Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre
for War and Peace Studies

Liverpool Hope University EST. 1844

Working Paper Series n°5:
Narratives of Peace and Conflict

The Art of Conflict: Using A Visual Trigger to Transform a Conflicted Narrative

by Ephrat Huss

A paper presented at July 2015 Conference "Narratives of Peace and Conflict" at the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War and Peace Studies

Liverpool Hope University, UK

July 2015

ABSTRACT: The aim of this is paper is to provide a theoretical analyses of the mechanisms behind using visual arts as a communicative tool within conflicted group narratives; This is illustrated with a comparative case study analyses of a group of Jewish and Arab participants in Israel, who used both verbal and visual methods to reach understanding conflicts within the group. The image as a trigger for a narrative was shown to create a more flexible integrative and solutions focused narrative than directly discussing the conflict.

Introduction and Literature Survey

Traditionally, the arts have always been a medium for transmitting information between generations. In our own post-modern, media-infused society, images are the most persuasive and pervasive tools for influencing people and changing behavior skills (Bresler, 2007; Rosal, 2001; Rubin, 2001). The cultural image explosion has influenced action research methods and the practice of the social sciences as seen in the rise in arts-based research, education, visual culture, visual anthropology, and arts therapies (Eisner, 1997; Huss 2012; Levine & Levine, 2011;Shank, 2005; Simmons &Hicks2006).

A compelling conclusion from studies of war and major disaster is that both children and adults attempt to express themselves and to enhance their resilience through play, work, and creative arts, even under the most bizarre and brutal conditions. (Hass-Cohen & Carr 2008; Huss, 2012; Huss & Sarid, 2012a; Frost, 2005; Mitchel et al., 1999). The arts enable the retrieval and reprocessing of traumatic memories that are often encoded in images rather than in words. They are a natural way of creating resilience in that they recreate a connection between cognition, emotion, and the senses that enables new perspectives and effective problem solving. Restoring symbols of meaning help reorganize community solidarity and resilience. Creativity as a socially and culturally mediated practice is a natural way to reignite communication, team work, problem solving, cultural understanding, and decision making.

Indeed, the arts have become a central method of social inquiry and practice in the last decade, as seen in visual culture, visual anthropology, arts-based research, community

art, art therapy, and arts in social action (Avruch, 1998; Barone, 2003; Butler, 2001; Huss & Cwikel, 2007a; Joughin & Maples, 2004; Simmons & Hicks, 2006; Spieser & Spieser, 2007). However, the use of arts within conflict resolution has only been generally stated. Thus, the following literature survey will show the relevance of the arts in conflict negotiation from the cognitive, emotive, and practical levels. Further, the theoretical and methodological mechanisms of the arts that contribute to conflict negotiation will also be examined (Dokter, 1998; Liebmann 1996; Zelizer, 2003).

From a cognitive perspective, negotiation is a complex decision-making process, in which people mutually decide how to allocate scarce resources that will reconcile both parties' interests. Both sides are required to transfer complex knowledge and to utilize negotiation skills across different situations, with the goal of reaching greater joint benefits in an integrative rather than distributive type of agreement and log-rolling from less to more important elements, as well as identifying the most compatible issues to agree upon (Berbey-Meyer et al, 2004; Thomson, Nadler, & Lout, 2006)

Further, the arts demand fresh perspectives, involving skills such as compositional organization and prioritizing, as well as the definition of and implementation of complex levels of symbolization (Csikszentmihalyi,1990; Huss, 2012; Tripniger, Izaakson, & Durbell, 2000;Zelizer, 2003). This process of ensuing reflection, reframing, and reconstructing knowledge challenges preconceptions and develops solutions to problems from fresh, innovative perspectives (Gombrich 1006) with the past and reconstructing the present, enable concrete envisioning of a better future, as used in guided imagery in cognitive behavioral therapy (Rosal, 2001; Sarid & Huss, 2011).

As Arnheim (1996) claims,

"All problem solving has to cope with an overcoming of the fossilized shape … The discovery that squares are only one kind of shape among infinitely many." (p 35)

Within conflicts, stances become calcified and rigid due to the effort to defend the homeostatic self which is experienced as under attack (Kalmanovich & Lloyd, 2005). Art activity can counteract this by creating an experience of "flow" that is defined as a

form of flexible, mindful concentration that enables creative thinking and problem solving. The multisensory and broad revelatory character of images enables their constant reinterpretation, enabling the individual to evolve the sense of self in the context of traumatic experience and ongoing stress, and form a more positive interpretation of the experience. (Hass-Cohen & Carr, 2008; Nelson & Fivush, 2004). The arts thus can enable the restructuring of a coherent mental map of a world.

On an emotional level, the creative experience resulting from art activity embodies harmony and creates a connection between emotion, cognition, and physical reactions, which, in turn, encourages flow, mindfulness, attention, and repose- that create the right emotional state for the above cognitive processes (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Henderson, Rosen, & Mascaro, 2007).

