 'uncommitted' activism, in which one's activism with its respective diagnosis would not sufficiently take into account 'power relationships' is reflected in ideas on blame and responsibility. Discussing supposed "false symmetry", Sharoni states: "All too often, media accounts and academic scholarship on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have fallen into a *trap of false symmetry. Typically, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is presented as an intractable struggle between two parties over territory, identity or security.* What this interpretation overlooks is that the present phase of the conflict involves the Palestinian's struggle to rid themselves of the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which has not been benign. For Palestinians, the occupation has included, among other things, widespread arrests, detentions, curfews, and shootings, not to mention a maze of military laws and regulations that impose upon all aspects of daily life. In spite of this, whenever there is an escalation in violence, the tendency has been to label Palestinians as the aggressors. Such interpretations *obscure the asymmetrical power relations between Palestinians and Israeli-Jews*". (Sharoni 1995, p. 5). Similarly, to 'ignore the structures' that produce violence, Brockhill & Cordell (2019) say this "discredits accounts and concerns of the most disadvantaged people in society that are more likely to be subject to these forms of violence" (2019, p. 993). To put it simply; if one does not do a power-analysis, one supposedly discounts 'the powerless'. A power analysis can dichotomize blame and responsibility, in the "powerful" and "powerless", oppressor and oppressed, a perpetrator and a victim, in which the "powerful ones" are responsible for change or to blame for an absence thereof.

This is contested by those arguing for *shared responsibility*, which I would argue is present in the frames of empowerment and recognition. It is the respondents from these frames who also state they receive the most internal treason discourse. These frames have observed how Israelis and Palestinians have constructed a narrative of 'the attacked one', which focuses the *blame* for fighting and the *responsibility* for reconciliation on the shoulders of 'the other' (Caplan, 2012). To break such a cycle, these two frames emphasise the shared responsibility, i.e. the responsibility of each individual to elicit social change. This does not mean responsibility is entirely 'equal', as mostly Israeli respondents in the recognition frame state the need to accept Israel's role in the suffering of Palestinians and take responsibility as elaborated in the previous chapter. However, both the empowerment and recognition frames include Palestinians who emphasise their own role, their own ability to share in a bi-national community to resolve the conflict. The empowerment frame considers a victim-mentality which eschews responsibility to be counterproductive and the recognition frame emphasises reciprocity; mutually legitimizing their belonging, emotions and truth. As one respondent says "there is plenty of blame and responsibility to go around"[318]. Indeed, also Tessler preemptively defending himself against charges of 'false symmetry' says: "the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a [dichotomized] struggle between good and evil but rather a confrontation between two

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[318] Author's interview on 02-04-2020 with Respondent 22 digitally, Israeli peace activists and debater

people who deserve *recognition, and respect, neither of whom has a monopoly on behaviour that is either praiseworthy or condemnable"* (Tessler 2009, Preface xiv-xv).

These intellectual differences need not necessarily lead to treason discourse; an accusation of uncommitted activism or normalization. This is evident in the widespread cooperation across frames. Yet, if one observed the conflict through power relations, then one may view such intellectual difference *also* through the prism of power relations. For instance, Brockhill & Cordell argue for a structuralist interpretation of violence in Israel-Palestine, which emphasises power disparities, yet argue in its conclusion that those who disagree should be seen as taking a *political position,* where the employment of a particular definition of violence may *depend on the interests of those employing them*" (Brockhill & Cordell 2019, p. 993). This views intellectual debate through the lens of power relations, which casts doubt on the intellectual honesty of differing positions, as these supposedly "obscure injustice", and subsequently considers the omission of power relations as an attempt at securing the individuals own interests.

5.3 A reflection: juxtaposing frames using academic theory

The (counter-)frames discussed in the previous chapter each have their own diagnosis of the conflict, and their own suggested remedies they found morally relevant. Each frame also had key parts of a moral agency journey more associated with one frame than another. Indeed, a frame is a collective definition of a situation, resulting from commonalities in moral agency journeys. This section reflects on the differences between frames and if, after the role of 'power disparities', there are differences of significance.

