Zehavit Gross [1]

Sources of Hope: Enhancing Peace Education in Higher Education.

A Case Study from Israel

1 Studying how to deal with stereotypes and discrimination in a time of terror and despair: Theory and practice

This contribution aims at exploring how Palestinian Arab and Jewish university students in Israel, attending a course on conflict resolution, deal with their stereotypical views of the Other and their prejudices, as well as their complex emotions of fear, hate, anxiety, and love. On the one hand, they have a natural desire for professional partnership and friendship with their fellow students. On the other hand, they are attending this class in a Jewish university, in the heart of the Middle East, where acts of terrorism occur almost daily. This violence changes the power structure and the dynamics of their mutual relationships. For most of them, this is the first time they have an unmediated interaction with the Other and this encounter is completely new for them. As well, they did not have any prior preparation for this challenging situation.

This article analyzes how the activities entailed in conflict resolution – which begins as a planned, artificial and enforced process – is transformed into a personal journey in which the students get to know their individual and collective »self«, as well as the Other. It argues that management of the conflict can be perceived as a moral journey. More specifically, the research will focus on the conceptualization of the feelings, complicated experiences, and the way in which these students are required to confront the question of their authenticity.

2 The current context and stereotypical views of Muslim Arabs

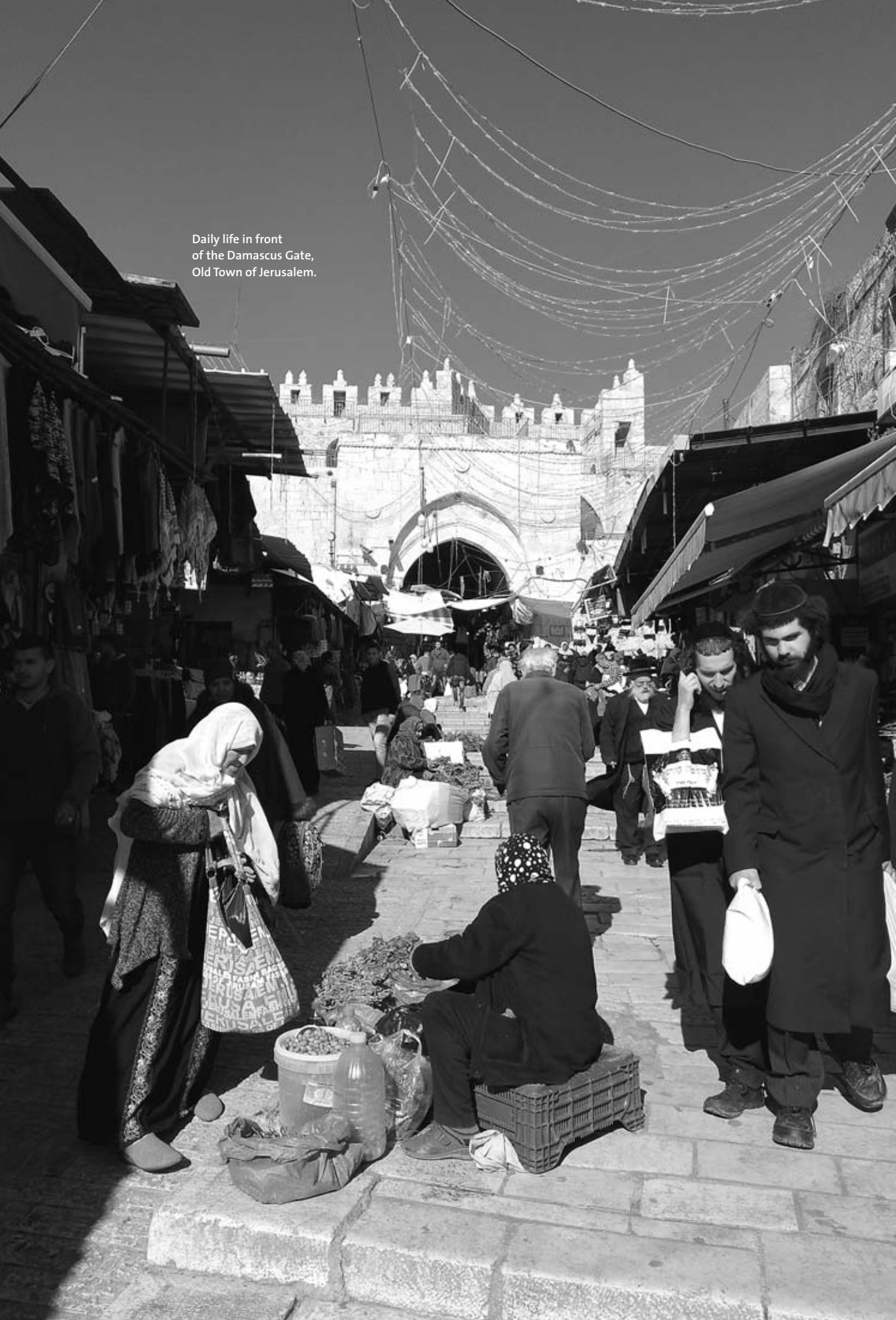
In recent years global terrorism has increased with the main driver being shown to be directly related to Islamic extremism, as reported in the 2014 Global Terrorism Index.[2] Terrorism is closely associated with the Islamic State (IS) and other Islamist movements such as Boko Haram, al-Sha-baah, the Taliban, and al-Qaeda. These movements operate across the Middle East, Africa and the Indian sub-continent in countries like Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia, Pakistan and Afghanistan. As well, a phenomenon known as »lone wolf attacks« has emerged, occurring across the globe, from France, Germany and the United Kingdom to the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