Conflicts are based on different cultural and power bases (Avruch, 1988; Coleman & Marcus, 2006). By shifting communication to a visual paradigm, a broader, common base of communication is accessed because symbols are broader than words and thus more open to multiple interpretations (Arnheim, 1996; Betinsky, 1995; Emmerson & Smith 200; Huss, 2012; Pink & Kurti, 2004). Examples of using a visual paradigm include psychiatric patients and their psychiatrists drawing mental illness together (Spaniol & Bluebird, 2002) or cancer patients and their doctors drawing cancer and the needs of cancer patients and doctors (Zammit, 2001). Images create a different type of space for redefining meanings and for reaching common understanding amid the dual content of emotions: weakness versus strength or compliance versus resistance. The complex stories within images help to break down the binary understandings of strong/weak or victim/aggressor that tend to solidify people within one stance. Images are more multifaceted, less direct, and less threatening or confrontational; thus, they remain a central communicative device in cultures that do not engage in direct confrontation to solve problems, or in situations where it is too dangerous to directly confront power holders (Ben-Ezer, 2002; Spivak, 1990; Mohanty, 2003).

Another level of conflict negotiation is the didactic level of learning negotiation skills: The recurring experience of negotiation has been shown to improve overall negotiation skills (Thompson et al., 2006). The arts can serve as an action-based activity that can distance or shift the negotiation to different levels, enabling both parties to gain from this experience. As stated, conflict negotiation occurs between different levels of power and different levels of culture. Thus, by creating a personal interpretation of a cultural reality in an externalized image, a negotiation between individual and social reality can be initiated (Harrington, 2004; Huss, 2008, 2012; Mahon, 2000). For example, everyone can draw a house, which is a universal element and serves universal functions of protection, identity, and so forth. However, differences between houses as tents versus houses as apartment blocks situate experience within a specific cultural reality. Thus, cultural differences, hidden in words, can be clarified (Bhabha, 1994).

Indeed, the transformative powers of images are well understood within advertising and other fields that use images to indirectly influence people on the macro level. Likewise, arts can also be used to shift social consensus, as in social activist art movements (Dallow, 2003; Harrington, 2004; Hills, 2001; Brington & Lykes, 1996; Shank, 2005). For example, Butler (2001) describes artist's projects involving a social issue through the metaphor of "waves," where the ripples touch and vibrate around an issue and the art becomes a "silent witness" to injustice. Indeed, aesthetic mechanisms are deliberately chosen to arouse empathy and identification or to destabilize or confront issues. New perspectives on issues are initiated through the compositional and content elements of the image.

On the micro level, metaphors and symbols are frequently utilized within therapeutic interventions to help create shifts in internal beliefs or conflicts (Huss, 2008; Betinsky, 2003). Arts are central phenomenological methodologies that create a dual level of personal interpretation: first, by transferring experience to the page, and second, by explaining in words what was drawn. Hooks (1992) describes the passive concept of being "seen" versus actively "seeing" or creating one's vision or explanation of what one sees and communicating this to other. The use of arts as expressive media is empowering

because it can intensify the expressive – as well as the interpretive – voices of clients and communities. These "voices" enable reflective processes by externalizing internal beliefs, allowing the expressive processes to become visible to others (Huss, 2012; Friere & Macedo, 1987; Foster, 2007; Hogan, 2003; Wolverton, 2002; Wang & Burris, 1994).

Positive emotions, such as trust and empathy, are the backdrop for successful negotiation and have been directly connected to being prepared to compromise and give up elements, as well to shift to cooperative rather than competitive negotiation strategies (Colman & Marcus, 2006; Linder, 2007). The sensory, pleasurable, aesthetic, sensual arousal of using images that is achieved through color, shape, texture, and composition, enables a positive emotional climate: Research has shown that even a single art-making session can significantly improve mood (Dalebroux, Goldstein, & Winner, 2008; van kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004). This process encourages emotional engagement and projective processes that connect the viewer emotionally to an image, even if the content is not fully understood (Betinsky, 2003; Huss & Cwikel, 2008a; Sarid & Huss, 2010, 2011). Further, the enhancement of empathy in turn sublimates and symbolizes negative emotions, discouraging an individual from directly acting out in angry behavior (Rubin, 2001; Schaverien, 1999) and resulting in a shift to sublimated and nonviolent types of communication: symbols of resistance are used instead of violent resistance. In other words, the externalization of the experience onto the artwork transforms the negative sensory and cognitive arousal common to conflict into a more positive or self-regulated emotional equilibrium. For example, art is cited as being especially effective in coping with the negative emotional effects of PTSD symptoms that are encoded in visual rather than verbal memory (Huss, Sarid, & Cwikel 2010; Kay & Bleep, 1997; Sarid & Huss, 2010).

On the level of art processes, then the creation of a joint product not directly connected to the conflict is another method of reconciliation, as it enables individuals to gain a positive experience by negotiating smaller disconnected elements. Art processes enable this joint production in a safe and symbolic context that is pleasurable. These processes also create a concrete product as documentation of the possibility of working

together and creating new products (Curl, 2008; Leibman, 1996;, Prut & Kid, 1994). Within a group context, the artworks are experienced as a jointly created image that becomes a jointly owned recourse that connects all of the viewers.(Ben -Ezer, 2002; Benson, 1987 Chamberlayne & Smith, 2008; Huss, Alhozeyel, & Marcus, in press). Alternatively, in reconciliation activities, learning about and creating traditional craft activities together is cited as a way of distancing differences to a nonthreatening arena (Kalmanovich & Lloyd 2005; Cohen, 1994, 2003).