The social justice frame counters ideas of return, exclusivism and militarism in Israeli nationalism. It argues structures of colonialism, racism and sexism inherent in Zionist society cause and perpetuate the conflict. The suggested remedy is to expose and challenge these structures that create power disparities between Israelis and Palestinians. This frame mirrors Galtung's theory, in which the individual 'Attitudes' and 'Behaviour' known in conflict - such as the racist interactions, wars and settler-violence encountered by the respondents - are the visible expressions of the inherent 'Contradiction' within the structures which maintain the boundaries between the powerful and powerless (Galtung, 1996). The remedies proposed are those actions that "expose" [319] and challenge power relations publicly, by performing acts of solidarity and by actively using the privileges Israeli citizenship affords to help Palestinians without such rights. To Galtung, only "conscientization", the realisation of the "real contradiction" in the structure, can change the structure (Galtung, 1996). This may be reflected in the respondents' characterisation of the supposed "maintainers of the structure", the religious right, as "ignorant"[320], as well as that they arrived at their diagnosis through "sheer logic"[321]. Either way, there appears to be a distinction made between those who acknowledge structures as the cause of conflict and those who do not.

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[319] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

[320] Author's interview on 07-03-2020 with Respondent 6 in Haifa, Israeli peace activist.

[321] Author's interview on 08-03-2020 with Respondent 7 in Haifa, Israeli activist.

This may be understood as the difference between "rule followers" and "purposeful agents". Namely, this theory has an interpretative structuralist epistemological and ontological basis. Structures here are not independent entities but embedded within a society with the assumption that individuals are by-and-large rule followers (Demmers 2017, pp. 34-37). Structures are defined as a set of regulative rules and practices, 'meaning rules', or 'dominant mentalities', which are 'external to each, but internal to all' (Demmers 2017, p.129). These structures tell us how to "do" social life and are produced and maintained through *power relations* (Demmers 2017, p. 105 emphasis added). It is through becoming aware of the oppressive structures, "to conscientize", one can transform from "rule follower" of the structure to a "purposeful agent" which is able to affect change (Galtung, 1996). Yet what then, if one is active against the conflict while having a differing diagnosis? Is one still considered a 'rule follower' who chooses to be a rule-follower? An activist who is complacent or uncommitted to justice? Indeed, all other three frames differ from the social justice frame, yet not all are equally targeted with internal treason discourse.

The complexity frame counters political polarizations internally, by de-essentializing identity and ideas of how the conflict is understood, and between nationalisms by countering the idea there is "no partner for peace". The remedy is creating space for pluralism and humanization both between political opponents and Israelis and Palestinians. Here, the focus appears to be on "discourse", on how we talk about each other and see each other. Discourses are the "social relations represented in texts where the language contained within these texts is used to construct meaning and representation" (Jabri, 1996). These discourses decide what is normal and just (Demmers, 2017; Jabri, 1996). Discourse is thus consequential; they can formulate identities, legitimize violence, produce truth and stories, and as such this view both focuses on the power of discourse but also on the power one has to define discourse (Demmers 2017, pp. 188-196). As Demmers concludes, discourse analysis is about the "politics of portrayal" (Demmers 2017, p. 202); of who determines meaning.

Thus, this frame does appear to take into account power relationships, as a discourse is what makes 'a structure' visible in discursive theories, and discourse is influenced by power (Demmers, 2017). Yet, discursive theories denote an ontological and epistemological presupposition of 'structuration'; which emphasises the constructive nature of social reality, by *already purposeful agents*, and the power of language within it. Collectively individuals repeat social practices - such as speech, classification, and so forth - which over time may become a set of rules, a structure, which is represented as a dominant mentality in discourse which in turn influences the context within an individual lives and allow for agency (Demmers 2017, pp.192-196). So, if both frames consider 'power', are there other possibly contentious differences between these frames?

Many respondents in the social justice frame consider the supposed structures as cause for breaking with collective forms of belonging, or at least experience a sense of unease, identifying as post- or anti-Zionist. Most respondents in the complexity frame, albeit acknowledging structures, made the choice to fight for the "moral essence" of the Jewish State, emphasising dovish and democratic aspects of Zionism's discursive heritage. A focus on the individual's ability to alter discourse, which implies social life is

constructed, that social reality is malleable, can be seen as allowing for opportunity for peace activists to engage in re-defining Zionism and thus retain their sense of belonging. It begs the question, how salient is a sense of belonging in one's propensity to fight for, or discard one's respective society? Or, how does one's sense of belonging influence the process of analysing one's own society? Does an absence of belonging make one prone to essentialize the collective negatively or vice versa?