In Israel, this phenomenon created what has been defined as »a wave of terror«, especially since September 2015. According to the website of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs since then there have been 156 stabbing attacks (including 76 attempted attacks), 98 shootings, 46 vehicular (ramming) attacks and one vehicle (bus) bombing during which 40 people have been killed and 517 injured, similar to the lone wolf attacks that have occurred elsewhere.[3] Unlike earlier terrorist attacks, lone wolf violence is much more difficult to counter, since the acts are often spontaneous and not part of a broader terrorist network, which is easier to monitor. Within Israel/Palestine the current wave of attacks have been sparked by religious fervor under the battle cry of »Al-Aqsa mosque is in danger.« They began in the Old City and East Jerusalem, spread to the territories on the West Bank, and also within Israel proper.

1 **Dr. Zehavit Gross** is Professor of Education at School of Education, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel. She is heading the Sal Van Gelder Center for Holocaust Research & Instruction and holds the UNESCO chair for Values Education, Tolerance and Peace.

2 *https://reliefweb.int/ report/world/ global-terrorism-index-2018* (May 18, 2019).

3 *http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/ Palestinian/Pages/ Wave-of-terror-October-2015.aspx* (May 18, 2019).



Daily life in front
of the Damascus Gate,
Old Town of Jerusalem.

The unpredictable nature of these attacks and the threat that they can occur anywhere at anytime against innocent civilians have led to a wave a fear amongst Jewish Israelis. Stephan and Stephan (2000) propose four basic types of threats that can cause intergroup conflict: realistic group threat, symbolic group threats, realistic individual threats, and symbolic individual threats.[4] These threats vary along two dimensions: group and individualistic, with each dimension consisting of two categories: concerns whether the threat involves realistic (tangible) or symbolic (intangible) harm to the ingroup. Realistic threats include threats to the ingroup's welfare, such as territorial threats, threats to political power, economic threats, and threats of physical harm. Symbolic threats include threats to the ingroup's identity, values, beliefs, norms, and way of life. The lone wolf attacks intensified the realistic, individual sense of threat, which is much stronger for Jewish Israelis even though Palestinian Arab Israelis can also suffer and four have died within Israel from lone wolf attacks.

This fear has intensified the belief in the stereotypical view of Jewish Israelis that all Muslim Arabs are violent, because Muslim culture fosters violence. It has resulted in increased prejudice, discrimination and even Jewish violence against Palestinian Arab Muslims in Israel and the territories, creating a double fear. The Jews fear the lone wolf attacks and the Palestinian Arabs fear Jewish retaliation. It was within this difficult atmosphere that the coexistence course was offered at an Israeli university with an equal number of students from both cultural groups, encompassing both religion and ethnic origins.

3 Encountering coexistence between Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Israelis

Since 1995 Bar Ilan University has offered a conflict resolution course to foster coexistence between Palestinian Arabs and Jewish students. The principal aim of the course is to encourage coexistence among the various groups comprising Israeli society in an atmosphere of cooperation, mutual understanding and social tolerance. It enables Israeli Arab and Jewish students to reflect productively on their place and role in a diverse society in an educational environment that respects difference. The three-part program, designed for small groups of 20 – 25 students, consists of twelve weekly 1½-hour sessions offering hands-on learning, based on the personal experiences of its participants. It provides students with skills and techniques to enable them to operate within a multicultural context and to function within it as agents of change. Exercises are derived from the Anti-Defamation League's »A World of Difference« program, adapted to the needs of students experiencing the complex realities of the state of Israel. The course is conducted in Hebrew.

The challenge of teaching this course is how to build appreciation for diversity during a moment of the threat of danger and anger. How can students recognize multiculturalism when their lives are at risk? How could one »market respect for diversity«[5] in a time of terror? As the facilitator of this course over twenty years, I understood that in Israel, you have to prepare students to respect multicultural voices in impossible situations. The class needed to understand that differences should be perceived as an opportunity, rather than

4 Stephan, W. G. & Stephan, C. W. (2000): An integrated threat theory of prejudice. In: S. Oskamp (Ed.), Reducing prejudice and discrimination (pp. 23 – 45). Mahwah, N.J.: Psychology Press.