The literature has shown that the arts can create a connection between cognition and emotion, as well as between hermeneutic individual experience and social context. Further, in visual terms, images create a direct connection between figure and background or context. Using only a subjective prism (such as understanding terrorism as pathology) or only a social context theory (such as understanding terrorism as ideology) disregards the complexity of the issue of the conflict and creates less conceptual space within which to negotiate multiple and different understandings of a phenomena (Brewer, 2002; Crenshaw, 2002; De Drew, 2010; Schaverien , 1999, Welsh, 2004). Steinberg & Bar-On (2002), when observing Arab-Jewish conflict-resolution groups, noted that moments of empathy and understanding between Jewish and Arab students occurred when an inner or personal conflict was expressed, rather than when generalized ideological conflicts were expounded. Conversely, a social prism, such as feminism, can help make the subjective experience of violence for women understood outside of a pathological frame (Hogan, 1997).

Overall, we see that images create a type of "transitional space" – to use Winnicot's term (1958) loosely – that permits a more flexible interaction between conflicting emotions, cognitions, power levels, and cultures because the interaction is distanced and symbolized onto an intermediate page, and because both emotion and cognition, as well as imagination and reality, are called upon. However, as stated, although the theoretical stand makes a strong case for using phenomenological and subjective methods, such as the arts, in conflict negotiation, there are few specific case studies exploring the specific mechanisms of arts used in conflict groups, beyond general

statements endorsing creativity. This paper will examine how arts are used in a conflict-negotiation group and reveal the specific mechanisms of how art is used, in light of the literature survey.

The arts are also cited as a didactic tool, that enable experiential learning, which integrates emotions, cognitions, and physical sensations. This type of education is achieved by bringing personal interpretation and the engagement of the imagination, rather than educating from the "outside in," for example through the use of political and ideological lectures (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Huss, 2012a, b) . This can have implications for conflict negotiation training

Research strategy:

This research started with a political debate within a conflict group, and then expanded to include a personal conflict, expressed using arts tools, and finally, a return to the original political argument, with the aim of determining if and how the personal discussion and the arts intervention had shifted the quality of the debate.

Field of research:

The participants in this conflict group were all from the southern area of Israel, an area populated by religious and secular groups of both Arab-Bedouin and Jewish populations; a region characterized by constant political conflict between these two demographics. The group consisted of socially involved members of the community, such as teachers, headmasters, social activists, and social workers, who were interested in enrichment in conflict negotiation skills and were studying for second degrees while continuing their regular employment. They all agreed to participate in the research meeting in exchange for enrichment in negotiation skills. The group consisted of men and women, Bedouin, Jewish, religious, and secular, between the ages of 25-35 years, some married with small children.

The research tool:

The group began by engaging in a political debate, which was then transcribed and thematically analyzed. The topics of debate were: 1) the right of the Bedouin to set up illegal villages in the area, and 2) the option for public transportation to run on the Sabbath – both contentious issues in the area. The group then shifted from verbally debating the political issues to drawing pictures of a personal conflicts; They returned to the original political discussion. This workshop took place for two hours

The data sources for this article are the transcripts of the initial political debate, the transcripts of the group comments on their personal conflicts and the resulting artwork, the transcripts of the final political discussion, the group's summary of the intervention, and the artwork created in the group. The group had three different observers: one Arab, one Jewish, and the researcher (Jewish; Hubberman & Miles, 2002).

The analytical strategy involved qualitative thematic analyses, which is suited to a preliminary study and could access the semantic and emotional shifts in the methods of conflict negotiation utilized by the group members before and after the arts intervention (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hubberman & Miles, 2002). The analytical prism for understanding the images is phenomenological rather than projective, based on the participants' explanations (Betinsky, 1995; Huss, 2012; Pink & Kurti, 2004). To create peer validation, the data was thematically peer-reviewed by a group of graduate students studying conflict negotiation.

Ethical considerations All the participants gave written agreement to partake in this research in exchange for free workshop and arts enrichment: All personal details were hidden (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Stage One – Presentation of the data:

The first conflict issue chosen for discussion was the right to build illegal Bedouin settlements in southern Israel. The second issue chosen for discussion was the option for public transportation to run on Shabbat. Sections of each argument are presented below, to give a sense of the construction of the argument:

"*I live in an illegal settlement and I demand the right to live in the traditional Bedouin style, why do you keep pulling my house down?*

"Because you don't have a building permit; why do I have to get a building permit to even add a balcony to my house, and you can just build anywhere? How can a state run itself like that?"

"Because my tribe has always lived there, I don't want to go to a city – I want to continue being a Bedouin. Why do the Israelis build outside of the green line, huge villages, and nobody pulls down their houses?"

"You have not always lived here- you were nomadic- you came from Egypt a few generations ago, it was never your land."

"You have to change, it can't be helped- the world is changing, you can't be left behind."

"I will fight till the end for my right for this land, and for my right to live in the traditional Bedouin style."

"So will we fight for the right for a normal country where people respect the law."

The second issue was public transportation on the Sabbath:

"I am a secular working student and it's very hard for me to get around on Shabbat; I can't afford a car, and it's my only free day –if you are religious, then why can't you just not ride the bus on Shabbat?"

"For me, Shabbat is the only day of rest, and also this is a Jewish state – the only Jewish state in the world – why can't we respect our traditions, at least in our own country?"

"Exactly, that is why I think we should separate state and religion – it's the only way."

"I am an Arab living in this state- why do I have to suffer on Shabbat?"

"In other countries then Sunday everything is closed."

"Yes- but not transportation; it hits poor people, and students, people who can't afford cars."

"I think in Israel we should respect the Shabbat- it makes a special type of day."

The participants summarized these conversations over conflicts as "repetitive," "cyclical," "angry," "getting nowhere" and "boring."

"We have discussed these things a million times; it's depressing because there is no solution. Each person is locked in their own stand, there is nothing new."

<u>Stage Two – Shifting to personal conflicts:</u>

The group was then asked to each think of a personal conflict and to depict it visually by drawing each side of the conflict as a fish. The fish were cut out and organized in a group exhibition on the wall on blue paper representing the sea: Each drawer explained the conflict as expressed in the fish images. Following is an excerpt from this dialogue, chosen because it included two Arab and two Jewish participants, two religious and two secular participants, and two male and two female participants.

A Jewish religious woman, Sharon (fictional name), a student with two small children described her dilemma every evening after work, studies, and childcare: sinking down to watch TV versus settling down to read an article for studies. She drew an open book on one page and a TV on the other:

"I drew a fish with a TV inside it, and a fish with a book inside it; I am not very creative!"

A Bedouin woman, Samar (fictional name), responded:

"*I think that although you define these as different, both sides of your conflict are similar because both of them are a luxury – impossible, at least in my house, because cleaning and cooking and childcare don't leave time for anything; maybe that is why both fish are the same color."*

Sharon (laughing): *"Yes, you are right, I didn't think of that."*

Samar*: " I drew a fish with ten hands, because I feel like I am always pulled in many directions, six children and studies and a large family. I identify with your drawing. In the other fish I drew my studies; I feel pulled in so many directions. I wonder if the studying is worth it."*

Bedouin man-Seff (fictional name): *"I think having so many hands can be seen as a good thing as it serves her family – she is a role model for other Bedouin women to strive to have a family and to receive an education. I have a different dilemma: I have to decide between staying within the tribe. I live in an unrecognized village, about an hour away from town, or moving to town, which would enable me to work in my community project without the long trips back to the village. I like the town, but my father would be devastated if I left the extended family in the village. This fish has a red car as a tail. It's me in a red car, symbolizing modern life; my dream, to own a car- a red car! And this fish has all*

the people of the village as tiny fish inside the fish, and me as a pale yellow fish holding the whole village on my back."

Secular Jewish man, Dan (fictional name): "*I think you, Sef, really deserve to fulfill yourself, rather than to fulfill your role within your family. I, like you, also have a conflict between moving and staying. I have the dilemma between working in a 'safe' job as a teacher, with a set but small salary and a pension, and between continuing to business studies which will be less secure. I drew a fish in a jar, that is safe, and a small fish in a turbulent sea, with is not safe.*

The participants were then asked to add – around the fish, in the sea, or inside the fish – the social context of their personal dilemma.

Seff, the young Bedouin man, explained that he is the oldest brother and that he has to lead the family, which means that moving to a nearby town would be doubly devastating for his family. He changed his fish to orange to show this role:

Samar: *"You know the car is red and you were yellow before – red and yellow make orange; maybe there is a middle way to solve this."*

Seff stated that by being orange he was combining both. He decided to try to stay with a friend in the city one day a week and spend the rest of the week be in the village.

Dan drew a dark clump of seaweed with dollar signs around his fish and explained that this symbolized the Holocaust, which his mother had survived, and that the dollar signs symbolized her deep financial insecurity after losing her family and the family money in the Holocaust. He connected this to the message of staying in a "safe" job with enough money, even if he wasn't happy.

Sharon*: "I noticed that you were very adamant that Seff left his village and fulfilled himself; maybe you are the one who wants to fulfill yourself and not stay 'safe.'"*

Dan explained that he had drawn a third integrative fish, which was in an open jar in the sea, so he could jump in and out of the jar and the sea. He had decided to continue teaching but to start business school half-time.

Sharon chose the TV fish and added her husband next to her watching TV. She decided that TV allowed her to relax and to be with her husband, and so it was more important than being an excellent student, at present.

Samar joined all the hands in her fish into a pattern, saying that, in fact, they all connected and that she accepted Seff's interpretation: She is glad her life has many directions, as compared to her mother's life – although she is so busy – and she is an example to other Bedouin women who desire education.

Stage Three – Returning to the political conflicts after discussing personal conflicts:

At the end of the session, the participants were asked to discuss the same two political issues that they had chosen at the beginning of the session; their artwork was still on the wall in front of them. Following is an excerpt from this discussion.

Sharon: *"After hearing about my hectic life, which you also share, you can understand my wish to have one day with no TV and no studies! (everyone laughs) And also no housework. Having transportation and shops open will make it just another day for me, it won't be special. We all decided on solutions of 'having it all' – also town and also village, also business school. But even more so, we all need one day to just be – to also stop and relax, even if you aren't religious, and this is the Jewish state. In Christian countries there is less things open on Sunday."*

Samar: "*Yes I understand about your religion, I understand what you are saying, but for me, Shabbat can be a day I can finally travel to see my husband's family; a day to take the children out, to have fun together. I have a car, but most Bedouin women don't drive and can't afford a car. They need the public transportation and they are not Jewish. Also there are busses in European countries on Sunday."*

Seff: *"I cannot take all of them in my red car."* (Laughter)

Dan: "*It's complicated. I understand it's complicated, but I still think there should be public transportation. Maybe there should also be separation between state and religion. That's the biggest problem."*

Seff*: "As you saw, for me, my village and its land and traditions are very important, just as your traditions are important; just like you, Sharon, want to keep Shabbat. They are a part of me; because of this I will stay in my village and help them; I think we deserve our land; we don't suit town life."*

Dan: *"Yes, but you want to move to town – that was your dilemma – so in the end you will all move to towns; you can't stop progress."*

Samar: *"Maybe, but it has to be in our own way and not enforced by the government. We have to find our own way for the cultural transition. Losing everything from the past is not a good way. "*

Sharon: "*Maybe the country could set up villages instead of townships."*

Stage Four – Discussion after the arts intervention:

The discussion of the political conflicts after the arts intervention was qualitatively different from the opening discussion of the same issues before the arts intervention: First, the use of personal stories within the political issues humanized and anchored the issues in personal stories This humanizing element included references to personal symbols and the joint experiences of the previous session, which served to create a sense of unity and understanding. Secondly, there was not a sense of anger, repetition, or boredom, but rather, humor and flexible shifts between subjects, as well as much more empathy, as expressed in words such as "I understand." The use of phrases such as "it's complicated" also suggested a broader outlook and expectation that it would take time to solve these problems. These responses were all qualitative and semantic shifts within the conflict.

Stage Five – Participants summaries of the session:

The following is a thematic summary of the participant's evaluation of the arts intervention:

"It was good to do something about a problem, rather than just talk about it. I liked the doing."

"I think it worked on the system of the conflict instead of the content itself; in other words, it enabled me to think about it in different ways, to experience it differently."

"For me it was reflective. I found myself thinking about my conflict from new perspectives."

"It was fun; we laughed a lot. The art calmed me. I found a good solution to my problem."

"I understood the other side better in the last discussion, even if I didn't agree with them."

"I don't know if it didn't create an escape from the hard work of actually solving the conflict. It was fun, interesting, we had a good time together ,but we still haven't reached a consensus as to whether there should or shouldn't be busses on Shabbat."
"I think it showed how solutions are integrative, a little bit of this and a little bit of that...that's the best we can do."

Discussion

The first question to ask is if and how the arts intervention influenced the political conflict and arguments in the group: The first debate over local issues of conflict – the illegal Bedouin settlements and public transport on the Sabbath (a political issue and a religious issue) – was typical of such arguments in Israel and was self-defined by the participants as a conflict expressed in clichés and repetitions. This pattern only intensifies existing stances and does not create an understanding or a shift towards resolution, but rather, creates a sense of calcification and hopelessness for the possibility of solving these issues. This reaction is characteristic of conflict situations in general, in which, as stated in the introduction, stances become calcified and rigid as an effort to defend the ego, which feels under attack (Kalmanovich & Loyd , 2005; Pruitt& Kim, 2004).

Compared to this ineffective discourse, after the arts intervention, a clear shift in the semantics and quality of the same political discussion was apparent. The conceptualization of the issues was more abstract, contextualizing the issue of public transportation into the issue of separating state and religion. Cognitively, this allowed an acceptance of the complexity of the issue, resulting in the ability to hold ambiguity, rather than to revert to locked dichotomous stands. The negotiation strategies were sophisticated and integrative (Bereby- Meyer et al., 2004; Thomson et al., 2006) Overall, there was a transfer of the positive emotional climate from the arts intervention (Colman& Marcus, 2006; Linder, 2007). This second discussion was constructed with more expressions of identification and empathy, as well as more integrative solutions learned in the arts group.

The data points to the transferability of the gains from the phenomenological arts intervention to the second- final political discussion: What mechanisms within the arts intervention enabled the arts to become a training field for breaking down and for re-conceptualizing these conflicts?

Firstly, the arts intervention in this conflict situation created a dual phenomenological shift, from the verbal to the visual and from the political to the personal. The shift to the personal deconstructed a static binary identity and enabled individuals to identify with each other, even when their overall political conception was opposed. For example, the Bedouin and Jewish women found that they had similar experiences in terms of gender roles, although they strongly disagreed about transportation on the Sabbath. Similarly, the religious Bedouin man and the secular Jewish man identified similar dilemmas between personal self-fulfillment and familial obligation. The deconstruction of a static conception of identity into a modular one, consisting of culture, gender, class, family role, and historical context as separate from each other, enabled more space to identify and to negotiate (Hooks, 1992; Huss, 2007a; Mohanty, 2003; Freire & Macedo,1987).

Secondly, the shift from words to arts, intensified the multiplicity of perspectives and connected them to concrete visual symbols. The symbols used in the arts section were referred to within this final discussion as joint group contents, enabling a constant shift between the personal and the political. (Steinberg & Bar On, 2003). This repertoire of visual symbols helped to create a common group language that transcended differences. These images also concretized a common experience of empathy and understanding that was utilized as a more enabling background for the return to the political conflicts. In other words, there was a concrete end-product as documentation of the process and possibility of working together, and this end-product was experienced as joint group property that helped to bridge differences when referring back to political issues. (Curl, 2008; Leibman, 1996; Prut & Kid, 1994).

On a didactic level, the symbolization of both sides of the conflict in concrete visual symbols of fish shapes concretized the possibility that both sides of the inner conflict have their space and can be observed in a distanced and nonthreatening manner (Rhyne,1991). This was transferred to the possibility of having different sides to a conflict in the political discussion.

The compromises reached can be understood as the result of the inclusion of creative thinking, initiated by shifting from words to symbols (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Henderson et al., 2007; Huss et al., 2010; Kay & Bleep, 1997; Sarid & Huss, 2010). To elaborate; The shift to an abstract form, such as fish, distanced and permitted new perspectives on the issue, which also created a new language or new semantics for the conflict: This shift in the terminology or parameters of the conflict, from well- known political concepts to colors and shapes, enabled new integrations such as the conflict between loyalty to self- versus loyalty to tribe, as symbolized by a yellow person versus a red car (with orange as the integrative solution) or the conflict between security versus interest, seen in the shift from being a fish in a jar to being a fish in the wild sea (with the integrative solution of being a fish in an open jar inside the sea) .The arts enabled to envisage more sophisticated integrative, "win-win" solutions, such as combining town and village life, balancing financial safety and risk-taking, and even finding a different set of values that could shift the parameters of the conflict. This shift included defining central values that were more universal than the values in the conflict, such as family time over work, or recognizing the value of being a positive role model in the community as most important. These results verify the literature on arts and cognitive processes The literature on arts and emotional processes was also verified; We saw that on the emotional level, as described in the literature survey, the images enabled projection and identification, as seen in the intense reactions of others to the different images. This helped shift perception of both themselves as observers, and of the creators of the images (Ben-Ezer, 2002; Benson, 1987; Chamberlayn & Smith, 2008; Leibman, 1996; Rubin, 2001). For example, the a young Jewish man understood that his strong suggestion to r the Bedouin man to leave his village was in fact his own wish to break free of a safe but boring job (Barone, 2003; Curl, 2008, Huss, 2012a). The arts also initiated a positive

emotional climate including humor by revealing unexpected perspectives. This inherent healing or pleasurable process of art-making was also described in the literature survey (Dalebroux,: Goldstein & Winner; Van KleefDe Dreu, & Manstead, 2004).

Summary

Overall, in this case study, the use of arts verified the above described literature regarding the potential usefulness of arts for conflict negotiation. The results were clearly apparent in the second political conflict debate, after the use of arts : There was clearly more cognitive flexibility and fresh perspectives that generated new solutions, as well as empathy and identification with parts of the other that initiated a positive climate for conflict negotiation. The mechanisms of the art process that enabled this were outlined in the discussion, including on the cognitive level- the creation of modular, flexible identity, the shift to fresh visual terminology and perspectives that are more conductive to integrative solutions. On the emotional level, we saw the arousal of empathy, humor and a joint sense of activity and achievement outside of the zone of the conflict.

Another important finding in this study was the transferability or internalization of these skills after using the arts- such as thinking in more abstract and inclusive terms about the political conflict.

This research was theoretical in nature, with an illustrative case study pointing to the promising connection between conflict resolution and the arts. A limitation of this study is its single-case frame, which did not allow for further development of the value of arts in conflict negotiation or the opportunity to validate the results against additional groups. However, promising results were seen within a short time-span and a single case. These results were theorized –and this preliminary study calls for further research that would include longer interventions and multiple case studies.

Implications of the study are the potential effectiveness of using the arts to teach or gain experience with different levels of conflict negotiation within groups- and for those dealing with conflict (Thompson et al., 2006; Simmons & Hicks, 2006).

The findings in this study showed the ability of the arts to create flexible shifts between phenomenological or subjective experience and political or social context,

without erasing either. Most importantly, this research demonstrated that a shift from verbal to visual forms of expression enabled a new semantic frame for conflict that in turn shifted its content. In other words, a different, fresh narrative was created, which allowed for opportunities to find new connections and solutions.

References

Arnheim, R. (1996). *The split and the structure: Twenty-eight essays.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Avruch, K. (1998). *Culture and conflict resolution*. Washington, DC: Institute of Peace Publication.

Barone, T. (2003). Challenging the educational imaginary. *Qualitative Inquiry, 9*(2), 202-218.

Ben-Ezer, G. (2002). The collective creative space as a tool with intercultural work: Group work with Ethiopian immigrants. In L. Kacen & R. Lev-Wiesel (Eds.), *Group work in a multicultural society* (pp. 149-163). Tel Aviv: Cherikover Publications (Hebrew).

Benson, J. (1987). *Working more creatively with groups*: London, UJ: Tavistock Publications.

Beraby-Meyer, Y. & Moran, S., & Unger-Aviram, E. (2004). When performance goals deter performance: Transfer of skills in integrative negotiations. *Abstract Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 93,* 142-154.

Betinsky, M. (1995). *What do you see? Phenomenology of therapeutic art experience*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Bhabha, H.K. (1994). *The location of culture*: London, UK: Routledge.

Bresler, L. (Ed.). (2007). *International handbook of research in arts education*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Brewer, M. (2002). The many faces of social identity: Implications for social identity. *Political Psychology, 22*(1), 115-125.

Brington, C., & Lykes, M. (1996). *Myths about the powerless: Contesting social inequalities*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Butler, M. L. (2001). Making waves. *Women's Studies International Forum, 4*(3), 387-399.

Chamberlayn, P., & Smith, M. (2008). *Art creativity and imagination in social work practice*. London, UK: Routledge.

Cohen, C. (2003). Engaging with the arts to promote coexistence. In A. Chayes & A. M. Ninaow (Eds.), *Imagine coexistence* (pp. 267-2930). San Franciso, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Coleman, P., & Marcus, E.C. (2006). *The handbook of conflict resolution theory*. NewYork: Morton Deutsch

Crenshaw, M. (2002). Psychology of terrorism: An agenda for the 21st century. *Political Psychology 21*(920), 405-420.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Curl, K. (2008). Assessing stress reduction as a function of artistic creation and cognitive focus. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art association, 25* (2), 164-169.

Dalebroux, A., Goldstein, T., & Winner, E. (2008). Short-term repair through art-making: Positive emotion is more effective than venting. *Motive Emot, 32*, 288-295.

Dallow, J. (2007). Bridging feminist art, activism, and theory: A review of three contemporary texts. *NWSA Journal, 19*(1), 166-174.

De Drew, C. (2010). Social conflicts: The emergence and consequences of struggle and negotiation. In S.T. Fiske, D.T. Gilbert, & L. Gardner (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (pp. 984-1023).

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research.* California: Sage Publications.

Dokter, D. (1998). *Arts therapists, refugees, and migrants: Reaching across borders.* London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Emerson, M., & Smith, P. (2000). Researching the visual: Images, objects, contexts, and interactions in social. London: Sage Publication.

Erikson, E. (1995). *Childhood and Society*. London, UK: Vintage.

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (1987). *Literacy, reading the word and the world*. London, UK: Routledge.

Foster, V. (2007). Ways of knowing and showing: Imagination and representation in feminist participatory social research. *Journal of Social Work Practice, 21*(3).

Gombrich, E. H. J., & Eribon, D. (1993). *Conversations on art and science.* New York, NY: Abrams.

Frost J. (2005) Lessons from disasters: Play, work, and the creative arts. *Childhood Education* 2005; Freepatents online.com

Harrington, A. (2004). *Art and social theory: Sociological arguments in aesthetics*. London, UK:Polity Press Ltd.

Henderson, P., Rosen, D., & Mascaro, N. (2007). Empirical study on the healing nature of mandalas. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, 1*(3), 148-154.

Hills, P. (2001). *Modern art in the USA: Issues and controversies of the 20th century*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hogan, S. (1997). *Feminist Approaches to Art Therapy.* London & New York: Routledge.

Hooks, B. (1992). *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. London, UK: Turnaround.

Hubberman, M., & Miles, M. (2002). Reflections and advice. In M. Hubberman & M. Miles (Eds.), *The qualitative researcher's companion* (pp. 393-399). California: Sage Publications.

Huss, E. (2008). Shifting spaces and lack of spaces: Impoverished Bedouin women's experience of cultural transition through arts-based research. *Visual Anthropology, 21*(1), 58-71.

Huss, E. (2009). A coat of many colors: Towards an integrative multilayered model of art therapy. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 36*(3), 154-160.

Huss, E. (2012a). What we see and what we say: Combining visual and verbal information within social work research. *British Journal of Social Work*, 1-25.

Huss, E**.** (2012b*). What we see and what we say: Using the Arts in Social Research and Practice***.** London, UK: Routledge.

Huss, E., Alhozeyel, E., & Marcus, E. (In press). Drawing in group work as an anchor for integrating the micro and macro levels of intervention within incest survivors. *Clinical Social Work*.

Huss, E., & Cwikel, J. (2007). Houses, swimming pools, and thin blonde women: Arts-based research through a critical lens with impoverished Bedouin women in Israel. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *13*(7), 960-988.

Huss, E., & Cwikel J. (2008a). Embodied drawings as expressions of distress among impoverished single Bedouin mothers. *Archives of Women's Mental Health*, *11*(2), 137-147.

Huss, E., & Cwikel, J. (2008b). It's hard to be the child of a fish and a butterfly: Creative genograms bridging objective and subjective experiences. *Arts in Psychotherapy*, *35*(2), 171-180.

Huss, E., Kacen, L., & Hirshen, E. (2012). *Researching creations, creating research: Social arts-based research*. Beer Sheva, Israel: Ben-Gurion Publications.

Huss, E., Sarid, O., & Cwikel, J. (2010). Using art as a self-regulating tool in a war situation: A model for social workers. *Health and Social Work*, 35(3), 201-211.

Joughin, J., & Maples, S. (2004). *The new aestheticism.* Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Kalmanowitz, D., & Lloyd, B. (2005). *Art therapy and political violence*. London, UK: Routledge.

Kaye, S., & Bleep, M. (1997). *Arts and healthcare*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Liebman, M. (1996). *Arts approaches to conflict*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley.

Linder, E.G. (2007). Emotion and conflict: Why it is important to understand how emotions affect conflict and how conflict affects emotions. In M. Deutsch, P.T.

Levine, E. & Levine, S. (2011). *Art in Action.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Coleman, & E. C. Marcus (Eds.), *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.) (pp. 268-293). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mahon, M. (2000). The visible evidence of cultural producers. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 29*, 467-92.

Mitchell, J.T., Schiller, G., Eyler, V.A., & Everly, Jr., G.S. (1999). Community crisis intervention: The Coldenham tragedy revisited. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health, 1(4)*, 227-236.

Mohanty, C. T. (2003). Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In R. Lewis & S. Mills (Eds.), *Feminist postcolonial theory: A reader*. Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press.

Nelson, K. & Fivush, R. (2004). The emergence of autobiographical memory: A social cultural developmental theory. *Psychological Review*, 111(2), 486–511.

Pink, S., & Kurti, L. (2004). *Working Images: Visual research and representation in ethnography*. London, UK: Routledge.

Pruitt, D., & Kim, S.H. (2004). *Social conflict: Escalation, stalemate and settlement*. McGraw-Hill.

Rosal, M. (2001). 'Cognitive behavioral art therapy'. In J. A. Rubin (Ed.), Approaches to art therapy. Philadelphia: Brunner-Routledge.

Rhyne, J. (1991). *The gestalt art experience: Patterns that connect.* California: Magnolia St. Publications.

Rubin, J. (2001). *Approaches to art therapy.* Philadelphia, PA: Brunner and Maze.

Sarid, O., & Huss, E. (2010). Trauma and acute stress disorder: A comparison between cognitive behavioral intervention and art therapy. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 37*(1), 8-1.

Schaverien, J. (1999). *The revealing image: Analytical art psychotherapy in theory and in practice*. London, UK: Routledge.

Shank, M. (2005). Transforming social justice: Redefining the movement: Art activism. *Seattle Journal for Social Justice, 3*, 531-535.

Shohat, E. (1995). *Talking visual multicultural feminism in a transitional age*. New York, NY: New Museum of Contemporary Art Press.

Simmons, H., & Hicks, J. (2006). Opening doors: Using the creative arts in learning and teaching. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, 5*, 77-79.

Spaniol, S. & Bluebird, G. (2002). Creative partnerships, people with psychiatric disabilities and art therapists in dialogue. *Arts in psychotherapy, 29* (2), 107-115.

Speiser, V., & Speiser, P. (2007). An art approach to working with conflict. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 47*(3), 361-366.

Spivak, G.C. (1990). *The post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues*. London, UK: Routledge.

Steinberg, S., & Bar-On, D. (2002). An analysis of the group process in encounters between Jews and Palestinians using a typology for discourse classification. *Pergamon, 26*, 199-214.

Thompson, Nadler & Lount. (2006). Judgmental biases in conflict resolution and how to overcome them. In M. Deutsch, P. Coleman, & E. C. Marcus (Eds.), *The handbook of conflict resolution theory and practice* (2nd ed.) (pp.243-265). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Tripnger, D., Izaakson, G., & Durbell, K. (2000). *Creative problem solving*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Branko Institute for Cognitive Studies.

Wang, C., & Burris, M. (1994). Empowerment through photo-novella. *Health Education Quarterly, 21*,172-85.

Welsh, N. A. (2004). Remembering the role of justice in resolution: Insights from procedural and social justice theories. *Journal of Legal Education, 49.*

Winnicott, D. (1958). *Collected papers, through Pediatrics to Psychoanalysis*. London, UK: Tavistock Publications.

Van Kleef, G. A., De Dreu, C. K. W., & Manstead, A. S. R. (2004). The interpersonal effects of emotions in negotiations: A motivated information processing approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87,* 510-528.

Zammit, C. (2001). The art of healing: A journey through cancer: Implications for art therapy. *Art Therapy Journal of the A.A.T.A., 18* (1), 27-36.

Zelizer, C. (2003). The role of artistic processes in peace-building in Bosnia-

Herzegovina. *Peace and Conflict Studies, 10*(2), 62-75.