Similarly, the recognition frame focuses on the importance of belonging and identity. The recognition frame counters the competition between the two national narratives, which it diagnoses as the cause for continuous social antagonism between the two peoples. The remedy is individual transformation, in which one recognises the others sense of belonging, truth and takes responsibility. Essentially, this does not require a change of "who they are"[322]. The ability to accept the 'other' while also retaining one's own identity and narrative is what one calls "true reconciliation"[323] as it provides the peace of mind from which one can build peace. This view is in line with "human needs theory", which "in essence [...] trace the source of violent behaviour in the individual need for identity" (Demmers 2017, p. 140). Basic human needs such as participation, recognition, security and identity here, are *fixed*, ontological and universal and the individual would not, or indeed could not, compromise on them (Burton 1984 in Demmers 2017, p. 140). As one says, "I *can't* be anti-Zionist"[324]. I wondered how difficult the communication must be between those respondents which argue that to solve the conflict, one must acknowledge and understand Zionism as a colonialist entity and not as a returning group, with those respondents who experience their (Zionist) identity as a non-negotiable deeply felt sense of belonging and revival of their culture. It begs the question, to what degree does a sense of belonging influence frame resonance[325]? Furthermore, what is the role of emotion in this process? As indeed, the former group of respondents is characterised by emotional outrage directed at the in-group, while a core characteristic in the latter group of respondents is the *relinquishing* of fear and anger.

Furthermore, the recognition frame also differs with the two former frames in that it first focuses on reconciliation, only *after* which one focuses on creating justice in which possible power disparities are taken into account. In other words, only after dialogue between individuals happens and one builds relationships, can one work together in creating social change: first we become friends, then we discuss the conflict[326]. It has an individualist ontological focus, in which the healing of a larger and larger group of individuals may create change together. Similarly, the empowerment frame also has an individualist focus, as they seek to empower individuals and localities: it directly counters a righteous victim-mentality, arguing

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[322] Author's interview with Respondents 16, 17, 18

[323] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with respondent 16, Palestinian peace activist.

[324] Author's interview on 25-03-2020 with respondent 18, Israeli peace worker.

[325] Framing resonance: relevant to the issue of the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of preferred framings, thereby attending to the question of why some framings seen to be effective or 'resonate' while others do not, [...] two sets of interacting factors account for variation in degree of frame resonance: credibility of the proffered frame and its relative salience" (Snow and Benford 2000:619).

[326] Author's interview on 06-04-2020 with Respondent 25 digitally, Israeli peace activist.

for an attitude in which one "responsible for its own actions"[327]. Respondents in the empowerment frame here posit that a strong, bottom-up, grassroot movement is necessary for any peace to be sustained[328].

The empowerment frame differs from the recognition frame however, in that the individuals are positioned in their context, not with non-negotiable identities. Rather, negotiation of local needs and interests here appears essential. The empowerment frame seeks to remedy economic destitution and hopelessness among, primarily the Palestinian populous, so one can cooperate with Israelis for peace on equal footing. First one builds a life, as one respondent says[329]. Like Kalyvas, this posits social reality consists of individuals *negotiating* their stance vis-a-vis the collective by building alliances which includes their own interest (Demmers 2017, p. 56). Kalyvas proposes local conflicts, groups, rivalries and violence retain their own complex motives, strategies and choices within the larger national framework of their respective civil war (Kalyvas, 2003). Indeed, also Hassassian signifies Palestinian resistance as a tightrope between local allegiances and internal rivalries (Hassassian, 2002). The remedy, therefore, is to "rebuild the community", possibly through alliances between local communities and individuals by giving them the opportunity to create an economically stable life and a confident sense of self which allows for cooperation with Israelis as equals. In other words, it holds the positions that change is made through individuals and their context-specific situation, which appears to lean on a longer Palestinian tradition of resistance and social change movements. Considering these differences: to what degree can they be understood as ontological and epistemological differences, structuralist versus individualist approaches, and to what degree is such a reflection on the frames' differences insufficient? And, to which degree are hegemonic narratives within the peace movement related to the hegemonic narratives of culture within which they are formed?

5.4 Further Research

The summarize the previous sections; internal treason discourse is experienced by some respondents, particularly those who engage in cooperation and dialogue with the "wrong people". The core of this argument against dialogue, as Hassouna (2015) states, is that cooperation is felt to ignore the power imbalance between 'oppressor and oppressed'. Sharoni (1995) concurs, stating many diagnoses of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict do not take into account power disparities but focuses on identity, security and land disputes; which she calls 'false symmetry'. When one views such differences in diagnosis not as an intellectual conversation or competition, but as an expression of these same power differences, internal treason discourse may occur with accusations of ulterior self-interested motivations or "uncommitted activism" and normalization.

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[327] Author's interview on 24-03-2020 with Respondent 15 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[328] Author's interview on 18-03-2020 with Respondent 11 digitally, Palestinian peace activist.