5 Mentz, K., & van der Walt, J. L. (2007). Multicultural Concerns of Educators in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Education and Urban Society, 39 (3): pp. 423 – 449, here p. 428.

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as a threat, and that those who are carrying the lone wolf attacks are a tiny minority. There is a need for the students to undergo a paradigm shift in order to survive in such complicated situations.[6] However, in the 2016 semester course, achieving these goals was more difficult, because of the problem of terror against individuals resulting in a strong sense of fear on the part of both Jewish and Palestinian Arab Israelis.

This article will describe and analyze one current case study highlighting the sense of threat, both realistic and symbolic, and the reactions of Israeli Jewish and Arab students to the wave of terror within Israel. It discusses two specific incidences experienced by Arab Israelis and the discussion surrounding these incidences that occurred during a university workshop. The article will show how the process of contact and interaction operates in practice.

A case study can be used to investigate complex phenomena not yet theoretically described. It contributes to our knowledge of individuals, groups, and uncharted phenomena.[7] Yin argues that the case study method is appropriate when the goal is to uncover contextual conditions of a contemporary phenomenon and when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not evident.[8] The goal is to produce an integrated, holistic description of real life events and to establish a framework for discussion and debate.[9] The course used what Sergiovanni (1984) calls reflective practice.[10] In order to make students more aware of the inner processes they were undergoing in the classroom, they were asked to keep a reflective journal and describe and analyze their feelings after every lesson. The analysis below is based on students' journal descriptions (25) of what occurred in class, 12 semi-structured interviews held with students a year after the workshop ended and my own field notes which I write during and after the lessons.The quotes in the article were taken from the reflective journals of the students but I used pseudonyms to preserve the students' anonymity.

The point of departure of this article is that a university course can serve as a venue for experiential learning where civic engagement and peace education is studied and practiced.

4 The Case: The Lemon Exercise – Studying how to deal with stereotypes and discrimination

The workshop started with a brainstorming session where the students had to characterize a lemon. Then each student received a lemon and had to write down the characteristics that made their lemon better than all the others. The aim of this stage was to acquaint them with their specific

6 Gross, Z. (2010): Using an Incidental event as a potential Curricular Constituent in a Complex Educational Setting – A Case Study. Curriculum and Teaching 52 (1): pp 77–92.
7 Yin, R. K. (2004): The case study anthology. London: Sage, p. 1.
8 Yin, R. K. (2009): Case Study Research: Design and Methods (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
9 Lovat, T. (2003): The relationships between research and decision-making in education: An empirical investigation. The Australian Educational Researcher, 30, pp. 43–56.
10 Sergiovanni, T. J. (1984): Cultural and competing perspectives in administrative theory and practice. In: T. J. Sergiovanni and J. E. Corbally (eds): Leadership and organizational culture: New perspectives on administrative theory and practice, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, pp. 1–12.

lemon. Then the students broke into groups and each student had to convince the group that his or her lemon was the most beautiful lemon.

Then I collected the lemons and put them all in a bag. I then took some of them out of the bag, threw them on the floor and asked the students to find their lemons. To their amazement, all the students whose lemons were on the floor found their lemons and those who didn't were extremely disappointed and upset.

»Something hard to believe happened in this class«, Deena an Arab student wrote in her reflective diary. *»Intelligent people developed a relationship with a lemon, as if it was their own cute child. Then they took the lemon away from us (a quite dramatic moment) and asked us to identify it in a group of other lemons, with different textures and various shades of yellow. When I looked for my lemon, I felt I was not only searching for it, but also something very important that belonged to me. Since I couldn't find my lemon, I started observing all the lemons more intensely.«*

I asked, *»Can you think about another situation where you lump people together?«* to which Gaby replied that all the Ultra Orthodox Jews look the same. Ron answered, *»Yes, all the Arabs looked the same to me until I came to this workshop where I saw individual Arabs and they look exactly like me. It is unbelievable how generalizations affect our thinking and our lives.«*

After this we began discussing stereotypical thinking. First we defined the term »stereotypes« (a set of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people) and »discrimination« (any conduct which denies individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish). Then I asked them to describe a situation when they were victims of stereotypical accusations and prejudice.

Haya, a Muslim student who lives in an Arab village in the center of the country, raised her hand and said that whenever she got on a bus, people looked at her as if she was a terrorist. She could feel their eyes on her back when she boarded the bus and sense their relief when she got off. As an Israeli citizen, this gave her a bitter feeling. Sometimes she heard people saying it explicitly: *»Beware of the Arabs. All Arabs are terrorists.«* She told us that a month earlier, after a bus explosion in Jerusalem, she decided to take a taxi to class. One of the passengers asked the driver to ask to see her identity card and somebody in the back said that she looked like a terrorist. Another shouted *»Perhaps she is hiding a knife under her dress.«* Haya felt terrible. She started looking for her identity card in her bag but could not find it. Haya told the taxi driver she had left her identity card at home. She started shivering. Then one of the people in the taxi said that if this Arab woman did not get off, he and all the others would get off. Haya felt that everyone was against her. The driver said he knew her personally, as he drove her every morning, but nothing helped. Haya was so insulted that she decided to get off. It took her a few minutes to recover.

As she told this story, she started crying. This is my country, she said. I'm a good citizen. *»A good citizen«*, said Danny (a Jewish student) cynically. *»A good citizen brings his identity card.«*

»Oh come on Danny you are being derogatory.« »It is time to say the truth said Danny that you are citizens but a different kind of citizens.« »What you are saying is derogatory,« shouted Ora. *»She is an equal citizen and deserves respect and proper treatment in the public sphere.« »You see«,* said Danny, *»we have paid a high price for granting full human rights to the Arab citizens who recently have taken part in the terrorist attacks in this country.« »Tell the truth«,* said Danny to Ora, *»when an Arab woman who is covered gets onto a bus and wants to sit next to you do you feel comfortable… tell the truth do you suggest to her to sit next to you in the bus. Look into my eyes«,* he shouted towards Ora. *»Please answer yes or no.«* Galit, a Jewish student, responded: *»This is not a yes or no answer. It depends on the situation.« »Depends on what?«,* asked Yasmin an Arab student.

Every situation has its own interpretation and meaning. Danny is trying to replicate in the classroom the power relations that the Arab students experience in the outside world. The challenge is to enable the students to bridge the discrepancies between the equal relations that have been established in the classroom and what is happening in the outside world, particularly in this period of terror. Lilach wrote in her reflective journal *»I feel I live in a schizophrenic world«*, expressing the conflict she felt between wishing to support her fellow Arab students, and the terror being experienced in the outside world. Indeed, within this difficult situation both the majority and the minority victimize the Other, and also experience victimization from the Other.

Apparently it seems that students are using double standards. They articulate the need for equality in the classroom but the minute something happens in the outside situation the whole atmosphere changes. Beckerman and Zembylas argue that in places where there is an intractable conflict, the discussions between students who come from rival groups reflect the socialization they underwent for many years:[11] This socialization makes clear for each community that the Others are and have always been the ›perpetrators‹. Each community's fears are built on hegemonic narratives that they have always been victims and they will continue to be so at the hands of other communities.

During my classes my main challenge was to try and break what Beckerman and Zembylas call the cycle of identity, memory and victimhood, especially in the current situation of lone wolf terror attacks.

5 Can the process of peace education humanize us as facilitators, as well as the students?

The group was shocked with this exchange of views. Haya was one of the most vibrant, active students in our group. The previous week she had brought us a huge cake to create a nice atmosphere in the classroom. There was a terrible silence in the class. We could see that Haya was very upset. I asked the students for their reaction.

Tal, a Jewish girl, was the first to respond. She said: *»We live in terror. This is a terrible time for all of us. I can understand the people in the shuttle bus. I would feel the same. Haya, can you under-*

11 Beckerman, Z. & Zeymbylas, M. (2012): Teaching Contested narratives Identity, Memory and Reconciliation in Peace education and Beyond. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 87.

stand that whenever I get on a bus I pray to God that I will get off it safe and alive… All the passengers are immediately suspect. If I see a man with an Oriental face holding a bag, I'm terrified. A few times I got off the bus before my stop because I was so afraid that someone was a terrorist.«

Lilach, another Jewish girl, was angry. She could not understand how life in the classroom could continue because a student was so deeply hurt. *»Something is wrong with all of us«*, she said, *»we have lost our sensitivity. We have lost our humanity. Life cannot go on while a dear friend of us was so terribly intimidated.« »It's a battle of life and death, either us or them,«* Ron said. *»Every day we encounter brutal terrorism. We must put an end to this story, stop rolling our eyes and currying favor with terrorism.«* Ron brought to the class a zero-sum discourse of either/or. Lilach, however, was unwilling to sustain the insult and offence, and fought for her right to remain humane in spite of the wave of terrorism.

6 Situated Learning in a specific context

Learning is always situated in specific cultural and social contexts. This story cannot be simply analyzed as a story of exclusion as a result of stereotypes. It should be understood within the unique Israeli context in which there is a constant violent conflict between Arabs and Jews.[12] Specific contexts shape the conditions for the kinds of learning that can take place. Bruner stresses that learning is a »complex pursuit of fitting a culture to the needs of its members and of fitting its members and their ways of knowing to the needs of the culture.«[13] »Therefore learning is not an island but the continent of culture.«[14]

In a way, the workshop is a form of situated learning where what we study in the classroom can be understood only in this specific setting. Accordingly, learning should never be isolated – something that takes place only within an individual – because learning is inherent in ongoing interactions with a social, cultural and physical environment. The Israeli setting, where stereotypes are learned, serves as a venue for the cultural and social situatedness of learning. Lave and Wagner (1991) claim that »learning must not be seen simply as the acquisition of knowledge by individuals but as a process of social participation in a community of practice.«[15] Most researchers view learning as an activity that involves objective abstract knowledge acquisition. However, Lave and Wagner describe learning as a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs.

The workshop discussed here is constructed as a community of practice where students study how to become part of a multicultural society, in practice.

7 Experiencing the feeling of exclusion

I asked the students to give me another example where they were excluded due to stereotypes and prejudice.

Manal raise her hand and told us that she is looking for a part time job. She went to a dress shop at the mall near the university and enquired if they needed a shop assistant. The shop owner interviewed her. She was enthusiastic about the fact that Manal was studying at the university and of-

12 See also Sagy, S. (2006): Hope in times of threat: The case of Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish youth, p. 147–160.
13 Bruner, J. (1996): The culture of education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 42.
14 Ibid. p. 12.
15 Lave, J., and Wagner, E. (1991). Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 98.

fered her a position. However, the owner said she wanted to hire her but she had a small request: She asked Manal to remove her *hijab* as customers might feel threatened and not enter the shop. Manal was very insulted and left the shop telling the owner of the shop that she would think about it and come back to her.

As she told this story, Manal became red then pale. She said she felt humiliated and would never return to the shop. Avigail, a Jewish student, said that the owner of the shop was racist. Limor said that the owner of the shop reacted strongly: *»It is a form of cultural violence.«* Limor thought she had invented this term. I was very happy it was raised into the class discussion. Michel, a USA student who was very open minded, said he is not sure the term is accurate. Galtung refers to cultural violence to *»those aspects of culture … that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence.«* [16]

I told the class that concerning the *hijab*, this is very complex. France has forbidden the wearing of the full cover *hijab*, and this has also been debated in the Australian and British parliaments. Even though I like the theory of cultural violence, I think the word ›violence‹ is a bit strong. There certainly is violence in regards to the *hijab* – girls have their *hijabs* pulled off on trains in Paris, London and Western Sydney – but regulations against wearing the *hijab* are more complex. I think there is the fear of religious extremism – the wearing of the *hijab* was prohibited in secular Turkey under Ataturk – but I would call it discrimination, based on religious prejudice, and in Israel mixed with fear. However, as we know, prejudice can easily lead to religious/ethnic and racial violence as I have described above. I do believe in religious freedom and am strongly opposed to discrimination, so I would not support the shopkeeper, whose actions I consider discriminatory. Generally speaking I agree with Murphy et al. that while discussing complex issues in times of terrorism and radicalization a more nuanced debate about victims and villains should be taken into account.[17]

In our discussions, I argued that Manal's case largely represented a symbolic threat. Ron interrupted me and said this was not true because we were talking about a realistic threat: Customers could feel threatened by the hijab and what it represents. In fact, *hijab*-wearing women and young girls have carried out some of the recent lone wolf attacks. However, the other members of the class were disturbed by Ron's statement, with Limor saying that it was derogatory. Ron insisted that entering a shop where a female assistant was wearing a *hijab* would give him a feeling of insecurity. Manal was very upset. She said she felt frustrated that after all these years she was still perceived as a second rate citizen. Michal insisted that it was a form of violence and suggested that we as a class should go and demonstrate in front of the shop. Since the mall is within walking distance, this was seen as a realistic suggestion but, due to the security concerns of the university authorities, this did not take place.

Ohad suddenly expressed the stereotypical view of Muslim Arabs: *»The Arabs are hot-blooded. So all Arabs have a tendency to be murderous, because they are the descendants of Ishmael, who was a murderer.«* Samira stood up and said she' d had enough – she wanted to drop out

16 Galtung, J. (1990): Cultural Violence. Journal of Peace Research, 27 (3): pp. 291–305, here p. 291.

17 Murphy, K, Pettis, S and Wray, D. (2016): Building peace: The Opportunities and Limitations of eDucational Interventions in Countries with Identity-based Conflicts (pp. 35–50). In: Bajaj M. and Hantzopoulos, M. (eds): Peace Education International perspectives. London; Bloomsbury.

of the course. I supported her and said I understood her. The Jewish students started whispering, as they looked at me; they clearly felt discomfited by what I had said. I asked Ohad to apologize. He replied arrogantly: *»But you said we should speak honestly, say what we feel.« »Yes«*, I said, *»but you should also bear in mind that the Other is here besides you, and has a soul and a heart.«* I believe my expression made it clear how angry I was. Ohad looked at me, then lowered his eyes and said *»I apologize. But…«* I stopped him right there and said: *»No buts«*, using my authority to restructure the power balance in class. It is interesting to note that there were »multiple voices« in the classroom, and that on the whole the Jewish male students in this group were much more aggressive and prejudiced in their reactions.

I interrupted Ohad as it was important for me to stop the mechanism of violence on the spot and demonstrate clearly to the class that what he said was wrong. I suggested to Samira that she reconsider and remain in the class. She agreed and I introduced a theoretical discussion on the notion of the Other.

For a moment, that incident had violated the structure of symmetry between lecturer and students that prevailed in the classroom. But it defined the boundaries and, without words, honed the game-rules. The minority-majority relationship of lecturer and students creates a nuanced field of power relationships that I could exploit at moments where I thought it vital in educational terms. Those moments became teachable moments, and the Jewish and Arab students related to them in their reflective diaries. Abed remarked in his diary: *»I saw the lecturer's anger in her eyes, and felt that we have some hope. That guy went too far, he had to be taught a lesson. In fact we all learned a lesson from him.«*

Bajaj and Hantzopoulos (2016, p. 4) argue that »critical peace education in particular considers the ways in which human agency dynamically intersects with structures and forms of violence and in turn contemplates the potential from educational spaces – formal and informal – to be sites of individual and collective transformation«.[18]

The university class has the potential to be both a site for both marginalization and transformation. My challenge as a facilitator is to document and conceptualize the mechanism of unequal social relations and to combat through interventionist action both marginalization and the justification students provide for this marginalization, as well as suggesting an alternative transformative approach that will enable my students to build »capacities for peace«.[19]

Levinas (1969) elaborated the concept of the Other. The experience of meeting the Other was the basis of his scholarship. Levinas argued that »The Other precisely reveals himself in his alterity not in a shock negating the I, but as the primordial phenomenon of gentleness«.[20] Levinas' concept of the ethical is to be always for the Other. For Levinas the concepts of morality and ethics mean to be able to see the otherness of the Other. Levinas capitalized the Other in order to make him more distinct from »myself« and emphasized the need to face the Other. The face is a central component in the theory of Levinas because it denotes the essence of the encounter »face to face«.

18 Bajaj M. and Hantzopoulos, M. (2016): Introduction; Theory, Research and praxis of Peace Education. (pp.1–16). In: Bajaj M. and Hantzopoulos, M (eds): Peace Education International perspectives. London; Bloomsbury, p. 4.

19 Ibid., p. 2.

20 Levinas, E. (1969): Totality and infinity: a essay on exteriority. (trans. by Alphonso Lingis.) Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, p. 150.

The aim of our workshop at the university was to face the Other. Hence to disregard the face according to Levinas and to the basic premise of the course was an act of violence, which paves the way to dehumanization. Therefore, during the class interaction between my students, I encouraged them to look practically in the face of their fellow students to enable a better encounter and contact with the Other and his/her Otherness.

There is one golden rule to these lessons: A student cannot offend his fellow students during class interactions. It is difficult to define the exact meaning of »offend«, but when someone says subjectively that it is offensive we consider what was said as an offense.

8 Can we solve the Israel- Palestine conflict in a University course?

One of the questions the students keep asking me during the course is whether a conflict resolution course can solve the Israeli-Palestine conflict. I often explained to my students that the aim of the course was not to solve the Israeli-Palestinian problem but rather to change the interaction.

Following Bush and Folger's (2005) transformative mediation methodology, mediation aims to change people, not the situation.[21] It aims to transform the participants' perspective, making it easy to recognize each party as an equivalent entity who also has human rights. »The role of the mediator is to help parties reverse the downward and destructive, alienating and demonizing, negative conflict spiral.«[22] Resolution is not the only possible outcome of mediation.[23] Bush and Folger claim that »outcomes that are reached as a result of party shifts toward greater clarity, confidence, openness and understanding are likely to have more meaning and significance for parties than outcomes generated by mediator directiveness, however well meant.«[24]

As a facilitator of a conflict intervention group, I have found Bush and Folger's theory very useful. As Kuttner (2006) claims, the transformative technique is performed by »mirroring« or summarizing the points made by each party, highlighting the differences and, in the process, giving legitimacy to those differences.[25] This is extremely important in a multicultural encounter where different people and points of view want to be treated equally. In a multicultural situation in general, and especially in a situation where two enemies are sitting together, the emphasis should be on the process rather than the outcome.

In the final analysis, as can be seen in their reflective journals, the students remembered the receptive climate rather than the contents of the course, and this also empowered them, enabling them to be more open and willing to listen to the voice of the »Other«. Bush and Folger claim that this form of empowerment causes the transformation of the spiral from a destructive to a more positive, constructive, humane and humble interaction where each human being is treated equally.

At the end of the lesson Samira came to thank me for my insistence. Ohad also underwent a small shift in his attitudes. Although he held extreme right-wing opinions, he voiced his statements much less aggressively. I felt that the quali-

21 Bush, R. A. B., & Folger, J. P. (2005): The Promise of Mediation: The Transformative Approach to Conflict (rev. 2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

22 Ibid., p. 50.

23 See also Gross, Z. (2015): The place of contestation in the discourse of conflict education (pp. 13–28). In: Gross, Z. & Davies, L. (Eds.): The Contested Role of Education in Conflict and Fragility. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

24 Bush & Folger (2005): The Promise of Mediation, p. 71.

25 Kuttner, R. (2006): Striving to Fulfill the Promise: The Purple House Conversations and the Practice of Transformative Mediation. Negotiation Journal, 22, 3: pp. 331–349, here p. 339.

David Gerstein: »Spirit of Freedom«, Sculpture at Tel Aviv University.

ty of his interaction had changed to a more receptive and humble form of communication that might set the ground for his future relationships with the Other. This was reflected in his final report in his reflective journal. That change may have been extrinsic, to satisfy me or to make an impression, yet I felt he had absorbed the conclusions of that short lesson I' d given him – alongside the whole group. He had experienced an encounter that caused him to ponder and rethink.

In a conflict resolution workshop, students constantly seek balance, equilibrium and order. They want immediate and instant reconciliation, a clearly impossible outcome. Hence, as a facilitator, I attempted to expose them to processes of »becoming« over the semester. I tried to enable them to recreate order and pattern out of the disorder in spite of the internal and external shocks they were exposed to when undertaking the different exercises that are part of the course curriculum. As a facilitator I know how I start the lesson; yet I can never predict how it will end.

Davies claims that conflict has a prominent positive facet as it promotes dialogue and active exploration, which is necessary for human development.[26] The fact that everybody was so upset and aired their fears and stereotypical views so openly during the class discussion enabled us to better confront the different points of view and develop our multicultural competence. Indeed, paradoxically, as a facilitator, I felt that the fact that Samira stood up and announced that she wanted to drop out of the course, even though she would have lost credit points by doing so, showed that she felt comfortable in the class, and was strong enough to stand up for her rights, and state her authentic wishes.

From her testimony in the retrospective interview a year later, I understood that it helped her to create a »safe place« for herself. Generally speaking, the interviews attested to the fact that Arab students felt that the course constituted the only

26 Davies, L. (2003): Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos. London: Routledge Falmer.

university unit in which they had a defined place. Usually after such occasions when we have tough discussions, the students return to the class with more enthusiasm and the discussions become much more authentic than the plastic discussion of peace and equilibrium.

This case study shows how bridging theory and practice can generate a better understanding of complex situations, enabling signposts to improve coping mechanisms within peace education frameworks in times of terror. The conceptualization of our practice in peace education makes the experiential process conscious, reflective and critical. This equips students in higher education during intractable conflicts with basic humanistic skills, helping them to become responsible citizens and better human beings.

9 Three types of processes

Liora Bresler perceives education as a journey and identifies three types of travel experiences: *tourist excursion, change of habitat* and *interpretive zone.*[27] This typology can be validated in my peace education classes. There are three types of students.

1 *The tourist excursion type*
There are students who come to the classes in order to watch and explore the possibility/ies of the encounter between Arab and Jewish students. They surf in the classroom to expand their knowledge, nourish their curiosity and become acquainted with this interesting experience. Those students construct distinct borders and do not allow themselves to push the boundaries.

2 *Change of habitat type*
Another type of student comes to class and experiences a change in habitat. These students allow themselves to »exit the comfort zone«.[28] They experience »a shock and eventually a change of identity [finding] themselves immersed in a foreign territory«. I can see slight changes in their vocabulary and I can see how they are »grappling with dissonances between the familiar values systems and the new one«.[29] They become part of the culture of the discourse initiated in the classroom, a discourse of respect and acceptance of the Other. Gradually they become committed to »a new habitat«,[30] while undergoing a complex meaning making process that sometimes clashes with their former socialization and enculturation processes and value systems. This is not dramatic but it does occur, even though sometimes some of the students only come to the realization of change towards the end of the semester or even after it. While writing their reflective journals I can clearly see *»a hyphenated, multi layered«* deliberation.
For example, Maya wrote in her journal *»this course was very meaningful for me. I could see the gradual changes in my attitude to the way I perceive the Palestinian Arabs. It was the first opportunity I had to talk, collaborate and act with ›real‹ Arabs. After you study together and role-play something changes. You cannot treat The Arab as you did before.«*

3 *The Interpretive Zone*
The third type is those who, after a deep personal search for collaboration, create what Bresler defines as »the interpretive zone« where

27 Bresler, L. (2016): Interdisciplinary, intercultural, travels: Mapping a spectrum of research(er) experiences. In: Burnard, P., Mackinlay, E., & Powell, K. (Eds.): The International Handbook in Intercultural Arts Research (pp. 321–332). London: Routledge.

28 Ibid, p. 322.
29 Ibid., p. 323.
30 Ibid.

In the street of Bethlehem.

the students »bring together their various areas of knowledge, cultural background and beliefs, to forge new meanings through the process of joint inquiry in which they are engaged.«[31] During this stage the students are looking for intercultural collaborations.[32] They are able to see each other as equal human beings, exchanging ideas and dilemmas, which cut across and beyond cultural, social and religious boundaries that might lead them to concrete action.

Hebert Kelman argued that »Significant changes in attitudes invariably occur in the context of action.«[33] The course provided a venue where actions were initiated and facilitated, leading to slow gradual changes in the participants' attitudes. Not all the participants went through the same route of change, yet most of the students reported in their reflective diaries that they experienced a change, although this had different manifestations.

Reading the students' reflective journals I can say that all the students start the course as tourists and most of them finish it as the second type of Bresler's categories. I can also see in their class conversations and reflective journals a change of habitat. Some of them succeed at the end of the course to create an interpretive zone and are entering into a life long dialogue and even friendships with the Other – the Jews or Palestinian Arabs. Most of them complain that the course is too short and if they would have another semester they can start practicing the skills and techniques we have studied, enabling them to further develop their new, intercultural competence while encountering the Other. However, as Omar wrote in his reflective journal *»the university thinks that it is more important to give them some more courses in statistics.«*

10 Conclusion

Over the years that I have facilitated this course I have come to the understanding that Bresler's three types represent the different stages within the course. The course has three parts:

The first part deals with identity with a focus on icebreaking exercises and introspection; the second part introduces exercises to combat stereotypes and prejudice; and the third part fosters tolerance.

In the first two lessons most of the students function as if they are tourists. The fundamental change happens with the lemon exercise, where as facilitator I can see what Bresler defines as change of habitat. This varies among students because there are different manifestations to this phenomenon. I could identify this stage in the attitude and behavior of both Ohad and Samira. It started with non-verbal manifestations and was later apparent in their reflective journals. Though the change was gradual and very small it created a better atmosphere in the classroom, which facilitated the beginning of more in-depth conversations.

Towards the end of the semester, where they have to investigate the borders of their tolerance, I can see how they become more flexible and allow themselves to laugh and while role playing and during class discussions they »create spaces

31 Ibid., p. 324.
32 Dervin, F. (2015): Towards post-intercultural teacher education: analysing ›extreme‹ intercultural dialogue to reconstruct inter-culturality. European Journal of Teacher Education 38(1), p. 71–86.
33 Kelman, H.C. (2015): The Development of Interactive Problem Solving: In John Burton's Footsteps. Political Psychology 36 (2): pp. 243–262.

for an interpretive zone«.[34] This zone is constructed as a safe zone where »multiple worldviews« are explored and challenged and the Arab and Jewish students become »explicitly acquainted with the notion of interculturality«.[35] During this stage they attempt to comprehend and interpret from one culture to another. This transformative action was complex and sometimes ambivalent.

Some of the students analyzed this journey in their reflective diaries. For example, Rotem wrote:

»At the beginning I was shocked to find out that this is the course I took. I thought to myself Ok if I am here; let's see who is who and who is against whom. I sat and looked around to try and see what's going on. At the beginning I did not even opened my mouth but I enjoyed so much the atmosphere and the exercises. It took me time to take part. Then some of us, like four students, we became a group. It developed naturally. We sat next to each other and when we had to create groups automatically we became a group. We were two Arabs and two Jews, all women. We started talking seriously between us. It continued even after the class finished. I felt that something had changed even in my language. We started talking in the plural »we«. It was not »them« but »us«. We started to trust each other. We exchanged telephone numbers and the spoke about our cultures. We were interested in the way they get acquainted with boys. How do they date? What kind of conversation they have? How do they engage? What is allowed and what is not? It was so interesting. We did not feel how the time was passing. But then we came to the tough issue: the political issues. But when you get to know each other it is different. And then there was the terrorist attack in Jerusalem and it was tough. My brother asked me in sarcasm what do your cousins say (meaning the Arab students in the class)… it was not easy.«

There are no easy answers but as seen in this reflective journal, a new consciousness was constructed during this course, even though it was challenged when another terror attack occurred. Bresler's typology enables us to better conceptualize what's going on in the classes and how can we move ahead through the stages of acknowledging the Other.

During the course, the process of reflecting about dialogue, and the stages of increasing openness to the Other, were accompanied by experiential endeavors and analyses of the theoretical literature. That combination of applied, practical efforts and theoretical study created a deep experiential process, and equipped the students with justifications for others and themselves, enabling them to cope wisely with the complex socio-political circumstances in which they live, and that the course addresses.

The role of stereotypical views in terms of fostering prejudice, as discussed above, can relate to issues regarding either race or religion, or in this case a combination of both. Combatting such stereotypes in higher education currently should be seen as a major challenge and also as a central strategic goal in order to cultivate good citizenship, combat prejudice and assist people to act rationally and pro-socially in the face of possible threats.

34 Bresler (2016): Interdisciplinary, intercultural, travels, p. 326.
35 Ibid.