[329] Author's interview on 03-04-2020 with Respondent 23 digitally, Palestinian social entrepreneur

A further reflection on the differences between frames raises the following questions. How do "accusers" contend with those who are active in peace work, but do not consider structures (and respective emphasis on power disparities) to be at the core of the conflict? Is the argument that one must first acknowledge power structures before one can be considered an impactful agent, a reified or contested argument in the peace movement? Which other boundaries defining narratives of social movements and activism exist?

Benford & Hunt state that the fact social movements exist, "indicate differences regarding the meaning of some aspect of reality. At the core of these contests over meaning are differences regarding conceptions of power" (Benford & Hunt 1992, p. 37). In other words, all social movements inherently comment on power relations and enact and communicate power in the public space (Benford & Hunt, 1992). While this categorization may hold true for some of the frames, it appears activism focused on reconciliation first is less concerned with commenting on power relations. Power dynamics may implicitly be included when respondents are forming relations, yet are not 'performed', as they focus on individual and social healing. The enactment of power in the public space, as a way of commenting on power relations, requires preparation and adaptation. Benford & Hunt characterise this dramaturgically, in that movements script, stage, perform and interpret their protest (1992). Interestingly, they emphasise such organised communication requires "dramaturgical loyalty" in which participants stick to the constructed definitions and emergent norms one aims to communicate lest one be excluded from the movement (Benford & Hunt 1992, p. 45). Can internal treason discourse then be conceptualized as the enforcement of dramaturgical loyalty?

Secondly, we observed that the sense of belonging and emotion in one's moral agency journey appear to be particularly significant in both one's activation, and one's choice of frame, i.e. in how one ends up diagnosing the conflict. It begs the question, to what degree does a sense of belonging influence frame construction and resonance? As appears to be present in the empowerment frame, are hegemonic narratives within the peace movement related to the hegemonic narratives of culture within which they are formed? Furthermore, what is the role of emotion in this process?

Flam & King state "activists sense particularly strongly the tensions between being embedded in the emotional culture of a particular social movement, being pressed upon by the values and emotions of broader society, and developing one's own cognitive normative and emotional frame" (2005, p. 7). 'Emotional framing' refers to the activities that social movements engage in to achieve emotional resonance" (Ruiz-Junco 2013, p. 49). While 'emotional culture' dictates "how one should feel about themselves and about (dominant) groups" (Ruiz-Junco 2013, p. 49). It could be interesting to observe this process through the prism of 'emotional cultures' and 'emotional framing', to merge the question of belonging and emotion and its influence on meaning construction and 'emotional boundary-making' in societal frames and frames of social movements. The question may then become, how does one emotionally frame the diagnosis of the conflict to counter, cut also *create* an emotional culture? Is it the breaking with an emotional culture of a movement that may create internal treason - discourse?

To conclude, as a tool of reflection, this chapter has made use of classic conflict theories, each of which has its own ontological and epistemological presuppositions. Besides locating subjects of 'power', 'belonging' and 'emotion', one can further explore the counter-frames as an expression of structuralist versus individualist approaches to conflict. The degree to which these differences are connected is also in need of further research. The exact nature of the differences between counter-frames, the nature of what explains the internal diversity of the peace movement and internal treason discourse, therefore remains an open question. What may be said however, is that 'the peace movement' should not be seen as a homogenous unit. It is united by its goals and desires but encapsulates many significant individual and ideological differences.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Summary

To answer the question: "How do grassroots peace activists develop the moral agency to counter-frame a discourse of treasonous radical alterity?", we have looked at three components: 'a discourse of treasonous radical alterity", "moral agency" and the "counter-frames". The discovery of internal treason discourse within peace initiatives and activists added an unexpected fourth component.

Firstly, we have characterised the accusations of treason discourse, which serve to police the boundaries of, and gain the power to define, the hegemonic collective moral arguments. Palestinian nationalism explains the conflict as a fight between an indigenous population and a colonial entity, whose aggression has caused suffering, humiliation, loss and shame. After which the victimized group is required to unify for national liberation, encouraging all members to express their rootedness, and sacrifice for the community. Israeli nationalism explains the conflict as an ancient people returning to its homeland, whose historical persecution and existential fear justifies a conformist, militarized society to safeguard needs of security, cultural preservation and a belonging for its people. This occurs in a context within which these two hegemonic narratives are in continuous competition over their legitimacy, authenticity and victim-status. The peace movement and its activists are characterised as betraying boundaries of their respective collective, siding with 'the other' in this competition.

Secondly, peace activists have come to see the collective moral arguments in a new light, to varying degrees, in which the emotions felt in such a journey were the motivator for action. Upbringing, a (series of) catalyst events, an emotional response to said events, a repositioning vis-a-vis the collective and its tenets, and finding one's activist community, are the five stages discerned of moral agency development. The emotions are what transformed the dissenting thinker into dissenting do-er, linking moral reasoning with moral conduct. The community of activists one joined facilitated a continuous moral agency development; gaining more experiences, of which an emotional response led to the re-assessing of collective tenets and one's position within such a collective. With this community one forms a collective definition of the situation and engages in activism.

Thirdly, the synthesis of moral agency journeys by a group of like-minded individuals, produces a diagnosis and remedy for the conflict, or a (counter)frame: social justice, empowerment, complexity and recognition. These target oppressive structures, economic destitution and hopelessness, political polarization, and social antagonism, respectively, and counter the collective postulates that are believed to have created these problems. Through this counter-frame activists act out their moral agency in the world, performing their frame through morally relevant actions such as protest, dialogue, material aid, art, mentorship and journalism. While a (counter-)frame of the conflict; its diagnosis, evaluation and remedy, can be discerned respondents cannot easily be fit into just one frame. Indeed, all respondents share similar goals and desires, and uniformly express a commitment to human rights. Many borrow and use language

from other frames, use several frames as they find their analysis and message complementary, or work together for strategic reasons.

Yet, some respondents note the presence of internal treason discourse. Those engaged in dialogue and cooperation are critiqued, as this supposedly 'neglects' addressing the structures which cause power disparities between Israeli and Palestinians. While respondents engaged in dialogue and cooperation dispute this, treason discourse may arise when accusers find their intellectual difference an expression of 'uncommitted activism', 'normalization' or self-interested omission. It raises questions about the presence of hegemonic narratives in activism. A further reflection on the differences in counter-frames points towards an examination on the role of power, but also belonging and emotion, as well as the culture in which supposed hegemonic narratives on activism are formed and resonate, giving possibilities for further research.

6.2 Answering the Research question

To conclude, "How do grassroots peace activists develop the moral agency to counter-frame a discourse of treasonous radical alterity?". Peace activists develop moral agency through the emotional responses to significant events, after which one reflects on one's position in the community and its tenets. Activists find a community which provides an alternative sense of belonging and develop, from their cumulative experiences, a diagnosis on the conflict and formulate remedies. This is expressed in a counter-frame which may target both treason discourse, as well as the essentialized narratives treason discourse police. They subsequently perform this counter-frame to attract audiences and provide an alternative path to the current status quo: fighting for social justice, empowering oneself, accepting complexity and humanizing one another, and/or accepting and recognizing human needs to leave the competition of antagonistic nationalistic narratives behind. These different approaches may also be subject to policing by internal treason discourse if another activist's approach is considered insufficient or counter-productive according to another approach. It is here that opportunities lie for further research.

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Appendix 1: Watchlist

Disturbing the Peace (2016) Directed by S. Apkon, A. Young, and M. Hale [Documentary]. Israel: Reconsider.

This documentary chronicles ex-IDF and ex-Palestinian fighters from Combatants for Peace on their journey towards non-violent cooperation and resistance. The documentary can be rented here: https://www.disturbingthepeacefilm.com/?fbclid=IwAR2cBB2w94JPwWskZA3AfNNww-bLwF0ffAPBPtwPN2bTqxpDDipYGp4cHOU.

Les Guerrières de la Paix (2018) Directy by H. Assouline [Documentary]. Israel: TV Presse productions.

This documentary follows Women Wage Peace, recognizably clothed in white, as they mobilize against the war in Gaza. It focuses on a broad coalition of women, both Israeli, Palestinian as well as from all over the political spectrum. The documentary is released on youtube, in French: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9QLrKzoxXE

The Field (2017) Directed by M. Vardi [Documentary]. Israel: Channel 8, Hot Cable Communication.

This documentary follows the initiative of Roots, a religious bi-national community in the Bethlehem area. It is the unlikely pairing of Palestinian living under occupation forming a dialogue community with religious settlers in the area. Together, they hope to make peace. You can watch the trailer here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFcXwAh-GlQ

Within the Eye of the Storm (2012) Directed by S. Hermon [Documentary]. Israel: Firefly Pictures.

The Family Forum, The Parent's Circle, the organisation consists of Israeli and Palestinian bereaved families working together for reconciliation. This follows two members, as they become brothers. Both men have lost a young daughter to the conflict. Smadar was killed by a Palestinian suicide bomber. Arin was shot by an Israeli soldier while walking home from school. Still, they fight for peace. The whole documentary is now on youtube and can be watched here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkqRibYJCHI.