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Dov Shinar

Reflections on media war coverage: Dissonance, dilemmas, and the need for improvement

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Reflexionen über Kriegsberichterstattung: Dissonanz, Dilemmas und das Erfordernis der Verbesserung


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Reflections on media war coverage: Dissonance, dilemmas, and the need for improvement

Media preference of war has been diagnosed as resulting from correlations of media psychology, culture, and interests with war. Such correlations encourage personal, professional and institutional dissonance, and provoke dilemmas of coverage adequacy; selectivity of narratives and contexts; manipulation, and narrow ranges of discourse and focus. Efforts to curb these difficulties might succeed, with research and applied efforts aimed at updating the media culture of war coverage; helping identify media controls; encouraging gradual and cumulative reporting; employing "thick coverage" and "thick training"; promoting the cooperation of established media with newer types of journalism; assisting journalists in resolving war coverage dilemmas; promoting ongoing field monitoring and empirical research; helping post-war establishment of appropriate media structures, regulatory frameworks, and program production.

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Abstract: Media preference of war has been diagnosed as resulting from correlations of media psychology, culture, and interests with war. Such correlations encourage personal, professional and institutional dissonance, and provoke dilemmas of coverage adequacy: selectivity of narratives and contexts; manipulation, and narrow ranges of discourse and focus. Efforts to curb these difficulties might succeed, with research and applied efforts aimed at updating the media culture of war coverage; helping identify media controls; encouraging gradual and cumulative reporting; employing "thick coverage" and "thick training"; promoting the cooperation of established media with newer types of journalism; assisting journalists in resolving war coverage dilemmas; promoting ongoing field monitoring and empirical research; helping post-war establishment of appropriate media structures, regulatory frameworks, and program production.

1. The media like war

Research on conflict coverage reveals a long-standing preference for war in the printed press, radio and television (Shinar 2003; Wolfsfeld, 2004). As early as 1898, just before the Spanish-American War broke out, the New York Journal envoy to Cuba, photojournalist Frederic Remington spent a few days in lively Havana. Without sensing any signs of war, he cabled his boss saying, "there will be no war; request to be recalled". The boss, press tycoon William Randolph Hearst, cabled back: "Request denied. Please remain. You furnish the pictures, I'll furnish the war". Regardless of the doubts over its accuracy, this episode illustrates the media preference of war and the pursuit of this interest. In line with Hearst's papers' sensationalist style, later baptized as "yellow journalism", his New York Journal carried out an aggressive campaign, blaming the Spanish for the mysterious sinking of the American battleship Maine in Havana harbor, in addition to allegations of torture and rape of Cubans by Spanish forces. At present, it is widely believed that the explosion on the Maine was due to a fire in one of its coalbunkers. Nevertheless, the coverage of the incident together with a daily torrent of horror stories, served to steer public opinion and to pressure Republican President McKinley into a war he had wished to avoid (Beede 1994; Corbett 2012a, b).

More recent literature displays a similar tendency, including coverage of the first and second World Wars, and conflicts in South East Asia; the Middle East; the Gulf; the Balkans; Chechnya; Afghanistan; Africa and Latin America (Corbett 2012a, b; Fliger 2010; Blasi, 2004; 2009; Knightley, 2000).

Two examples are highly illustrative. Before, during, and after the April-July 1994 Rwandan genocide, Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) became an iconic symbol of media promotion of hatred and violence in that country. Run by Hutu majority government agencies, that popular radio station openly called for the extermination of the Tutsis, enhancing a climate of hostility that encouraged genocidal mass killings. Yanagizawa-Drott (2012) concludes that access to such broadcasts served to increase organized and civilian violence; that they caused approximately 10% of the participation in genocidal violence; and that some 50,000 deaths can be attributed to the broadcasts. Tayeebwa (2012) corroborates this evidence and adds information on hate media in the 2009 Northern Ugandan crisis.

The ethnic and religious strife in former Yugoslavia during the 1990s provides further evidence of such preferences. Nationalist propaganda disseminated by major media channels sponsored by the Milošević regime in Serbia, has enhanced violent attitudes and behaviors on the part of civilians against rival minorities; and later recollections of such propaganda have served civilians to justify unacceptable behaviors (Shinar and Bratić, 2010, Volcic, 2006). Likewise, Croatian journalists used global discourses of violence to justify and legitimize war crimes in the coverage of the war in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia (Erjavic & Volcic 2007, Kurspahic 2003).

1. French for "One Thousand Hills Free Radio and Television", deriving from the description of Rwanda as "Land of a Thousand Hills".

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2. **Media attitudes and behaviors**

Professional critique and academic research provide information on institutional, organizational, personal and professional aspects of the media preference for violence and war. Schechter (2006) offers a critical analysis of this preference by U.S. media organizations in the Iraq invasion.

Ottosen comments "that it is interesting to see how both the New York Times and the Washington Post one year after the War in Iraq started, apologized to the readers for misleading them and then taking responsibility for being a part of the war preparation" (Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 12). On a more general vein, Andersen (2006) argues that the history of the struggle between war and its representation has changed the way wars are fought, and the way stories of war are told: information management has developed together with new media technologies; computer-based technologies have transformed the weapons of war; and media images have turned war into entertainment.

The media tendency to incite and ignite rather than to appease is another dimension of this scene, as documented in research and professional writings. The former includes works by Kull et al., 2003-04; Shinar 2003; Wolfsfeld 2004; Volcic 2006, and others. The latter is illustrated by reports such as Pekusic's for the Belgrade Southeast European Times (January 10, 2012), entitled: "Media war crimes under investigation in Serbia: The Belgrade prosecutor's office says trials are forthcoming for the journalists who are responsible for inciting 1990s war crimes in the former Yugoslavia". SETimes' states at the same date that according to the prosecution, media propaganda in the former Yugoslavia was a prelude to the ensuing armed conflict. Blasi (2006, 2009) analyses institutional and professional constraints that affect journalists in conflict coverage, such as media structures, conflict situations on-site, individual journalists' personal features, political climate, lobbies, and audiences in different stages of conflicts. Based on interviews with German journalists who covered conflicts in the Gulf War, the Balkans, Chechnya, Rwanda, Liberia, Indonesia, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq, he argues that it might be easier to improve the coverage quality of the violent stage through investing efforts toward more accurate reporting of the "pre-violence phase". Further research is required to supply more evidence to support this proposition.

Finally, current research displays several types and degrees of media involvement in conflict:

1. **pro-active involvement**, such as Hearst's, and Radio Mille Collines;
2. "**passive compliance**" with governmental authorities, such as in the My Lai massacre in 1968, reported from Vietnam by freelance Seymour Hersh, but not by the mainstream media, even though some journalists and media executives knew about this and similar atrocities (Corbett 2012a, b; Fliger 2010);
3. **Cooperation** with government agencies, as revealed in the correlations found by Kull and his associates (2003-2004) between audiences' misperceptions about the war in Iraq support for the war, and individuals' primary source of news. Viewers of US government-supportive Fox News, for example, displayed more misperceptions and support for the war;
4. **embedding**, i.e. contractual relations of journalists and media outlets with governments and armed forces' agencies that provide journalists with access to and relative personal protection in war events, in return for their vaguely defined "fair" coverage (Ignatius 2010; Goodman & Cummings 2003).

3. **Why is that so?**

Professional environments, political contexts, and economic constraints provide some explanations of media attitudes and behaviors in conflict and war coverage.

3.1 **Professional environments**

Professionally, conflict coverage has been highly rated in the mainstream media culture because of its nature as a source of prestige and of its openness to discourse that enhances the news-value of war. Both factors encourage journalists to represent realities in vivid colors and clear-cut polarities, primordial sentiments and the thrill of the unexpected. They allow reporters and editors to prefer the emotional over the rational and to emphasize glory and heroism, thus satisfying classic "news value" requirements: "live" coverage immediacy, dramatic action, simplification of events, personal stories and "victory" or "defeat" results (Corbett 2012a, b; Shinar 2011; Nohrstedt 2009). Thus Wolfsfeld (2004, 15) states that conventional news values are so grounded in the extent to which "when peace appears to be taking hold in a particular area, it is time for journalists to leave". Such conventional news values include a "sacrosanct" set of norms that dictates the use of frames such as immediacy, drama, simplicity and ethnocentrism. Since journalists cannot afford to be in the "business of waiting" (p. 16), the "immediacy" frame captures events and specific actions rather than processes and long-term policies. The "drama" frame demands violence, crisis, conflict, extremism, dangers, internal discord, major breakthroughs rather than "calm, lack of crisis, cooperation, moderation, opportunities, internal consensus and incremental progress". The "simplicity" frame favors "opinions, images, major personalities, two-sided conflicts, while ideology, texts, institutions,
multi-sided conflicts are less newsworthy. Under "the ethnocentrism" frame news is "our beliefs, our suffering, their brutality", and what is not news is "their beliefs, their suffering, our brutality" (ibid).

Such coverage has been criticized for desensitizing the audience to the gory details of war, for blending news with views, and for ignoring facts and contexts. This is how media war coverage becomes a form of entertainment rather than a quest for information (Bunting 2004; InfoRefuge 2003). One excellent illustration is the comment made by an American correspondent one night during a US air raid over Baghdad, about the thrill caused by the "fireworks" that lit up the sky[^1]. Moreover, the evolving public status of media organizations and journalists in war coverage has benefited from the fact that they have become direct actors in international relations: they exchange information with policymakers and field actors, they provide channels for dialogue between belligerent leaders; and they often ignore the distinction between the roles of reporter and actor. The resulting media culture has thus tended to emphasize fighting parties, manifest violence and sportslike "us versus them" attitudes; and visible events and results, winners and losers, rather than longer and complex processes. In addition, it has made it easier for governmental agencies, such as the military, to manipulate the media (Shinar 2011; Nohrstedt 2009).

However, cases of rebellion against manipulation, and of less biased reporting should not be ignored. Thus, frustrated by Pentagon manipulation of the media during the Gulf War, CBS's Bob Simon and his three-man crew began making unauthorized forays from the press center in Dhahran to the front. Regardless of the fact that in their last trip they were taken war prisoners by Iraqi troops, and spent forty days in a Bagdad jail (Simon 1992), this episode reflects professional attempts to resist pressures imposed on journalists. On another line, Rosen (2010) and Hammock (2010) recognize the merits of a "contextual journalism" new trend in some of the traditional and newer media, and quote illustrations for this trend. Another example is the worldwide award winning documentary "Precious Life", produced by Israeli TV correspondent Shlomi Eldar in 2010, in which he reports on the efforts to have a Palestinian baby taken out of Gaza during the Cast Lead operation in the Winter of 2008-9, in order to give him lifesaving treatment in an Israeli hospital. The film manages to escape the propaganda war, and to show dilemmas, radical positions, and a human approach that is often missing in war reporting (www.preciouslifemovie.com).

The question remains, however, whether such few instances are not the exception that proves the rule.

3.2 Political contexts and controls

Not surprisingly and not exclusively, media political contexts are active both in totalitarian regimes, and in democratic open societies. While it is true that the media are controlled by coercion and censorship in the former, less obvious manipulative practices have been making progress in the latter (Shah, 2005). Thus, in 2005, the White House admitted to producing videos designed to look like news reports from legitimate independent journalists, and then feeding those reports to media outlets ready to air on the evening news. In April 2008, the New York Times revealed a secret US Department of Defense program launched in 2002 that involved using retired military officers to implant Pentagon talking points in the media. They were presented as "independent analysts", while the fact that they were briefed beforehand by the Pentagon was concealed. Also, in line with developments in the media world, it was revealed early in 2012 that the US government had contracted with a private firm to develop software that create fake social media accounts so as to steer public opinion and promote propaganda on popular websites (Corbett 2012a, b). Riger (2012) and Knightley (2000a) express similar criticism for the United Kingdom media political context.

3.3 Economic constraints

Insofar as media economy is concerned, radical and moderate critics perceive the media preference of violence and war as highly correlated with the influence of the profit-making, rating-hungry, scoop-hunting basic media structures, particularly but not exclusively the private ones (Mc Chesney 2000; Herman & Chomsky 1988). Nohrstedt (2009) points out the economic breakthrough given by wars to media organizations, such as the Gulf War to CNN and the Iraq War to Al-Jazeera. Such claims are illustrations of a "media economic imperative" that works together with the technological and the professional ones. A second important aspect is the increasing economic facet of war coverage as entertainment. Raymond Federman (1997) wrote a sarcastic "letter to a friend" about the Gulf War being the best TV show of the year, and Jean Baudrillard (2001) made an ironic claim that the war did not happen, but was just a media production. More specifically, Billig's (1995) notion of "banal nationalism" might have inspired Bunting (2004) to indirectly refer to the economic imperative in terms of the "barbarism" and "banality" involved in the interruption of news items that show images of death and suffering with tasteless out-of-context advertisements for consumer goods. On the other hand, a rather paradoxical result of the economic imperative appears in studies that link market pressures with the shrinking coverage of war (Ricchiardi 2008).

Such professional environments, political contexts and controls, and economic constraints together with the pressures and prejudices of journalists, editors, and producers on the ground provide the context for dissonance and dilemmas in war coverage. While war coverage is a classic case of convergence and coincidence of the institutional and personal normative levels, dissonance refers mostly (but not exclusively) to institutional and organizational issues, and dilemmas refer mostly (but not exclusively) to professional and individual aspects.

4. Dissonance

The preference of conflict is a central feature in the institutional DNA of the media. This implies high and multiple correlation levels of media psychology, culture, economy, and technology on one hand, with violence and war on the other. Such correlations can encourage the emergence of institutional and personal dissonance, such as:

a) Between patriotic/ethnic and professional allegiances: Evans (n.d.) and Zandberg & Neiger (2005) documented a preference of the former, mostly in the early stages of war. This confirms findings of other studies that in the coverage of conflict, particularly when referring to their own countries, journalists are caught between nation and profession, and their belonging to the national community overpowers their membership in the professional one. This leads journalists to relate to an institutionalized ‘sphere of consensus’ (Hallin 1986), in which they feel free to stop trying to be balanced in favor of a generalized ‘we’ and take for granted shared organizational values and assumptions (Schudson 2002).

b) Between the former “agenda-setting monopoly” held by the traditional media and the competition raised by the emergence of new media: the printed press, radio and particularly television have traditionally had exclusive control of setting the agenda in society, sometimes on behalf of governments and corporations, and particularly in war coverage. The emergence of new online and social media has reduced this monopoly considerably, as people are increasingly abandoning their former main source of news – newspapers, radio and television – in favor of online channels and as online journalists and bloggers are emerging as a threatening competition. This has been changing the ways in which the public agenda is being set. It is still unclear whether and how online channels affect the media preference for war and violence and to what extent governmental and opposition efforts to use the web will succeed. However, the flourishing decentralized and “de-institutionalized” new media and the decline of the traditional media monopoly have been worrying the traditional media system (Corbett 2012a, b; Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 30).

c) Between technological advancement and ethical standards: the emergence of newer technological developments in the media can pose serious challenges to journalistic ethical standards. Jean Paul Marthoz quotes: “The world is ... reduced to a village; all men are compelled to think ... on imperfect information and with too little time for reflection”, and adds, “this sentence is not about the CNN effect but about the telegraph effect; it was pronounced in 1889” (Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 29). Based on data from their study of the Romanian revolution and the Gulf War coverage, Shinar and Stoiciu (1992, 253) reflect that “technological changes have been so rapid and overwhelming ... that journalists and researchers have been busy chasing them with little time left for understanding the demands they make on the profession”. Indeed, the CNN-style “rolling news”, immediate satellite links, and the on-the-spot 24/7 availability of broadcast materials have made it very tempting to use them before assessing their veracity, significance, and impact. The professional race with their peers in the field and with their own editors has often led journalists to file or broadcast their reports without cross checking the information, out of fear that they will lag behind. (Corbett 2012a, b; Nohrstedt 2009; Shinar & Stoiciu 1992). Terzis writes about this dilemma in the Greek and Turkish media: “When my competitor gets the story, how can I miss the story? I know it’s one-sided and I know it might not be true and I don’t have the time to check the sources” (Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 27). In this sense, it is important to recall the institutional facet of media ethics, presented in Tehranian’s comment (2002, 58) that “the locus of most media ethics has hitherto been the individual journalist. But the individual journalist operates in the context of institutional, national, and international regimes ... media ethics must be negotiated not only professionally but also institutionally, nationally, and internationally ... ethics without commensurate institutional frameworks and sanctions often translate into pious wishes”.

d) Between longer and shorter spans of memory: the media have little or no memory, argues Philip Knightley (2000a). This is plausible, at least based on his critique of the Kosovo NATO campaign coverage. In a rather unusual stance, he suggests that war reporters have short working lives and there is little tradition, motivation or means for passing on their knowledge and experience. The military, on the other hand, plan media strategy with as much attention as military strategy. The Pentagon and Ministries of Defense have manuals updated after every war, which serve to guide the way they will manage the media – as does every other major military power. These military manuals follow basic principles – appear open, transparent and eager to help; never go in for summary repression or direct control; nullify rather than conceal undesirable news;

1. But not only in the early stages of war, as shown by the firing of venerated professionals Peter Arnett and Phil Donahew by their US media employers during the Iraq campaign (see below in the section on direct pressures and constraints).
control emphasis rather than facts; balance bad news with good; and lie directly only when certain that the lie will not be found out during the course of the war. In this sense too, one can wonder what implications will be introduced in this area by the increased access to historical materials provided by newer technologies.

5. Dilemmas

A considerable number of professional and individual normative dilemmas surface, based on the earlier discussion. The following presentation of some such dilemmas aims at providing a basis for thought and research rather than being an exhaustive list of problems, Reactions, support, suggestions for improvements, criticism and disagreement are bound to enrich this basis. The dilemmas listed here refer to the adequacy of coverage techniques; to the selectivity of narratives and contexts; to self-manipulation; and to the narrowing of focus and discourse.

5.1 Adequacy of coverage techniques

Dilemmas in this context refer to how to maintain a reasonable "critical distance" necessary for adequate reporting vis-à-vis the dependence on official sources; the attraction to "negative coverage" and access and safety problems.

The dependence of media organizations and journalists on official sources is a recurring theme in the academic and professional literature on war coverage. The allegation that mainstream media treat information supplied by official sources as fact rather than as just one perspective provides one example. Such dependence leads the mainstream media to fail in presenting context and depth. In reporting the Iraq war, popular mainstream news channels, such as The New York Times, CNN, and Associated Press presented news stories that practically conveyed only the government’s message, with little coverage of alternative views and sources that have often challenged official sources (Lancaster 2008). Likewise, Terzis reports on Greek and Turkish journalists’ experience that “international affairs reporting depends heavily on the official sources... dependency on the ministries of defense and foreign affairs is much greater than for example the environmental correspondent, because he can depend on personal experiences and eyewitnesses” (Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 27).

“Negative coverage”, such as personalizing, “negative othering”, demonizing or dehumanizing poses another professional dilemma vis-à-vis the professional normative demand for impartiality. Shinar and Stoiciu’s accounts about such techniques in the Romanian revolution and the Gulf War (1992), and reports on the genocidal role of Radio Mille Collines in Rwanda illustrate this type of coverage (Yanagizawa-Drott 2012; Tayeewa 2012). They are supported by more recent reports, such as the declaration of Serbian Chief War Crimes Prosecutor that “most local media during Milosevic’s regime were part of the war machine” whose propaganda goals were “completely to de-humanize opponents in the armed conflict, often threatening their right to life” (Pekusic 2012). And propaganda expert Nancy Snow explains why in the Gulf War, a majority of Americans linked Saddam Hussein to 9/11 because they “were repeatedly told by the President ... that Saddam's evil alone was enough to be linked to 9/11 and that given time, he would have used his weapons against us” (Gutierrez 2004).

Access to and safety in combat zones, are deadly characteristics of war coverage. About one hundred journalists and supporting staff died during two and a half years after the beginning of the Iraq invasion. A similar number of media workers and journalists died in the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. These figures certainly outweigh the sixty-three journalists killed during the Vietnam War, which lasted for twenty years. They illustrate the dilemma in the definition of journalists as witnesses on behalf of the public or legitimate targets. (Andersen 2006). This dilemma has been frequently used and abused by official authorities to deny or curb access of journalists to combat areas (Schechter 2005 resources)

5.2 Selectivity of narratives and contexts

Like many types of journalism, war reporting cannot present every detail of events and processes, but purposeful or negligent deceptive coverage should certainly worry those concerned with the adequacy of war coverage. At times, such shortcomings blur the distance between journalism and propaganda, creating dilemmas of incompleteness, inaccuracy; surrender to the “seductions of convenience”, and ethical shortcomings.

Incompleteness: The lack of access to events, and the consequent lack of full or at least reasonable witnessing explain obvious limits in the provision of details in war coverage. Safety demands are another explanation, based on the need to prevent supplying important information to the enemy. Thus the strict control imposed by US and South Korean authorities on visiting tourists and journalists to the DMZ, or the harsh limitations imposed by Israeli authorities on reporting landing sites of missiles and rockets in the Gulf War, the 2006 Lebanon War, the 2009 Cast Iron and the 2012 Pillar of Defense operations in Gaza. Additional sources of incompleteness include:

- massive information flows together with limited print space and airtime have made it more difficult for journalists to deal in detail with processes and complex topics, and for citizens to make sense of them;
limited knowledge about the contexts and culture of conflicts and lack of motivation to learn about them has lead reporting to reductionism and simplicity, and has emphasized what is close and what is believed to be known to media users;

- voluntary and forced cooperation of media institutions and journalists with political and military establishments has made independent journalism less and less feasible and less acceptable ... This ... is increased by ... the commercialization of news (that) leads to subservience to ... official communication policies' (Marthoz, in Carpenter & Terzis 2005, 30-31);

- the lower news value assigned to certain regions and topics have made it difficult for the media to cover complexity. The case of Darfur (and Africa in general) is an example of geography-based lower news value: the crisis started in March 2003, peaked between September and December 2003, and the first big broadcast came in March 2004 (Carpentier & Terzis 2005). Environmental damage caused by war is an example of thematic lower news value. The environment is a major victim of current war reporting. It is practically absent from the coverage, and in the few instances in which it is covered, it usually appears in less relevant pages and scheduling. This results from the traditional lower news value of environmental coverage in general, from the facts that the topic is complex, and that it demands previous knowledge by journalists and audiences of at least some historical, economic, and cultural backgrounds, and some perspective of its long-term consequences (Shinar 2008).

Inaccuracy: Some incompleteness might be acceptable, given the problems discussed above. Inaccuracy is less acceptable, for both practical and ethical reasons, referring to media organizations' and individual journalists' responses to direct pressures and constraints; "seductions of convenience"; and ethical shortcomings. The major dilemma in this case is how to provide appropriate coverage under such circumstances.

Depending on levels of democracy, direct pressures and constraints range from institutional and organizational directives and from professional and individual peer pressure. Terzis offers some evidence from Greek-Turkish crises reporting: "Greek and Turkish journalists ... feel like soldiers of the national army ... journalists would be fired in Greece and in Turkey ... if they go against the perceived national interest ... legislation exists in Turkey that if as a journalist you speak against the 'national interest', you can be imprisoned. In Greece, you will be fired ... and you will not be able to find a job afterwards ... journalist unions ... (to) protect journalists, are not there ... you want ... not be isolated from the main sources ... you socialize with them ... you don't want to be 'the bad guy' in the group' ... huge peer pressure especially in times of crises ... not to voice other opinions" (Carpentier & Terzis 2005, 25-28).

Greek and Turkish journalists are not alone in this matter. Questioning the US government and Pentagon agenda has resulted in an abrupt end to more than media personality's career. In 2003, NBC fired Peter Arnett, after he criticized the US policy on the war in Iraq. MSNBC fired Phil Donahue in the months leading up to U.S. invasion of Iraq. Although his show was top-rated, he was fired in response to his anti-war opinions and guests. A leaked network report called him "a difficult public face for NBC in a time of war ... anti-war, anti-Bush and skeptical of the administration's motives ... (and providing) "a home for the liberal anti-war agenda at the same time that our competitors are waving the flag at every opportunity" (Harris 2012). Dan Rather, the iconic CBS news anchor for 24 years, told interviewer John Pilger (2010) that in reporting the war in Iraq, "there was a fear in every newsroom in America ... of losing your job ... of being stuck with some label, unpatriotic or otherwise ... that war has made 'stenographers out of us'" This is a view now shared by a number of senior journalists interviewed in the US.

Surrender to the "seductions of convenience" refers to the levels of inaccuracy accepted by media organizations and journalists to help cope with complexity and financial constraints. The former refers to difficulties imposed by complex items and contexts, the latter to benefits provided to media organizations and professionals. Barstow and Stein (2005) note that together with a continuous demand for news that usually increases in war times, news channels budgets and staff are shrinking. In the United States alone, some 90 percent of TV newsrooms rely on video news releases, and "ready-to-run segments", provided by official agencies and contracted PR firms. This allows many outlets to expand their news coverage without additional costs. It also allows for the dissemination of inaccurate news with less checks and harder traceability, as segments flow through a vast network of distributors and redistributors. Nohrstedt (2009) implies some similarities in the inaccuracy of reports on the Iraq invasion and the coverage of the NATO bombings in Kosovo.

Ethical shortcomings refer to direct breaches of ethical codes, in addition to the such aspects in incomplete and inaccurate reporting. It includes the inventing of stories; and techniques of media management, such as the aforementioned practice of releasing and using prepackaged and fake PR segments; paying journalists to promote certain issues or contracting PR firms to feed stories to the press. Inventing stories refer to strategies that increase the attractiveness of the news. Thus,

1. This is the official title of the operation (in Hebrew it is called "Pillar of Cloud"), referring to the belief, recorded in the Bible, that during the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, God took the form of a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night, in order to light their way and to frighten the Egyptian army (Exodus 14:19-20; 14:24; 13:21-22; Numbers 14:14).
although war atrocities are not uncommon, Evans (n.d.) notes that "the Germans did not ... toss Belgian babies in the air and catch them on bayonets, nor boil down German corpses for glycerin for munitions... the French did not routinely... gouge out the eyes of captured German soldiers, or chop off their fingers for the rings on them". These were stories invented by a British correspondent to satisfy his office for attractive news. Iraqi soldiers invading Kuwait in the Gulf War did not toss premature babies out of incubators, as The Sunday Telegraph in London, and then the Los Angeles Times, reported, quoting Reuters. The story was an invention of the Citizens for a Free Kuwait lobby in Washington (Knightley 2000a).

In addition, news of the "massacre of 41 Serbian children" in an elementary school, near Vukovar, published in November 1991, proved very soon to be a fabrication (Pekusic 2012).

Paying journalists and experts to promote certain issues, without acknowledging this or without the media mentioning the sources, is an ethical issue dealt with caution, even in blogs and internet sites. Nevertheless, blogger Justin Raimondo (of www.antiwar.com) talks openly about "a cadre of bought-and-paid-for columnists, publicists, and perhaps even a few "bloggers". In a more personal vein, he attacks senior journalists Armstrong Williams and Maggie Gallagher on grounds that these pundits' messages sound like Pentagon press releases. Harris (2012) reports that not long after the Iraq war began in 2003, CNN chief news executive Eason Jordan revealed that he had secured the Pentagon's approval for a list of military analysts, mostly retired generals, to provide on-air commentary. PR firms are contracted to "sell a war, and to maximize media coverage of particular issues through the careful use of media management techniques, such as "driving the agenda" and "milking the story". This includes, for example, leaking jigsaw pieces of information to different outlets, leading them to piece the story together and to drive it up the news agenda (Gutierrez, 2004). One such example is the Washington PR firm The Rendon Group (TRG), a public relations and propaganda firm that as its website states, (http://www.rendon.com) "for nearly three decades has been providing innovative global strategic communications solutions ... assisting leading commercial, government and military organizations ... active in 78 countries" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rendon_Group - cite_note-prwatches2001-1#cite_note-prwatches2001-1). Founder John Rendon described himself as "an information warrior, and a perception manager", which in the language of Pentagon planners means "actions to convey and (or) deny selected information and indicators... to influence their emotions, motives, and objective reasoning" (Rampton and Stauber 2003). Many media outlets are willing partners. Kull et al (2003-2004) found that the frequency of Americans' misperceptions on the war in Iraq varies significantly depending on their exposure to different news sources. Their analysis of polls conducted in the summer of 2003 found that 48% incorrectly believed that evidence of links between Iraq and al Qaeda have been found, 22% that weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq, and 25% that world public opinion favored the US going to war with Iraq. Overall 60% had at least one of these three misperceptions. The following table presents a breakdown of respondents' percentages that had one or more of the three misperceptions listed above, according to their major source of news.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Misperceptions</th>
<th>FOX</th>
<th>CBS</th>
<th>ABC</th>
<th>NBC</th>
<th>CNN</th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>NPR/ PBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 or more</td>
<td>80%</td>
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The table presents a clear connection between all commercial TV networks, notably Fox, CBS, and ABC, with misperceptions about the war.

5.3 Self-manipulation

Some academics and professionals hold on to Herman and Chomsky's (1988) media manipulation pioneering model, regardless of the changes taking place in reporting war and in other aspects of international relations. Harris (2012) accepts the model as is, including the filtering agents that determine the news people receive from the media: owners, sources, financial interests, ideology, and "flak", namely corporate or government front groups that spin on particular stories or advocate their own point of view or deceptively plant false stories through fake advocacy organizations. Likewise, Shah (2006) and Corbett (2012 a, b) believe that in war coverage the media are totally manipulated by official sources and public relations firms that disseminate propaganda as news. Even without pointing out the need to update some details Herman's and Chomsky's model to the post-Cold War era, one must accept the argument that governments and private interests always use one or more of such agents. One can also admit that the press, radio and TV do disseminate false and distorted information, probably consciously in some cases. However, media organizations and professionals are not 'babes in the woods'. It is difficult to believe that they are always innocent victims of one-sided manipulation by omnipotent conspiracies. In most cases, they play active and willing roles in the process. In other words, the discussion is not really about evil pres-

1. Armstrong Williams is an American conservative political commentator, and host of a daily radio show and a nationally syndicated TV program. Maggie Gallagher, writer, commentator, column for Universal Press Syndicate, and has published five books. Both are known as media pundits, i.e. independent experts.
sures working on innocent media, particularly in war reporting. The dilemma faced by the media is the extent to which they can afford to go along with well known external pressures, and to what extent they can afford to disregard ethical codes and the public interest (and thus lose at least some credibility) in return for economic and other benefits. This is the media self-manipulation dilemma. Tagged in the early 1990s in an analysis of the Romanian revolution and the Gulf War coverage, it showed how desk editors in America and Europe framed reports from the field to fit their own expectations, and their willing acceptance of governmental, military, political or corporate views as facts (Shinar & Stoiciu 1992). Following Hearst’s heritage, and resembling some features of war coverage at present, this pattern finds expression not necessarily in factual materials but in the use of pre-conceived frames, such as:

- The conspiracy frame that ranges from Ceausescu and his Securitate’s behavior against the Romanian people to similar framings of Saddam, Gadaffi, Mubarak, Assad and others in more recent years.
- The monster frame produced by the demonization of leaders, such as Ceausescu, Saddam Hussein, Iranian leaders, and personalities ousted in the Arab Spring. Satanic images promoted by the highest official sources and willfully accepted by the media, range from brutality and torture, to clumsiness and cowardly behavior. Images of crime and punishment, good and evil, freedom and oppression make up the backbone of the legitimacy sought for war.
- The spontaneous reaction frame refers to the alleged snowball nature of events, which fits the “breaking news” style. Again, such framing in the coverage of Romania and the Gulf War, parallels the framing of events in former Yugoslavia, Tahrir Square and in other Arab Spring symbolic sites.
- The national unity frame promoted in the Western media coverage of early crises, and often abandoned as the climate becomes chaotic and anarchic (as in Romania, Tunisia, Lybia, Egypt, Syria, etc.).
- The international community frame, cherished at the political, economic, and psychological levels by governments, and by the media. Sympathetic portrayals of US-led coalitions have detracted public attention from unpopular facts. Examples include war against former allies (Saddam Hussein; the Taliban; regimes ousted in the Arab Spring); links with and support of underdemocratic and oppressive regimes (Kuwait, Syria, Saudi Arabia); poor training and inadequate command of military allies; and economic and political interests that motivated members of coalitions and media organizations to participate in US-led efforts.

Also this professional pattern implies, firstly, that in war coverage, particularly in areas far away from media centers, distinctions exist between field-reporters and headquarters’ desk editors. With or without sufficient factual materials, Western desk editors very often prefer less reliable information that fits their pre-dispositions, psycho-symbolic expectations and external pressures rather than reports filed by their own field staff. Self-manipulation is evident in that they tend to construct realities that do not deviate from the hegemonic consensus.

Second, in war coverage perhaps more than in other areas, the very trademarks of prestigious media help to legitimize propaganda. Regardless of the message, the sheer prestige of organizations such as The New York Times, CNN, or BBC plays a legitimizing role for selective and segmented information, and this is increasingly effective for governmental media management.

Third, in war coverage, media users get some details rather than full pictures, and are told ‘what they mean’ rather than what they are. In many cases, this displays the media willing compliance with the official line that promotes rituals of heroism and patriotism, condemnation of ‘disloyal’ actions and legitimate criticism; reliance on authority; morality and rationality; stereotyping, and others.

Finally, research findings (Knightley 2000b), reveal that both official propaganda and the media prepare users for war in skilful ways, increasing the likelihood that they do not want the truthful and balanced reporting once expected from war correspondents. As a result, governments might find further justification for exerting open and covert tighter control of war correspondents and media organizations.

The dilemma is whether ethical considerations and service to the public interest can reduce the media tendency to accept such control in return for commercial and political benefits.

5.4 Focus and range of discourse

The dilemmas of coverage techniques, narratives and contexts, and self-manipulation display some built-in focus and discourse problems. The present section adds two dilemmas specifically related to the media openness to discursive patterns that enhance the news value of war. They include narrowing the focus and range of discourse, and wording.

Narrowing the focus and range of discourse refers to presenting and discussing issues within a limited range of ideas, opinions, and facts. This approach allows for making judgments on details of given events, processes or issues while curbing broader and deeper substantive frameworks and boundaries of discourse. Indeed, directing focus, deflecting the range of discourse into "permitted parameters of debate", and using preemptive assumptions, appear like democratic debate and
discussion, but do not allow for proper deliberation, and encourage the loss of focus (Shah, 2005, Eno, 2003, Parenti, 2001). Following the earlier discussion, media use of biased experts, helps to determine such parameters and assumptions, thus reinforcing the limits imposed by governmental and military authorities on the range of the debate. Such limits are often systemic, although they might also occur accidentally, and sometimes result from journalists’ plain ignorance, lack of attention, or professional constraints, such as space and time limitations. The major dilemma in this sense has to do with the extent to which journalists and media organizations can accept such narrowing.

Wording: Classifications on this matter, such as Delwiche’s (n.d.) and Parenti’s 20011 clearly point out some of the important dilemmas referring to the use of language in war coverage. They include questions on the extent to which war coverage should use:

Word Games, such as name-calling and labeling people, groups, and institutions in positive or negative terms; glittering generalities, euphemisms, blander meanings, connotations and simple, repetitious and emotional words;

False Connections, such as symbols and imagery of institutions in order to strengthen or weaken acceptance; testimonials; citing individuals and sources not qualified to make the claims made;

Special Appeals, such as plain folks; leaders appealing to ordinary citizens by doing “ordinary” things; using band wagon effects and the “everyone else is doing it” argument; heightening, exploiting or arousing people’s fears to get support for one side, and opposition and hatred for others; and

Logical fallacies, such as bad logic or unwarranted extrapolation.

These factors affect ethical standards and provoke dilemmas of coverage adequacy, framing selectivity of narratives and contexts; difficulty to detect fabrications/lies, manipulation and self-manipulation; and narrow ranges of discourse and focus.

6. Nine implications for the improvement of war coverage

This closing section offers implications from the preceding diagnostic sections on the media preference of war and violence, their attitudes and behaviors; their professional, political and economic contexts; and on media dissonant dimensions and dilemmas in war coverage.

The first implication calls for reconsidering and encouraging the updating the media war coverage both conceptually (regarding aspects such as news-value, objectivity, ethics, and the like), and professionally (regarding techniques, use of technology, discourse, legitimacy of varied views and narratives). This could be done in joint symposia, conferences, and training efforts (see below) with the participation of journalists, officials and researchers experienced in war coverage, such as gatherings sponsored by a variety of media-and-peace-related institutes and foundations, relevant NGOs, academic institutes, and professional associations. This might be a slow process, with unknown results. The chances of success might have increased since the social media have joined the traditional press, radio, and television. Such new media and networks, particularly facebook, you-tube, and twitter – seem to be better equipped for early warning, airing events in real time, revealing intentions, exposing, mobilizing, and compensating for the limitations of the traditional media. Their use during clashes and crises2 could be encouraged.

In this context, questions on the extent to which this implication differs from peace journalism principles are natural. A concise response is that efforts to achieve this goal are increasingly becoming better equipped with evidence based on research and practice from the field, and with experimental applications, thus improving the arsenal of arguments offered by the rather ideological work conducted by Galtung and his disciples. Moreover, while the peace journalism guidelines advocated by Galtung and others can be accepted in principle, the methods offered by the original peace journalism model have not produced a significant genre in journalism since their advent some forty years ago. The low acceptance rates of these methods and their limited effectiveness have been recognized and criticized on the grounds of their radical ideology, their weak theoretical and empirical bases; their sectarian, “closed club” structure; and their “missionary” efforts at professional re-education (Shinar 2011, Hanitzsch 2004a, b).

An additional argument calls for challenging the increasing number of journalists and researchers critical of Galtung’s model to suggest new experimental trends and adapt the model to the 21st century. Good leads in this direction include Julian

1. Media acceptance as given of the very positions that need to be critically examined (Parenti, 2001).
2. Parenti’s classification (2001) includes suppression by omission, “attack and destroy the target”, labeling, pre-emptive assumptions, face-value transmission, sighting of content, false balancing, follow-up avoidance, and framing. For detailed categories, see his www.propagandacritic.com website.
3. See, for example John Rilger’s (2010) combined use of text and video segments run in you-tube.
Assange's wikileaks and other models based on new technologies, the developing "contextual journalism" trend (Hammock, 2010), revealed shortcomings in current conflict, peacemaking and peacekeeping coverage.

The second implication calls for recognizing the shortcomings of local and international media, not only in totalitarian but also in democratic environments. In the former, the ability of traditional local media to influence, expose or mobilize is limited, although not entirely blocked, as documented in the historical Iranian revolution and Palestinian national awakening (Shinar 1983, 1987) and in the ongoing Arab Spring. This emphasizes the importance of international and social media. Also media control in totalitarian regimes is easy to identify, for its usually blatant and crude methods. In democratic societies, they are harder to grasp. Thus, it is important to identify media control practices in democratic societies, particularly in the coverage of more recent wars and conflicts. In addition, this implication is an opportunity for recognizing that the concept of media literacy needs to depart from its traditional focus on the traditional printed press, radio and TV, on quite older and to some degree irrelevant expectations from journalism, and on rigid Western-based definitions of democracy. An updates effort could be made to study and experiment with technological, economic and normative changes in the journalistic profession, with particular reference to war coverage.

The third implication calls for encouraging gradual and cumulative reporting rather than immediate and explosion-like coverage, emphasizing

- predictive and interpretive reporting based on unbiased expertise, experience, and openness to a wide range of official and critical assessments;
- constant attention to possible and emerging eruptions of war and violence;
- early warnings, accompanied by immediate reactions, and consistent follow-up;
- awareness of the advantages offered by the new media for such roles: while the traditional media instill a sense of "controlled, closed networks", the newer media enhance the activation of "networks open for all".

The fourth implication calls for adopting, developing, and demanding "thick coverage", in the spirit of anthropologist Clifford Geertz's "thick description", a tool to rescue thoughts, meanings, actions, feelings, deeper motives, and details about the surroundings of people or phenomena. Thick coverage is process-oriented rather than event-centered; demands context, background knowledge and understanding; resolves as much as possible professional contradictions and dilemmas that affect the coverage; and does not narrow focus and discourse. It stands in contrast with "parachute journalism" that refers to reporters who drop into a country for a relatively short period, file a story or handful of dispatches, and then leave. This is an unflattering term, based on the sense that an outside journalist, usually a well known media celebrity, who stays in a country or town for just a short time is unlikely to have a sufficient feel for the area's political and cultural landscape. Lack of knowledge and tight deadlines often result in inaccurate or distorted reports, especially during breaking news. Unlike reporting by expert foreign correspondents active in the locale for a longer time, critics contend that "parachute journalists" misrepresents facts, display ignorance of contextual issues, lack proper contacts; are not able to conduct independent investigation; and often use the only information immediately available from other news organizations or from "official" or bureaucratic sources, which might be propaganda agencies.

Even though this might be difficult to implement fully and immediately, one could recommend to start working this strategy in terms of developing and experimenting with working definitions (i.e. change news value concept, increase respect for audiences, experiment with new media), and introducing the concept in the professional agenda.

As mentioned above, providing "thick training" to media students and young journalists could be a positive step in this direction. It could be based on teachers imparting and students acquiring knowledge and skills on the roles, techniques, and organizations of traditional and new media, on their current shortcomings, and on ways to improve their performance in war coverage. Scholarly and professional works as well as projects run by international organizations, such as Search for Common Ground and other NGOs, UN agencies, universities, and relevant institutions could take part in such "active media literacy" efforts.

The fifth implication calls for the adoption, by established media, of constant and consistent "routinization", legitimization, and cooperation with "civic", "fringe", "blog", and even "outcast" journalism, such as represented by Michael Moore, Danny Schechter, Julian Assange, John Pilger and others.

The sixth implication calls for assisting journalists in Western and other countries to resolve dilemmas of media rhetoric, particularly those related to focus and range of discourse, and to wording. It also calls for efforts to develop a media peace discourse (Shinar 2004) as an improvement of classic peace journalism. Academic research and emphasis on training elder and younger journalists in this respect could serve to update the marked focus on training by Galtung's disciples.

The seventh implication follows lessons from the reporting of 21st century conflicts and calls for redirecting Galtung's ideological concentration on professional reeducation to promoting ongoing field monitoring and empirical research that might help uncover incitement and hate-media as well as to document ethical infringements in Western and other countries. This
could serve to legitimize and encourage the remarkable ongoing progress of empirical research on war coverage and peace journalism in Third World countries, as showed by Lee and Maslog on Asian media (2005), Tayeebwa (2012) in Africa, and others.

The two final implications refer mostly but not exclusively to the post-war establishment of media structures, regulatory frameworks, and the production of adequate post-war contents. Accordingly, the eighth implication follows the premise that the use of media as weapons of war can lead to the development of new post-war media structures. Many NGOs and grassroots activist communities have become increasingly influential in both conflict and post-war times through creating their own coverage, as illustrated by their prominent presence on websites, by their use of professionally designed publications, and by the development of their own audio and video broadcasts. Examples from Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Israel-Palestine show the importance of such media structures. Following pressures of international powers, post war Bosnia and Herzegovina has become a laboratory of peace-oriented media regulation, resulting in an increased post-war ratio per capita of radio and television stations in Bosnia. Major media projects emerged, aiming to promote adequate media structures, such as new television and radio networks, and new frequencies and licenses that transformed the former ethnic broadcasters into a Public Broadcasting System. In Kosovo, the media responded to the conflict much in the same fashion, following the international community initiative to set up a national television and radio system, and strict regulation of hate broadcasting (Shinar & Bratic 2010). These examples might lead the way to additional initiatives.

Finally, the ninth implication calls for the production and dissemination of post-war adequate formats and contents. Examples include the Israeli-Palestinian jointly operated All for Peace Radio that has been successfully producing and broadcasting joint-produced news and programs in Arabic and Hebrew. In former Yugoslavia and elsewhere, the Common Ground News Service has been providing information produced by local and international experts, on and to conflicting parties, such as syndicated articles, analysis, and op-ed pieces. In order to counter the organization of the media along ethnic lines, Common Ground initiated joint reporting teams and ensured that each joint-written article be published identically in the different papers. The organization initiated the production and broadcasting of radio and television programs intended to build consensus on contentious issues, such as television series looking at the lives and concerns of ordinary people, with particular attention to successful efforts to rebuild post-war economy and society (Melone et al. 2002).

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Sozial-psychologische Barrieren einer friedlichen Konfliktlösung und wie man sie überwinden kann


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The nature of socio-psychological barriers to peaceful conflict resolution and ways to overcome them

The many devastating, violent inter-group conflicts raging in different parts of the world are very current and actual. Such conflicts arise from disputes over incompatible goals and interests in different domains that must be addressed in seeking to find a solution. It is well established that these conflicts might be resolved were it not for strong socio-psychological barriers that help to sustain them. These barriers block progress toward peaceful conflict settlement. They pertain to the integrated operation of cognitive, emotional and motivational processes combined with a pre-existing repertoire of rigid supporting beliefs, worldviews and emotions that favor selective, biased and distorted information processing. This paper elaborates on the nature of socio-psychological barriers and proposes ways to overcome them.

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The nature of socio-psychological barriers to peaceful conflict resolution and ways to overcome them

Abstract. The many devastating, violent inter-group conflicts raging in different parts of the world are very current and actual. Such conflicts arise from disputes over incompatible goals and interests in different domains that must be addressed in seeking to find a solution. It is well established that these conflicts might be resolved were it not for strong socio-psychological barriers that help to sustain them. These barriers block progress toward peaceful conflict settlement. They pertain to the integrated operation of cognitive, emotional and motivational processes combined with a pre-existing repertoire of rigid supporting beliefs, worldviews and emotions that favor selective, biased and distorted information processing. This paper elaborates on the nature of socio-psychological barriers and proposes ways to overcome them.

1. Introduction

Human societies have for millennia continually become entangled in highly destructive inter-group conflicts. Of special interest to us are inter-group conflicts regarded as intractable that have very marked distinguishing characteristics and are a seemingly unavoidable part of inter-group relations. They arise over conflicting goals viewed as existential and are violent, perceived by the parties as irresolvable and of a zero-sum nature. Such conflicts heavily burden the contending societies, which invest enormous resources in them, and continue for at least a generation (Bar-Tal, 1998, 2007, 2013; Kriesberg, 1993, 2007). Up until today such devastating conflicts have continually broken out and inflicted intense suffering in many regions of the world, as for example in Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Chechnya, Northern Ireland and the Middle East. They center on disagreements over incompatible goals and interests in different areas, including disputes over territorial claims, natural resources, economic wealth, self-determination, and/or basic values, and these very real disagreements must be addressed in conflict resolution. Potentially resolvable with various different cooperative procedures, such as negotiation, mediation or arbitration, in reality conflicts over goals perceived as existential are rarely settled within a short time. They often persist for decades or even centuries, accompanied by horrifying acts of violence and unimaginable suffering for the afflicted societies. We propose that one major cause of their persistence is the various nearly insurmountable barriers that fan and sustain conflict.

These barriers, which underlie the basic disagreements, are strong pressures that completely block or at least impede progress towards peaceful conflict resolution. They pose major obstacles to beginning talks, continuing negotiations, achieving agreement and later engaging in reconciliation processes. We will specifically focus here on socio-psychological barriers that are of special importance because they exert strong pressure against peacemaking (Arrow, Mnookin, Ross, Tversky, & Wilson, 1995; Bar-Sman-Tov, 1995; Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Ross & Ward, 1995). These barriers function on the levels of both leaders and society members.

This paper will first describe the evolution of a culture of conflict that provides the context for the emergence of socio-psychological barriers. Then it will discuss the barriers functioning on the societal level. The next section will introduce a general integrative model of socio-psychological barriers on the individual level. A conceptual framework will then be presented, indicating various ways to overcome the socio-psychological barriers. Finally, several conclusions will be summarized.

2. Development of socio-psychological barriers

Our point of departure is that intractable conflicts have an imprinting effect on individual and collective life in affected societies. The above-described characteristics of intractable conflict imply that society members living under harsh conditions

1. This article is based on a Keynote Address given by the first author to the German Peace Psychology Association at the University of Konstanz, June 1-3, 2012.
of inter-societal conflict experience severe ongoing negative psychological effects, such as chronic paranoia, stress, pain, uncertainty, exhaustion, suffering, grief, trauma, misery, and hardship, with both human and material consequences (see for example, Cairns, 1996; de Jong, 2000; Milgram, 1986; Robben & Suarez, 2000). Furthermore, intractable conflict necessitates the continuous mobilization of society members to support and actively participate, even to the extent of demanding a willingness to sacrifice their lives and fortunes. In dealing with these experiences, society members need to adapt to the harsh conditions, continue to meet their basic human needs, learn to cope with stress, and develop psychological characteristics conducive to successfully opposing the rival group.

A basic premise of this study is that to meet the above challenges, societies locked in intractable conflicts develop relevant sets of functional beliefs, attitudes, emotions, values, motivations, norms, and practices (Bar-Tal, 2007a and b, 2013). These explain the societal meaning of the conflict situation, justify the society’s actions, facilitate mobilization for service in support of the conflict, and help to foster a positive social identity and self-collective image. Gradually, the elements of the socio-psychological repertoire crystallize on the individual and collective levels. They form a well-organized system of shared societal beliefs, attitudes and emotions that spreads throughout the society’s institutions and communication channels and becomes part of the socio-psychological infrastructure. This socio-psychological infrastructure includes collective memories, an ethos of conflict and a collective emotional orientation. These mutually interrelated elements provide the major narratives, motivations, orientations and goals that society members need in order to cope with life under the harsh conditions of intractable conflict and to maintain their support for continuing the conflict. Eventually this infrastructure becomes highly institutionalized and widely disseminated and serves as a foundation for the development of a culture of conflict. This in turn comes to dominate every society engaged in intractable conflict (Bar-Tal, 2010, 2013).

We propose that the consolidation of the socio-psychological infrastructure, as an indicator of the development of a culture of conflict, includes the following four aspects: 1. Extensive sharing, the beliefs of the socio-psychological infrastructure and the connected emotions are widely shared by society members. 2. Widespread application, the repertoire is not only shared by society members, but also put into active use in their public and private discourse and is continuously accessible to them. 3. Expression in cultural products, the socio-psychological infrastructure is integrated into popular literature, TV shows, films, theater plays, the visual arts, public monuments, etc. 4. Inclusion in educational materials, the socio-psychological infrastructure shapes the textbooks used in schools and even pervades higher education, as a central theme of socialization and indoctrination.

This introduction presents the basis on which the socio-psychological barriers evolve that serve as powerful forces in societies caught up in intractable conflicts. These barriers are grounded in the culture of conflict, whose pillars are the narratives of the ethos of conflict and the collective memory. The narratives provide a very simplistic, one-sided picture that serves as a prism for viewing the reality of a conflict. In addition, these narratives rest on a foundation of shared emotions that adds still another powerful vector to the functioning of the barriers. All these factors play a major role in blocking in-

1. Societal beliefs are the building blocks of narratives. They are defined as cognitions shared by society members that address themes and issues that society members are particularly concerned about and that contribute to their sense of uniqueness (Bar-Tal, 2000).

2. The collective memory of conflict describes the outbreak of the conflict and its course, providing a coherent and meaningful picture of what has happened from the societal perspective (Bar-Tal, 2007b, in press; Devine-Wright, 2003; Papadakis, Peristianis, & Velz, 2006; Tint, 2010).

3. An ethos of conflict is defined as a configuration of shared central societal beliefs that provides a particular dominant orientation for a society in the present and for the future (Bar-Tal, 2008, 2007b, 2013). It comprises eight major themes about issues related to the conflict, the in-group, and its adversary: (1) Societal beliefs about the justness of a society’s goals, which systematize the contested goals, indicate their crucial importance, and provide explanations and rationales. (2) Societal beliefs about security stress the importance of personal safety and national survival, and outline the conditions for their achievement. (3) Societal beliefs about a positive collective self-image concern the ethnocentric tendency to attribute positive traits, values, and behaviors to one’s own society. (4) Societal beliefs about victimization concern the self-presentation of the in-group as the victim of the conflict. (5) Societal beliefs delegitimizing the opponent are beliefs that deny the adversary’s basic humanity. (6) Societal beliefs about patriotism generate attachment to one’s own country and society by propagating loyalty, devotion, care, and sacrifice. (7) Societal beliefs about unity refer to the importance of putting aside domestic disputes and disagreements during intractable conflicts in order to unite society’s forces in the face of an external threat. (8) Finally, societal beliefs about peace identify peace as the ultimate goal of the society.

4. A collective emotional orientation refers to the societal characterization of an emotion that, on the individual and collective levels, is reflected in the socio-psychological repertoire, as well as in tangible and intangible societal symbols, such as cultural products or ceremonies (Bar-Tal, 2001, 2013).

5. It has been observed that not all members of societies engaged in intractable conflict share the social repertoire equally. Societies differ in the extent to which their members share the societal beliefs of the ethos and the collective memory. Moreover, there are societies that have an ambivalent ethos even at the peak of the conflict, and others may develop them over time.
formation processing that could offer new perspectives for interpreting a conflict and thereby facilitate the peacemaking process. We can now elaborate on the socio-psychological barriers.

We divide this discussion of socio-psychological barriers into two sections. The first section deals with societal mechanisms that play an active role in positioning barriers to block the flow of alternative information differing from the narratives of the ethos of conflict and the collective memory and pointing to possibilities for peaceful conflict resolution. The second section describes the nature and functioning of the barriers on the individual level that influence the members of societies caught in intractable conflict and help to sustain this conflict. The chief argument advanced in this paper is that although socio-psychological barriers function on an individual level, this is greatly influenced by the dominant political culture of conflict that provides opportunities for communication and imposes restraints on the flow of information about the conflict. They create the social environment in which individual society members acquire information, form impressions and process them. Often societies locked in severe, long-term conflicts actively try to maintain the conflict-supporting narrative and prevent the spread of alternative views that could undermine its hegemony. They use various societal mechanisms to block the introduction and dissemination of information that offers alternative views about the conflict, about the rival, about their own group and/or about the society’s conflict goals: The alternative information may humanize the rival and shed new light on the conflict. It may suggest that compromises are possible with regard to goals, that there is a partner on the other side with whom to negotiate a peaceful conflict settlement, that peace is mutually beneficial and conflict is costly, that continuing the conflict will harm the society. It may even provide evidence that the in-group shares responsibility for continuing the conflict and that it has in the past also been guilty of unethical conduct.

These mechanisms can be viewed as societal barriers, as is explained below.

3. Societal mechanisms as barriers

Societal mechanisms are used to block alternative information and narratives from entering societal domains. Even when they spread throughout society, societal mechanisms cause alternative information to be rejected, so that society members will not be persuaded by their evidence and arguments (Bar-Tal, 2007b; Horowitz, 2000; Kelman, 2007). The use of societal mechanisms can be activated by the formal authorities of the in-group — in some cases the state — or by other conflict actors with a vested interest in preventing the dissemination of alternative information. The following mechanisms should be considered:

1. Control of information. This mechanism refers to the selective dissemination of information about a conflict within society by formal and informal societal institutions (e.g., propaganda organs, the military, police and media) that provide information intended to support the dominant pro-conflict narrative, while suppressing contrary information. This is achieved, for instance, by selecting trusted sources for the dissemination of information, by establishing a central organization with responsibility for promulgating official conflict-supportive narratives, and by denying journalists or monitoring NGOs access to particular theaters of conflict (Dixon, 2010).

2. Discrediting counter-information. This category encompasses mechanisms used to discredit information supportive of counter-narratives and/or information sources (individuals or organizations) as unreliable and opposed to in-group interests. Occasionally these methods go as far as delegitimating the individuals and organizations that originate such information (Berger, 2005).

3. Monitoring. This mechanism, used by formal and informal societal institutions, involves systematic scrutiny of the information disseminated to the public sphere (e.g., school textbooks, NGO reports, mass media news, scientific studies, etc.) in order to identify information contrary to conflict-supportive narratives, to discover the sources of such information and to use sanctions to suppress their informational activities (Avni & Kustein, 2009).

4. Punishment. When individuals and organizations challenge the hegemony of the dominant narrative, they may face sanctions. These sanctions can be formal or informal, of a social, financial or material nature, and are used to discourage challengers from carrying on their activities, and thereby in effect to silence them (Carruthers, 2010).

5. Restricting access to archives. This mechanism aims to block the public release of documents stored in archives (especially state archives) that may contradict the dominant narrative (Brown & Davis-Brown, 1998). Typically, such documents provide evidence of in-group malfeasance, including atrocities, rejected opportunities to make peace, or alternatively there may be information that challenges the negative image of the rival group promulgated by the conflict-supporting narrative. For example, there could be evidence of a sincere peace proposal offered by the rival. The restriction of access to archives can be comprehensive — applying to all persons and all documents — or may also be selective.

6. Censorship. This mechanism blocks information dissemination in various products (e.g., newspaper articles, cultural channels and official publications) if it challenges the themes of the dominant conflict-supportive narratives. Typically, these
products must be submitted to a formal or official institution for approval before they can be released to the public (Peleg, 1993).

7. Encouragement and reward mechanisms. These mechanisms use "carrots" rather than "sticks" to reward and encourage sources, channels, agents and products that promote the socio-psychological conflict repertoire. Authorities may grant privileges to various sources that offer information, ideas, artwork, and other products that transmit and disseminate the official conflict repertoire. In the case of news media, for example, a particular correspondent may receive permission to examine classified information or hold interviews. In the case of cultural products, a writer or illustrator may receive a prize for creative work that praises the culture of conflict. The goal is to show that those who promote the official line can expect to enjoy rewards and privileges. They are meant to serve as models for others to imitate.

The described societal barriers throw light on the context in which society members function on the individual level. Nevertheless, it is important to note that although these mechanisms function to some degree in every society, societies in intractable conflicts differ with regard to their use. Their employment depends on various cultural, political, societal and even international determinants. Also, societies in conflicts differ with regard to how much they need to use societal mechanisms to obstruct the flow of alternative information. In asymmetrical conflicts, one society may have a more solid moral-epistemic foundation, more consistent with internationally accepted ethical codes. We will now discuss how socio-psychological barriers work on the individual level.

4. Socio-psychological barriers on the individual level: Freezing

A discussion of the socio-psychological barriers on the individual level must begin with a generalization about societies taking part in intractable conflicts. At the peak of a conflict, at least a significant share of society members preserves in their repertoire narratives of the ethos of conflict and of the collective memory; some are even strongly convinced that they are central values. These conflict-supporting narratives form the bulwark of the culture of conflict, providing a specific view of the ongoing struggle that is widely held in a society. Theoretically, conflict-supporting narratives could easily be replaced by well considered, convincing arguments that include information about the costs of the conflict, humanizing characteristics of the rival, the rival’s willingness to negotiate a peaceful settlement, human-rights abuses by in-group members, etc.
But in practice, such a change in beliefs rarely takes place in the short-term. Even when society members receive credible alternative information that challenges their beliefs, they often do not alter them. Among the reasons for this response pattern are socio-psychological barriers. We understand a socio-psychological barrier as “an integrated operation of cognitive, emotional and motivational processes, combined with a pre-existing repertoire of rigid conflict-supporting beliefs, worldviews and emotions that results in selective, biased and distorting information processing” (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011, p. 220). Thus, the individual functioning of the barriers results in one-sided information processing that obstructs and limits the spread of new information that could advance the peace process. That means that because of these barriers people are not even interested in being exposed to alternative information that could challenge their strongly held societal beliefs about the conflict (see figure 1). The reason for this closure to alternative information is the freezing of societal beliefs by the narrative, which is the essence of how the barriers function (Kruglanski, 2004; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). The state of freezing is reflected in continuing reliance on widely held societal beliefs that support the conflict, reluctance to search for alternative information and resistance to well-founded arguments that challenge these positions (Kruglanski, 2004; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Kunda, 1990). The freezing of the narratives of the culture of conflict is based on the operation of cognitive, motivational and emotional processes, and also a number of socio-psychological factors that we will now elaborate on. (For a more detailed discussion, see the integrated model of socio-psychological barriers to peacemaking in Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011.) First, we begin our analysis with cognitive processes, focusing on the rigid structure of societal beliefs.

4.1 Cognitive-structural factors

Freezing is a process of cognition that is strengthened by the rigid structure of the conflict-supporting beliefs held by many society members. Rigidity refers to the robust nature of these societal beliefs, which are organized in a coherent manner with little complexity and greatly differing from alternative beliefs (Tetlock, 1989; Rokeach, 1960). Several factors contribute to this rigid structure. First, societal beliefs about a conflict are often interrelated in an ideological structure. These beliefs meet all the criteria of an ideology and as such provide a well-organized system that firmly resists counter-arguments and new information and is almost impervious to change (Jost et al., 2003). Second, as already indicated, these beliefs meet important human needs, e.g., for certainty, significance, understanding, predictability, a sense of security and mastery, positive self-esteem and identity, differentiation, justice, etc. (Bar-Tal, 2007a; Burton, 1990; Kelman & Fisher, 2003; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). As a result, because they satisfy such primary needs, they are relatively stable and permanent. Finally, they are also held with a high degree of confidence by many society members, are of central importance and are ego involving, which makes them more robust. All these factors contribute to the rigid structure of the societal beliefs of the ethos of conflict and collective memory, which, consequently, are very resistant to change. These are resolutely upheld even in the face of the most convincing alternative arguments that might lead to peaceful conflict resolution (Petrocelli, Tormala, & Rucker, 2007; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998; Fazio, 1995; Jost, Gaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Krosnick, 1989).

It is important to note in discussing cognitive aspects that closure is also affected by general worldviews. These are systems of beliefs not specifically related to a conflict that give orientations helping to perpetuate the conflict through the perspectives, norms and values they transmit (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011). The list of these general views is long, but among the more distinctive systems we can note, as examples, political ideologies (such as authoritarianism or conservatism) not directly related to the conflict (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1981; Jost, 2006; Sidanies & Pratto, 1999), specific values such as ones related to power or conservatism (Schwartz, 1992), religious beliefs (Kimbail, 2002), and entity theories about the nature of human qualities (Dweck, 1999). All these worldviews influence the way society members perceive conflict issues and form other beliefs about the nature of the conflict, the rival, and their own group (see, for example, Belt-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Dweck & Ehrlinger, 2006; Golec & Federico, 2004; Jost, Gaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Mocz & Edelson, 2007; Sibley & Duckit, 2008).

4.2 Motivational factor

A second factor leading to freezing is motivation, because accepted societal beliefs appear to be reinforced by specific closure needs (see Kruglanski, 1989, 2004). That is, society members are motivated to view the accepted beliefs of the ethos of conflict and the collective memory as true and valid, because they fulfill various psychological needs for them (see, for example, Burton, 1990). Therefore, society members use various cognitive strategies to increase the likelihood of reaching conclusions consistent with societally accepted beliefs (Kunda, 1990). In this motivational process, they reject information inconsistent with widely held conflict-supporting beliefs, but accept information that validates their firm convictions.

1. Still, the process of change may take place despite great difficulty, over a long period of time and in the face of many obstacles.
4.3 Emotional factor

The third factor that affects freezing is enduring negative group-internal emotions such as fear. These emotions function to close society members' psychological repertoires and strengthen the rigidity of their societal beliefs. The link that connects emotions with societal beliefs is the appraisalal component of emotions. Every emotion is related to a unique configuration of comprehensive (conscious or unconscious) evaluations of the emotional stimulus (Roseman, 1984). This means that emotions are interpreted in the light of societal beliefs, and when evoked, emotions may also instigate beliefs. Consequently, over time emotions and beliefs become closely related and mutually reinforcing. In the case of the societal beliefs of cultural conflict, we find them strongly linked to widespread negative emotions such as fear, hatred and anger. They concern a particular worldview created by societal beliefs, and once established and maintained as lasting sentiments, they activate thoughts consistent with the societal beliefs favoring continued conflict. These are then used to evaluate various conflict-related situations (Halperin, Sharvit, & Gross, 2011).

In sum, freezing triggered by many different factors is the dominant reason the societal beliefs of the culture of conflict function as socio-psychological barriers. The barriers encourage selective information gathering, which means that during intractable conflicts society members tend to search for and assimilate information that validates the societal beliefs of their repertoire, while ignoring and disregarding contrary information (Kelman, 2007; Kruglanski, 2004; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Kunda, 1990). But even when ambiguous or inconsistent information is absorbed, it is encoded and cognitively processed to harmonize with the socially supported repertoire, by means of bias, addition and distortion. Recently a thought-provoking experiment by Klar and Baram clearly showed that exposure to the other side's narrative is an ego-depleting experience, because it necessitates expending energy and mental resources to cope with the resulting psychological stress. They also illustrated how rival groups process information about their competing narratives. In the study, each of the Jewish and Arab participants was presented with one of two essentially identical stories — about an actual Jewish or Palestinian leader of a paramilitary group. Then, 90 minutes later they were asked to reconstruct the story. The researchers found that Jews and Arabs, on the one hand, added positive details to stories about their heroes and left out negative ones about them, and, on the other hand, added negative details to stories about rival leaders and left out positive ones (Klar, 2011; Klar & Baram, 2011). Along these lines, other studies have even found that cognitive processes are so biased in favor of the initial narratives people possess that it is very hard for them to change these narratives even when they are discredited (Ecker, Lewandowsky, & Tang, 2010; Lewandowsky, Stritzke, Oberauer, & Morales, 2009).

Moreover, since the repertoire is inculcated in the early years of childhood via societal institutions and channels of communication, we may assume that almost all members of the younger generation will assimilate the contents of the societal beliefs of the culture of conflict. Indeed, a recent study by Ben Shabat (2010) found that by the age of 6-8, Israeli children tend to hold the societal beliefs of the ethos of conflict even when their parents support peacemaking. It seems likely that during childhood most of this generation will come to regard conflict-supporting beliefs as valid and truthful, if they have been systematically inculcated in educational institutions. It is also possible that if a peace process begins and makes progress, at least some will adopt alternative beliefs that support peace. But important recent empirical findings from Israel indicate that even when over the years society members acquire alternative beliefs and attitudes that support peacemaking, the repertoire with which they are indoctrinated at a young age persists in the form of implicit beliefs and attitudes and exerts an automatic influence on information processing in times of stress (Sharvit, 2008).

Two studies have investigated the functioning of socio-psychological barriers like those presented in this paper:

Halperin and Bar-Tal (2011) did a survey study with a large-scale correlational design, using a nationally representative sample of Israeli-Jews. The survey included scales that captured a picture of the potential socio-psychological barriers described in the model. These consisted of: a) general worldviews (values, implicit theories about groups, authoritarianism and political orientation) and b) conflict-supporting societal beliefs, such as specific long-term beliefs (the self-perception of the in-group's collective victimhood and the delegitimization of the rival group), and circumstantial beliefs about the current situation in the conflict. The dependent variables (the effects of the independent variables, i.e., the psychological barriers) included openness to new and positive information about possibilities for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and the ways peace-supporting compromises are assessed.

An analysis of the results with Structural Equation Modeling confirmed the basic patterns predicted by the theoretical model. People with rightist political orientations, authoritarian personalities and entity theories about a group's malleability tend to express higher levels of delegitimization of the opponent and higher levels of collective victimhood attitudes. Interestingly, traditional values also predict a sense of collective victimhood, but not the delegitimization of the Arabs. Finally, circumstantial beliefs are positively associated with rightist political orientations, traditional values and entity theories regarding groups.

As was also hypothesized, the results show that support for compromise is predicted by openness to new conflict-related information. Modification indices led to the incorporation of direct paths between political orientation and compromise, as...
well as between all three societal beliefs (i.e., delegitimization, victimhood and circumstantial beliefs) and support for compromise. In general, the results showed that people with a rightist political orientation, persons who tend to delegitimize Palestinians, and those who see Israel as the ultimate victim are less supportive of compromise.

Of particular importance are findings clearly showing that within the context of conflict a great variety of psychological factors increase people's closed-mindedness. As predicted, delegitimization of the opponent and collective victimhood all decrease openness to new alternative information. It is noteworthy that modification indices led to the addition of two other direct paths between individuals' values and their levels of openness. While traditional values tended to decrease openness, universalistic values led to more openness. When we combine these results with the previous findings, it becomes clear that people's general values, as well as their specific beliefs about the conflict and the opponent, influence their levels of support for compromise, both directly and through the mediation of openness to new alternative information.

More recently, Porat, Halperin, and Bar-Tal (2012) specifically investigated the effect of the ethos of conflict on information processing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israeli Jews were the study subjects. Their level of adherence to the ethos of conflict was assessed, and they were then presented with a hypothetical peace proposal offered by the Palestinians. They were asked to decide how they thought Israel's leaders should respond to this proposal. The experimenters gave them a decision matrix containing new information relevant to the decision to be taken and told them that they could obtain additional information to help them decide. Using Decision Board software (Mintz, Geva, Redd, & Carnes, 1997), the study traced the participants' general processing tendencies (e.g., the time they spent searching for new information, the amount of information processed), as well as the type of information processed (information favoring/opposing the proposal). The results clearly showed that the ethos of conflict exerted a steering effect on the search for information and the final decision. Specifically, high levels of the ethos of conflict resulted in spending less time searching for information, examining fewer new information topics, and devoting less time and effort to considering alternative information than when there was a low level of the ethos of conflict. Ultimately, consistent with this behavior, participants with a high level of adherence to the ethos of conflict tended to reject the peace proposal.

Of special interest in this study were signs of asymmetry in the effects of different levels of adherence to the ethos of conflict. While participants high in adherence to the ethos differed from those low in adherence with regard to openness to information supporting the peace process, the former did not differ from the latter in their search for information opposing this process. In other words, individuals identified as strongly supporting the societal beliefs of the ethos of conflict were as a rule more closed to new information of any sort. Not only did they ignore information opposing their views, they also made very little effort to search for information supporting their pro-conflict views, similar to participants low in adherence to the ethos, who likewise did not look for pro-conflict information.

Focusing on information processing variables first, we see that they indicate a lack of openness to information that might provide a new understanding of the conflict situation—which could in turn increase support for the peace process. The ideological belief system that constitutes the ethos of conflict reinforces adherence to conflict goals, the delegitimization of the rival, and in general the continuation of conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007a, 2011, 2013). However, in order to resolve conflict peacefully, these beliefs must be unfrozen, for example, by information providing new (and more positive) insights on the rival, the goals, the costs of the conflict, and opportunities to initiate a peacemaking process. Such information is essential, since it may open up a new perspective on the conflict and the rival (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2009). Openness in information processing—a readiness to recognize and search for new information—is thus especially important.

In sum, the presented model and its empirical evidence highlight the powerful impact of long-term socio-psychological forces on the way people in intractable conflicts process information and form specific positions on peacemaking. Mapping the barriers should be thought of as an initial step toward discovering new ways to eliminate them. In order to overcome the socio-psychological barriers, society members and leaders alike should open themselves to new alternative information that presents possibilities for peacemaking, and then begin to entertain possibilities for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. We will now outline a number of initial ideas for breaking through socio-psychological barriers.

5. Overcoming socio-psychological barriers—The influence of beliefs about losses

In most cases, peacemaking involves, on the one hand, bottom-up processes in which groups, grassroots activists and civil society members support the ideas of peacebuilding, and also act to disseminate them among their leaders. On the other hand, peacemaking also requires top-down processes in which emerging leaders initiate, or join in efforts to begin, peacemaking processes, which must include persuading society members of the need for a peaceful conflict settlement and for bringing about such a settlement. But in all these cases, unfreezing is the key process that leads to change in the conflict-supporting repertoire.
5.1 Unfreezing process

According to Lewin's classic conception (1947), all societal change must begin with cognitive change. For individuals and groups that means unfreezing. Hence, for there to be any acceptance and internalization of alternative beliefs about a conflict or peacebuilding, it must be possible to destabilize the rigid structure of the dominant socio-psychological repertoire about the conflict, as described above. This gives rise to special challenges, because in many conflict situations this process begins with a minority that must have the courage to present alternative ideas to other society members.

In the social climate of conflict, an awareness of the need to support the peace process is a prerequisite for beginning the difficult task of peacebuilding. On the individual psychological level, the process of unfreezing usually begins with the spread of a new idea (or ideas) inconsistent with accepted beliefs and attitudes that creates some sort of tension, dilemma or even personal psychological conflict. These may cause people to shift away from their basic position and look for alternatives (cf., e.g., Kruglanski, 1989). The new idea is called an instigating belief, since it motivates the society members who develop it to reevaluate the accepted societal beliefs of the culture of conflict, and in some cases, it may lead to unfreezing (see the detailed discussion in Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2009). The content of the instigating belief can originate from various different domains that pertain, e.g., to the image of the rival, the history of the conflict, social or political goals, new threats, and so on. What matters is that the content of the instigating belief challenges at least some widely held beliefs in the system. Thus it may suggest that the rival is also human and could be a partner in negotiations, or that members of the in-group have also violated ethical codes, or that the society's goals are unachievable, or that the costs of a conflict are inordinately high and are imposing extreme hardships on the society, or that in the long run society will pay an unjustifiably high price for not settling the conflict, and other similar views.

Important in this process is that the instigating belief should be of high validity and/or come from a credible source – so that it will be hard to ignore. The instigating belief must be powerful enough to elicit cognitive dissonance, to use Festinger's term (1954). In other words, this belief must motivate society members to pause and make an effort to harmonize their dissonant beliefs. This does not mean that every society member must reflect on the instigating belief, but it is possible that at least a few will become aware of the belief and be motivated to reflect on its implications. The belief can arise from personal experience or from an external source, but once absorbed and considered, it may eventually lead to an unfreezing process. If this happens, at least some accepted beliefs will be rejected, and a new mediating belief will emerge that calls for changing the context of intractable conflict. A mediating belief will be the logical outcome of cognitive dissonance, if the dissonance is resolved in the direction of accepting the instigating belief as providing valid information (see the intrapersonal socio-psychological process described by Kruglanski, 1989). Mediating beliefs are usually stated in the form of persuasive arguments: "We must change our strategy, or we are going to suffer further losses." "Some kind of change is inevitable." "We have been on a self-destructive path; we must change our goals and strategies." "The proposed change is clearly in the national interest; it is necessary for national security" (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1996). These persuasive arguments can open a discussion of alternatives and thereby expand the process of unfreezing begun by instigating beliefs. One key alternative may emerge in this process, which is to suggest that peaceful conflict settlement can change the direction in which a society is moving. The spread of this idea is the first step on the road to peacemaking. This description may sound simplistic, but in essence, the idea must arise and be disseminated among society members. As an example, already in the early 1980s Peter Willem Botha, the conservative leader of the National Party of South Africa, who came to power in 1978, began to reflect on a number of unequivocal indicators. These included internal violence, deterioration of the South African economy, strong demographic growth of the Black population, South African isolation, and so on. Serving as instigating beliefs, these indicators made him realize that the country could not continue as in the past and needed to make reforms and start negotiations with the African National Congress. This logic illustrates the development of mediating beliefs (Beinart, 2001).

The process may appear rather simple in this description – but it is not. The fact is that many societies caught in intractable conflicts find it extremely hard to grasp such basic ideas. The described process begins on the individual level, often with a very small group of society members who either develop it together or unite based on their separate understandings of the situation. In some intractable conflicts, a group of society members may be present, who already at an early stage oppose the conflict and support nonviolent resolution. Nevertheless, in many intractable conflicts the existing or evolved minority must persuade other society members of the need to settle the conflict peacefully. Usually, this requires making compromises concerning the more extreme conflict goals pursued by the society. Eventually this process may lead to the evolution of a widely shared peace-supporting repertoire and even to a ethos of peace, as will be described below. Thus, a process that begins on an individual level moves up to the group level and rises further to the societal level.

From another perspective, it is possible to see the process of change as relating directly to the socio-psychological repertoire that society members share about the conflict and the rival – that is, the narrative belonging to the culture of conflict. This narrative is one-sided and simplistic, selective, biased and distorting. Of special importance in this situation is the closure, caused by socio-psychological barriers, of society members to accepting any alternative information. In this psycho-
logical state, the first step toward any positive change is to recognize that one’s own narrative does not reflect the entire truth, that it is instead selective, biased and distorting. Once they reach this conclusion, society members may be able to move beyond this phase to a state of openness to alternative information that sheds new light on the conflict and the rival. Of crucial importance is the last phase, in which society members open themselves to accepting new information and altering their strongly held beliefs and attitudes. This is an essential phase for any meaningful change that can move toward a peacemaking process. Thus, the ultimate test of becoming open and overcoming socio-psychological barriers is a willingness to receive new information that suggests opportunities for peacebuilding. This is the core challenge for any societal change – to motivate society members so that they both open themselves to new information and come to accept it.

5.2 Conditions for change

Some students of conflict resolution hold that the success of peacemaking processes and conflict resolution depends on specific conditions that arise when conflicts are ripe for settlement. For example, Zartman (2000, pp. 226-229) theorized, “If the (two) parties to a conflict (a) perceive themselves to be in a hurting stalemate and (b) perceive the possibility of a negotiated solution (a way out), the conflict is ripe for resolution (i.e., for negotiations toward resolution to begin).” Pruitt (2007) offers a psychological perspective on “ripeness theory,” which he uses to analyze the Northern Ireland peace process. In his view, ripeness mirrors each party’s willingness to enter into and stay committed to peace negotiations. Antecedents of readiness include motivation to extricate oneself from the conflict situation, together with optimism about the prospect of reaching a mutually advantageous outcome. When readiness is present, a subtle conciliatory signal may be offered. If the other party reciprocates, optimism should increase on both sides. We would argue that this stage does not come about by a natural process of development, but instead results from ongoing and consistent persuasion by those who undertake to move toward peacemaking. In other words, both individuals and groups must advocate and support the peacemaking process. They become aware of new peace-supporting ideas, adopt them, and disseminate them among other society members, in an effort to mobilize them for the cause of peace.

In addition, ideas about terminating a conflict peacefully often arise and are successfully disseminated when changes are seen in the context of the conflict. These contextual changes relate to major events and/or information that may facilitate the process of peacemaking, and we can therefore refer to this as the “emergence of facilitating conditions.” Contextual facilitating conditions can occur at any point in time during the peacemaking process. They can appear either at the beginning, contributing to the emergence of the first instigating beliefs, or at more advanced stages, when a substantial minority already supports the peace process. Any list of such facilitating conditions, which can include major events or information, would be open-ended, as different societies may be responsive to different experiences. Also, they probably will not sway a whole society to support peacemaking, but can serve as evidence for at least some society members of the need to resolve the conflict peacefully, and thus can contribute to the unfreezing process.

We note that among the most salient facilitating conditions that can serve as a major event and/or as information are trust-building gestures by the rival that lead to changes in perceptions of the opponent’s character, intentions and goals. Information about these gestures or even direct experience may begin to change existing images of the rival as malevolent and intransigent. One of the best examples to illustrate this process is Anwar Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem on November 20, 1977, in the midst of the intractable Israeli-Egyptian conflict, where he met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and other leaders and elite members. He proclaimed to the Israeli Parliament (Knesset): “I come to you today on solid ground to shape a new life and to establish peace. We all love this land, the land of God, we all, Muslims, Christians and Jews, all worship God... I have come to you so that together we should build a durable peace based on justice to avoid the shedding of one single drop of blood by both sides. It is for this reason that I have proclaimed my readiness to go to the farthest corner of the earth... Allow me to address my call from this rostrum to the people of Israel. I pledge myself with true and sincere words to every man, woman and child in Israel. I tell them, from the Egyptian people, who bless this sacred mission of peace, I convey to you the message of peace of the Egyptian people, who do not harbor fanaticism and whose sons, Muslims, Christians and Jews, live together in a state of cordiality, love and tolerance.”

Following this dramatic and unprecedented gesture, as a study by Oren (2005) showed, Israeli Jews substantially reduced their support for the major beliefs of the ethos of conflict. For example, prior to the visit over 70% of Israeli Jews thought the Arabs wanted to annihilate Israel, but after the visit, the percentage dropped below 50%.

Another facilitating condition pertains to major information about the state of society. The realization of the costs that society pays for continuing a conflict may lead to the crystallization of a belief in the need to change perceptions of the conflict and the rival, reconsider policies of intransigence and even adopt a willingness to compromise that facilitates resolving the conflict peacefully. An example of this factor can be seen in the perceptions of French President Charles de Gaulle, who came to power in 1958 intending to keep French control over Algeria. The French army achieved a series of military victories
in 1958-59 and very clearly gained the upper hand in the war in Algeria. Nevertheless, de Gaulle changed his position radically and began to speak about “self-determination” for Algeria, thus signaling a readiness to settle the conflict peacefully. He changed his position, because he realized that France was already paying an enormous price on the intra-societal level through polarization, with very high losses in human life and material destruction. On the military level, there was an over-extension of the French army, and on the international stage, France was coming under great pressure and was increasingly isolated (Horne, 2006).

Sometimes intervention by a powerful third party that demands the peaceful resolution of a conflict may also be a determining factor in changing conflict perceptions. In this context, a third party with major resources and high prestige may even use force to compel the party or parties to a violent conflict to agree to a peaceful settlement. An example that illustrates this context is US intervention in the Yugoslavian conflict. Between August 30 and September 20, 1995, NATO carried out airstrikes, mainly against the Serbs, to force an end to the conflict. Indeed the air campaign constituted the decisive pressure on Slobodan Milošević to change his policy and accept the November 21, 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, which finally ended the hostilities (Holbrooke, 1999). In another example, US Senator George Mitchell, a special envoy appointed by President Clinton, played a pivotal role in persuading Northern Irish Catholics and Protestants to sign the April 10, 1998 “Good Friday Agreement” (Mitchell, 1999).

Sometimes, in contrast, major incentives offered by a highly respected third party to at least one conflict party may affect this party’s views of a given intractable conflict and persuade it to take a more conciliatory position. As an example, Goren (2010) analyzed the case of Turkey, at a time when it was involved in two protracted and violent conflicts, one in Cyprus and the other with the Kurds in Eastern Turkey. EU membership was an important national goal for Turkey at that time, and consequently in 1987 it applied to join the European Union. The EU set specific conditions for admission that included changing Turkish policies toward the two conflicts. In fact, due to the EU demands, Turkey persuaded the Turkish-Cypriot leadership to accept Kofi Annan’s peace proposal to resolve the Cyprus conflict. In addition, the Turkish government also approved a set of major reforms, among others, abolishing the death penalty, granting cultural rights to the Kurds and limiting Turkish military measures in the predominantly Kurdish region.

Changes in beliefs regarding a conflict may also result from global geopolitical processes and events not directly related to the conflict (for example, the collapse of a superpower or new geopolitical realignments). In this case, global change as a facilitating condition may influence a conflict party to adopt a more conciliatory position. An example of this sort of change was the decision by Yasser Arafat and the PLO to cooperate more extensively with Israel, which led to the 1993 Oslo Peace Agreement. This move toward reconciliation seems to have been a response to the collapse of the USSR, which in the past had strongly supported the PLO in its conflict with Israel (Tessler, 2009).

In addition, it is possible to list facilitating conditions, such as a traumatic war or a major battle, that raise the price of a conflict and induce a reassessment of the costs and benefits. Such events may suggest that the rival is so powerful that victory is unlikely. An example of this kind of event is the disastrous battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, which had a dramatic influence on the French decision to negotiate the Geneva Accord to end the conflict with the Vietnamese communists. Furthermore, major events and/or information about the emergence of a new enemy that seems more threatening can persuade leaders of the need to settle a long-term conflict peacefully in order to concentrate resources on fighting the new enemy. As an example, an argument commonly used in Israel is that peace with the Palestinians is necessary in order to focus more on the threat from Iran. Finally, the spread of information about war crimes or atrocities committed by a country may reduce its citizens’ motivation to continue a conflict. As an example, the 1968 My Lai massacre by a US army unit became public knowledge in 1969 and strengthened domestic opposition to the Vietnam War.

The descriptions here of various conditions are neither complete nor mutually exclusive. Each of them alone, as well as various combinations, may give rise to new needs and goals that are more important than the ones that originally led to the conflict. As a result, a set of beliefs may emerge that can help to unfreeze the repertoires that support continued conflict. As noted, different beliefs can lead to unfreezing, but perhaps one of the most influential is the recognition that the costs of continuing a conflict will exceed those that must be paid, if a specific peaceful solution is accepted (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2009). This recognition is a powerful idea that may guide the peacemaking process to a successful conclusion. In essence, it focuses on the losses a society may incur if it does not resolve its conflict peacefully under the existing conditions.

5.3 Effects of information about losses as a facilitating condition

Our theorizing about the importance of losses is based partly on Kahneman and Tversky’s (1979) prospect theory, which has been adapted to apply to conflict situations (e.g., Boettcher, 2004; Levy, 1996; Geva & Mintz, 1997). According to prospect theory, people are more strongly motivated to conserve what they already possess than they are to strive for what they still lack (Tversky & Kahneman, 1986). In the language of prospect theory, the value function is steeper on the loss
side than on the gain side. The theory's insight about the greater impact of anticipated losses than of anticipated gains has also been included in other theories. One example is the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which asserts that losing resources through a traumatic event causes greater distress than an equivalent failure to acquire new resources. A similar negativity bias has been found in the literature on persuasion. Negative events and information tend to be more closely watched and better remembered, and are thus more likely to cause attitude change than positive events and information (see Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994 for a review).

One way to emphasize the potential losses associated with continuing a conflict and to reduce the focus on losses associated with a peaceful settlement is to reframe the reference point. Prospect theory holds that people react more strongly to changes in assets than to net asset levels; that is, they react to gains and losses from a reference point, rather than responding to the absolute values of the gains or losses (e.g., Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Tversky & Kahneman, 1986). In most cases, the reference point is the status quo, but sometimes it can be an "aspiration level" (Payne, Laughhunn, & Crum, 1981) or a desired goal (Heath, Larrick, & Wu, 1999). Very often, members of societies involved in conflict are socialized to believe in the feasibility of future gains from the conflict or even in the ultimate victory of their side over their rival (Bar-Tal, 2007a). The alternative possibility of paying a high price for continuing a conflict or being defeated is often discounted or trivialized. As a result, when the compromises required to reach a peaceful conflict settlement are compared with society's ambitions, or even with the status quo (usually for the stronger group), people perceive peace as unacceptably costly. In other words, the motivation to reevaluate firmly held beliefs and consider alternatives depends on a prior realization that continuing the conflict will not lead to a better or desired future, but may instead drastically reduce the chances of achieving one (Bar-Tal, 1993). Moreover, as noted, continuing a conflict could in fact result in losses far greater than the ones that would have to be accepted to arrange a peaceful resolution of the conflict via negotiation and compromise.

Two notable examples of changes that were driven, at least to some extent, by the described processes are the peacemaking processes in Northern Ireland and South Africa. With regard to Northern Ireland, MacInty and Darby (2002) recently argued that in the early 90s the Unionists began to realize that future change was inevitable and that such change might cause a variety of major losses for the Unionist side in the conflict. This was one of the central motivations for reconsidering their position and finally entering into negotiations in order to be able to influence a possible agreement. These authors quote a statement by a senior Orangeman that they believe reflected a common view shared by the Unionists: "Every time something comes along it is worse than what came before" (MacInty & Darby, 2002, p. 23). In the context of the South African conflict, Mufson (1991) has offered a similar image of the unfreezing process. When de Klerk and his supporters finally realized that "White South Africans' bargaining position would only grow weaker with time" (p. 124), they agreed to negotiations and made every effort to move as quickly as possible towards a viable settlement.

Working with colleagues (Gayer, Landman, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2009), we have tested the suggested process with a group of Israeli Jews. Our main assumption was that instigating beliefs, including information about potential future losses in various life domains (e.g., economic and demographic situations, as well as potential negotiations with the Palestinians), can unfreeze Israelis' predispositions toward the peace process with the Palestinians.

Based on this assumption, we made a correlational study (Study 1) using a representative nationwide sample of Israeli Jews. We found that Israeli Jews who believe that time is not on their side, i.e., that the continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would bring unacceptable losses to Israeli Jewish society, were more inclined to look for alternative information about the conflict. In addition, people who held these beliefs regarding future losses also showed greater willingness to make compromises for the sake of peaceful conflict resolution.

In our second and third studies, we used already available information to evoke certain perceptions of future losses among Jews in Israel and examined the effects on the levels of openness to new information and support for compromise. The results of Study 2 showed that information about possible future losses caused by the implementation of a one-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led to attitudinal unfreezing and to higher levels of support for compromise among members of all political groups. It also led to behavioral unfreezing among centrist (persons at the center of the Israeli political spectrum). These findings suggest that new information about losses could not only stimulate Israelis to question the alleged advantages of continuing the conflict, but also persuade them to consider alternative solutions (i.e., a compromise-oriented repertoire) for the conflict.

Furthermore, in accord with the original assumptions of prospect theory, the third study showed: The effects that instigating beliefs about future losses had on cognitive unfreezing and support for compromise were significantly greater than the effects of instigating beliefs regarding future gains, using the same information (for a detailed description of the studies, see Gayer et al., 2009). In other words, the same information framed as a possible loss led to more unfreezing and support for compromise than occurred when the information was framed in terms of possible gains.

These results are highly applicable to the case of the Israeli Jewish society, which accepts in principle a two-state solution, mainly because of the 'demographic threat'. This suggests that the much higher population growth rates of Palestinian com-
munities in Israel and the West Bank will soon upset the population balance between the two largest ethno-religious communities in the region. It is foreseeable that current demographic trends will lead to a Palestinian majority within the next few decades.

Accepting this conclusion encourages unfreezing. The ultimate outcomes of unfreezing include changes in the repertoire that supports continuing the conflict, greater readiness to reassess the conflict, and willingness to entertain alternative beliefs (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2009). The goal is to encourage alternative societal beliefs that support peaceful conflict settlement (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). The examples offered here illustrate more than just unfreezing. In all the examples, the leaders went to the point of being able to formulate a coherent set of compromise-facilitating beliefs that supported or served as a comprehensive plan acceptable to the opposing party. Indeed, the ultimate objective is to start from a plan that peacefully settles the conflict and continue on to evolving, accepting and internalizing a new ethos of peace. This ethos must serve, in terms of content and structure, as the reverse image of the repertoire of conflict, in such a way that it will adequately meet the needs and aspirations of in-group members. However, unless there is peace and reconciliation, the attempt to form a new socio-psychological repertoire that will fulfill these needs and aspirations appears to be a great challenge for every society striving to end conflict peacefully. Meeting these needs in the two clear-cut situations—irresolvable violent conflict and viable peace—seems to be much easier than doing so in the “transitional” period between violent conflict and peace, which is burdened by uncertainty and often marked by continuing violence and disruptions by opposition groups.

In summarizing this section, we would like to conclude that the process of unfreezing and the formation of a new system of beliefs that can facilitate the peaceful repositioning of conflict might potentially stem from two by no means mutually exclusive observations: a. Peaceful resolution of a conflict will prevent harm to the in-group and/or even benefit it. b. Peaceful resolution will stop the harm done to the rival and/or do justice to its claims. The first observation is based on utilitarian considerations, while the second relates at least partly to moral considerations. Our studies of inter-group conflicts have convinced us that the former consideration guides most leaders and society members who support peacemaking and conflict resolution.

6. Conclusions

Real disagreements over tangible and intangible goods motivate people to enter into violent, destructive conflicts that disrupt the lives of society members and cause continuing suffering and hardship, as well as great losses of human life. Conflicts burden the affected societies and the international community with serious problems and challenges. Settling these conflicts requires not only addressing the issues at the heart of the disagreement, but also necessitates surmounting the underlying socio-psychological barriers. Moreover, in protracted conflicts these barriers often become the major obstacles to finding solutions. They close the minds of society members and block information processing that can reveal alternative knowledge needed to facilitate peacemaking. Such information is essential for embarking on the path to peace, as it may unfreeze conflict-supporting societal beliefs.

We should not underestimate the fact that the foundation of these barriers consists in ideological beliefs supporting the conflict that were formed in society and inculcated in society members via societal institutions and communication channels. These ideological beliefs play a major role in sustaining conflict, fanning its flames and obstructing peaceful resolution. The internal socio-psychological barriers and the mechanisms that society employs are formidable brakes on the peace process. Only a determined minority and its involvement and activism in advocating innovative ideas can overcome the human tendency to cling to habitual patterns of thought and action, and start to overcome the inherent threat and danger in order to build a better world, free of violence, suffering and destruction. Breaking down these barriers is a major challenge for every society that wants to settle severe, violent conflicts and take the road to peace.

The Middle East conflict shows us that this process is difficult and stubbornly resisted by various groups with a vested interest in continued conflict. We do not deal with the economic-military-political interests that play a role in hardening the will to continue the struggle. Rather, we focus only on the ideological investments, as from an early age the respective society members have been inculcated with well established, coherent, systematic and interconnected ideas about why to adhere to extreme national goals and to disregard the needs and goals of the other party. They learn why they should distrust, dehumanize and hate the rival; and view their own group in highly idealized terms as the eternal and sole victim of the conflict. They learn to ignore, deny and repress the suffering of the other group, while focusing solely on their own hardships and excluding from the repertoire any empathetic moral considerations that could challenge the accepted image of the conflict. This ideology is supported throughout each citizen’s life by various communication channels and societal institutions that make all educational policies seem valid and beneficial. They indoctrinate people to believe that all those who propose alternative views, either from inside or outside a society, have malevolent intentions, are untrustworthy, and want to harm the common interest.

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The present paper suggests that overcoming socio-psychological barriers is not impossible, but requires intensive persuasion by society members themselves. In other words, society members and their leaders must employ the process of mobilization for peacemaking in much the same way that citizens were originally mobilized to support and participate in the conflict. Unfortunately, this is not so simple. With appeals to patriotism, society members can often be rapidly mobilized to take part in a conflict, but a very long time is usually required to mobilize them to leave the path of conflict for the new path of peacemaking. We know that the ideas of society members matter in both cases. Society members themselves have embraced the idea of engaging in conflict, and they can find new ideas to support the call for peacemaking. In both cases, they must persuade their fellow citizens of the "justness" of the path to peace.

We can learn from these observations that any analysis of intractable conflicts requires a socio-psychological perspective, in addition to other perspectives. People perceive, evaluate, infer and act -- they are active participants in the events going on around them. These psychological processes are integral parts of conflict interactions, since human beings are the only real actors on the conflict stage. People make decisions regarding the dissemination of information about the necessity of conflict, the mobilization of society members to continue fighting, the socialization of their children to persist in conflicts and conduct them violently or reject peaceful resolution. In essence, people are the decision-makers, and therefore we must address the psychological tendencies inherent in human nature if we want to change human behavior. Later, if they begin to view the conflict situation differently, they may decide to disseminate the idea of the necessity of peacemaking and begin to mobilize society members for this goal. We hope that addressing the socio-psychological repertoire will create various socialization and mobilization mechanisms for peacemaking and peacebuilding. It is thus essential to offer knowledge that sheds light on the conditions, contents, and processes that can not only persuade society members to embark on the peacebuilding process in times of conflict, but also socialize them to avoid violent, destructive conflicts and costly hate-cycles.

We conclude this paper with two quotations by political leaders who had the courage to break down barriers, and unfortunately later paid the ultimate price for their courage.

When he arrived to make peace with Israel, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat declared in a speech before the Israeli Knesset on November 20, 1977:

"As we really and truly seek peace, we really and truly welcome you to live among us in peace and security. There was a huge wall between us which you tried to build up over a quarter of a century, but it was destroyed in 1973. Yet, there remained another wall. This wall constitutes a psychological barrier between us. A barrier of suspicion. A barrier of fear of deception. A barrier of hallucinations around any action, deed or decision. A barrier of cautious and erroneous interpretations of all and every event or statement. It is this psychological barrier which I described in official statements as representing 70 percent of the whole problem."

Seventeen years later, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the architect of the Oslo peace process, received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo on December 10, 1994. At that time, he declared:

"We will pursue the course of peace with determination and fortitude. We will not let up. We will not give in. Peace will triumph over all our enemies, because the alternative is grim for us all. And we will prevail. We will prevail because we regard the building of peace as a great blessing for us, and for our children after us."

These messages should be taken to heart and put into practice by everyone who wants to overcome the socio-psychological barriers to peacemaking.

References


The nature of socio-psychological barriers to peaceful conflict resolution...


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Claudia König

Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt: Positionierung, emotionale Ambivalenz und emotionale Nähe


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**German volunteers’ experiences with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Positioning, emotional ambivalence and emotional closeness**

This study analyzes how young Germans’ mental models of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict change during their voluntary service in Israel or Palestine. Thirty-three German volunteers answered a questionnaire on positioning, emotional ambivalence and emotional closeness before they left Germany. After a period of four months in Israel or Palestine they answered a second questionnaire. Although the study is not representative, it shows that nearly half of the participants changed their position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during their stay. Confirming the findings of prior research, the results indicate that emotional closeness to one or the other conflict party plays an important role in taking a stance on the conflict. Especially participants who developed a stronger emotional closeness to the Palestinians shifted towards a clearly pro-Palestinian position.

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Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt: Positionierung, emotionale Ambivalenz und emotionale Nähe

Abstract. This study analyzes how young Germans’ mental models of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict change during their voluntary service in Israel or Palestine. Thirty-three German volunteers answered a questionnaire on positioning, emotional ambivalence and emotional closeness before they left Germany. After a period of four months in Israel or Palestine they answered a second questionnaire. Although the study is not representative, it shows that nearly half of the participants changed their position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during their stay. Confirming the findings of prior research, the results indicate that emotional closeness to one or the other conflict party plays an important role in taking a stance on the conflict. Especially participants who developed a stronger emotional closeness to the Palestinians shifted towards a clearly pro-Palestinian position.


1. Einleitung


Drittseitig spielen für die Entwicklungsstufen von Konflikten eine nicht unwesentliche Rolle. Die Art und Weise wie Außenstehende einen Konflikt bewerten kann dazu führen, dass sich die bestehenden Vorurteile und Argumentationsstile der Konfliktseitenseiten verfestigen und die Konfliktskalation weiter vorantreiben, aber auch dazu dass neue Perspektiven in den Konfliktdiskurs eingebracht werden, die eine Deeskalation des Konfliktes begünstigen (Kempf, 2000).


1. Die Autorin bedankt sich recht herzlich bei den Entsendorganisation für ihr Engagement zur Gewinnung der Studienteilnehmer/innen so wie bei den Freiwilligen für deren Teilnahme.


Die Ergebnisse zum Intergruppenkontakt lassen sich jedoch nicht ohne weiteres auf die vorliegende Studie übertragen, da es hier nicht um die Einstellungen gegenüber Israelis und/oder Palästinensern geht, sondern um die Wahrnehmung des Konfliktes zwischen den beiden verfeindeten Gruppen. Eine Studie, die sich mit Erfahrungen von arbeitenden Touristen in Israel beschäftige, konnte aufzeigen, dass diejenigen, die besonders intensive Beziehungen zu ihren Gastgebern aufgebaut hatten - hauptsächlich Kibbuz-Touristen - ausgeprägte positive Gefühle zu den Gastgebern entwickelten und eine positive Einstellungsänderung gegenüber dem Land Israel zeigten (Pizam et al., 2000). Doch auch diese Studie beschränkt sich auf die Bewertung der Gastgeber und macht keine Aussagen darüber, welche Auswirkungen die vor Ort gemachten Erfahrungen auf die Wahrnehmung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes haben.

1.1 Mentale Konfliktmodelle


Johnson-Laird (1983), der als der Hauptvertreter der Theorie der Mentalen Modelle gilt, stellte unter anderem drei Konstruktionsprinzipien auf, gemäß derer Mentale Modelle gebildet werden: (1) durch Beobachtungen im Alltag, (2) durch Erklärung anderer und (3) durch die Befähigung, Mentale Modelle induktiv zu bilden, indem auf Vorwissen aufgebaut oder auf bekannte verwandte Modelle zurückgriffen wird.


1.2 Gesellschaftliche Grundüberzeugungen in langanhaltenden Konflikten


- der Glaube an die Gerechtigkeit der eigenen Ziele,
- der Glaube an bestimmte Bedingungen, welche Sicherheit ermöglichen,
- die Delegitimation des Gegners: Der Gegner wird als Auslöser des Konfliktes betrachtet,
- der Glaube an die eigene Opferrolle. Dadurch kann der Gegner für den Konflikt und für die eigenen Verluste verantwortlich gemacht werden,
- ein positives Selbstbild, welches die eigenen Handlungen in ein gutes Licht rückt,
- Patriotismus, der den Gruppenzusammenhalt stärkt,
- der Glaube an die Einigkeit der eigenen Partei,
- der Glaube an Frieden in einer fernen Zukunft.


1.3 Soziale Identität


1.4 Übernahme von gesellschaftlichen Grundüberzeugungen einer Konfliktpartei

Wenn jedoch Dritte bestimmte gesellschaftliche Grundüberzeugungen einer Konfliktpartei teilen, heißt das, dass sie ein Stück der sozialen Identität der Konfliktpartei in ihr Selbstkonzept integrieren. Dies mag vordergründig erst einmal verwunderlich erscheinen, weil Dritte per se die Nationalität oder Ethnie nicht mit der Konfliktpartei teilen und somit gemessen an der sozialen Kategorie Nationalität zur Outgroup gehören. Forschungsergebnisse zu Intergruppen-Freundschaften (Sassenberg & Matschke, 2010) zeigen jedoch, dass Intergruppen Freundschaften nicht nur die Einstellungen gegenüber der Outgroup verbessern, sondern wie in jeder anderen Freundschaft dazu führen, dass der Freund in das Selbstkonzept integriert wird. Daher kann ein qualitativ hochwertiger Kontakt zu einem Outgroup Mitglied dazu beitragen, die Outgroup in das eigene Selbstkonzept zu integrieren. Das heißt, die einstige Outgroup wird zur Ingroup (Aron et al., 1991).

2 Methode

2.1 Ziele der Studie und Hypothesen

Ziel der vorliegenden Arbeit ist es zum einen, ein Bild über die Erwartungen und Erfahrungen deutscher Freiwilliger hinsichtlich ihres Aufenthaltes in Israel bzw. in den palästinensischen Gebieten zu geben, und zum anderen, zu untersuchen, wie sich der Aufenthalt als Freiwilliger in Israel bzw. in den palästinensischen Gebieten auf die Wahrnehmung und Einschätzung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes auswirkt.


Hypothese 1: Der Aufenthalt vor Ort hat einen Einfluss auf die Positionierung zum israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt.

Zudem pflegen Freiwillige während ihres sozialen Dienstes vor Ort zu den Menschen, mit denen sie täglich gemeinsam zusammen arbeiten oder zusammen leben qualitativ hochwertigen Kontakt und entwickeln eine emotionale Nähe. Gemäß
Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt

Hypothese 2a: Je einseitiger die neue emotionale Nähe, desto eher verschiebt sich die Positionierung zu dieser Seite.

Hypothese 2b: Je eher neue emotionale Nähe zu einer Seite tendiert, desto eher wird die Ambivalenz dieser Seite wahrgenommen und desto weniger die der Gegenseite.

2.2 Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peace-Frame</th>
<th>Befürwortung von Frieden</th>
<th>Pro-islamisch</th>
<th>Pro-palästinensisch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>npeace 01: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes kann nur auf dem Verhandlungsweg gefunden werden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>npeace 02: Die fortgesetzte Gewalt der Israelis und Palästinenser vertieft die Kluft zwischen den beiden Gesellschaften und führt zu einer Radikalisierung auf beiden Seiten.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berücksichtig der Lebensbedürfnisse</td>
<td>npeace 03: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes muss die Lebensbedürfnisse beider Bevölkerungen berücksichtigen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ipeace02: Es sollte von allen Beteiligten darauf hingearbeitet werden, dass die Israelis in einer angstfreien und friedlichen Zukunft blicken können.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War-Frame</td>
<td>Ablehnung einer friedlichen Konfliktlösung</td>
<td>iwar01: Die palästinensische Führung muss zur Anerkennung Israels gezwungen werden.</td>
<td>pwar01: Der israelische Staat muss zur Anerkennung der Rechte der Palästinenser gezwungen werden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iwar02: Die palästinensische Führung ist zu Kompromissen nicht bereit und versucht, ihre Maximalziele ohne Rücksicht auf Verluste durchzusetzen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kritik der gegnerischen Politik</td>
<td>iwar03: Das Ziel der palästinensischen Führung ist die Zerstörung Israels.</td>
<td>pwar03: Das Ziel der israelischen Politik ist die fortgesetzte Unterdrückung und Entreichung der Palästinenser.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegitimierung des Gegners</td>
<td>iwar04: Die Israelis führen einen legitimen Verteidigungskrieg gegen den palästinensischen Terrorismus.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimierung der eigenen Kriegsführung</td>
<td>iwar05: Die palästinensischen Terroranschläge gegen die israelische Bevölkerung können durch nichts gerechtfertigt werden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verurteilung gegnerischer Gewalt</td>
<td>pwar04: Die Palästinenser führen einen legitimen Befreiungskrieg gegen die israelische Besatzung.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antwortformat:</td>
<td>1 = das lehne ich voll ab; 2 = das lehne ich eher ab; 3 = Weder noch; 4 = dem stimme ich eher zu; 5 = dem stimme ich voll zu; 6 = weiß ich nicht</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabelle 1: Items zur Erfassung der Positionierung zum Konflikt

In Form einer Längsschnittstudie wurden die Positionierung, die Ambivalenz und die emotionale Nähe deutscher Freiwilliger bezüglich des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes zu zwei Messzeitpunkten erfasst. Die erste Erhebung fand von August bis Ende September 2010 statt, unmittelbar bevor die Teilnehmer ihren Freiwilligendienst in Israel bzw. den palästinensischen Gebieten begannen. Die zweite Erhebung erfolgte im Januar 2011 während des Freiwilligendienstes. Um die Teilnehmer sowohl bei der Ersterhebung in Deutschland als auch bei der Zweiterhebung in Israel bzw. den palästinensischen Gebieten erfassen zu können, wurde in Form einer Längsschnittstudie gewählt. Die Ergebnisse der Studie zeigen, dass die Teilnehmer ihre Positionierung zum Konflikt über den Zeitraum hinweg relativ stabil hielten.


Des Weiteren kam bei der Erfassung der emotionalen Ambivalenz bezüglich des Konfliktes in beiden Erhebungen die gleichnamige Skala von Kempf (2011a) zum Einsatz (siehe Tabelle 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War-Frame</th>
<th>Bietet Sicherheit</th>
<th>For die Israelis</th>
<th>Ambi01p: Durch konsequenten bewaffneten Widerstand kann ein palästinensischer Staat erzwungen werden.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schafft Bedrohung</td>
<td>Ambi02i:</td>
<td>Die vollständige Rückgabe der besetzten Gebiete würde Israel einen dauerhaften Frieden mit den Palästinensern ermöglichen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schafft Bedrohung</td>
<td>Ambi02p:</td>
<td>Wenn die palästinensische Führung die Gewalt nicht unterbindet, wird den Palästinensern die Gründung eines eigenen Staates nicht gewährt werden.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace-Frame</td>
<td>Bietet Sicherheit</td>
<td>Ambi03i:</td>
<td>Die vollständige Rückgabe der besetzten Gebiete würde Israel einen dauerhaften Frieden mit den Palästinensern ermöglichen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schafft Bedrohung</td>
<td>Ambi04i:</td>
<td>Die Rückkehr zu den Grenzen von 1967 würde für Israel ein großes Sicherheitsrisiko darstellen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schafft Bedrohung</td>
<td>Ambi04p:</td>
<td>Ein Kompromiss mit Israel würde den Ausverkauf der palästinensischen Interessen bedeuten.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Antwortformat: 1= das lehne ich voll ab; 2= das lehne ich eher ab; 3= Weder noch; 4= dem stimme ich eher zu; 5= dem stimme ich voll zu; 6= weiß ich nicht

Tabelle 2: Items zur Erfassung der emotionalen Ambivalenz der Frames


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wie wären Sie Ihre Kenntnis des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes einschätzen?</td>
<td>[1=sehr gut, 2=gut, 3=mittelmaßig, 4=gering, 5=sehr gering]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wie nahe geht Ihnen der Konflikt?</td>
<td>[1=sehr, 2=etwas, 3=wenig, 4=gar nicht, 5=ist mir egal]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcher Seite fühlen Sie sich mehr verbunden?</td>
<td>[1=Israel, 2=Palästina, 3=beiden gleichermaßen, 4=keiner der beiden]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind Sie schon einmal in Israel gewesen?</td>
<td>[1=mehrmals, 2=einmal, 3=noch nie]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sind sie schon einmal in den Palästinenseengebieten gewesen?</td>
<td>[1=mehrmals, 2=einmal, 3=noch nie]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mit wem werden Sie während Ihres Freiwilligendienstes zu tun haben?</td>
<td>Mit wem arbeiten Sie während Ihres Freiwilligendienstes überwiegend zusammen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1=überwiegend mit jüdischen Israelis, 2=überwiegend mit arabischen Israelis, 3=überwiegend mit Palästinensern, 4=weiß ich noch nicht]</td>
<td>[1=überwiegend mit jüdischen Israelis, 2=überwiegend mit arabischen Israelis, 3=überwiegend mit Palästinensern]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haben Sie schon mal persönlichen Kontakt mit Israelis gehabt?</td>
<td>Mit welcher Personengruppe verbringen Sie überwiegend Ihre Freizeit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1=ja, 2=nein]</td>
<td>[1=mit anderen Freiwilligen, 2=mit jüdischen Israelis, 3=mit arabischen Israelis, 4=mit Palästinensern]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haben Sie schon einmal persönlichen Kontakt mit Palästinensern gehabt?</td>
<td>Wo lagen Ihre bisherigen Ausflugsziele überwiegend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1=ja, 2=nein]</td>
<td>[1=Die Ausflugsziele lagen überwiegend in Israel, 2=Die Ausflugsziele lagen überwiegend in den palästinensischen Gebieten, 3=Die Ausflugsziele lagen gleichermaßen in Israel als auch in den pal.Gebieten, 4=Ich hatte bisher keine Gelegenheit Ausflüge zu machen]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haben Sie israelische Freunde, Bekannte oder Verwandte?</td>
<td>Haben Sie während Ihres bisherigen Freiwilligendienstes neue Freundschaften geschlossen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1=ja, 2=nein]</td>
<td>[Mehrfachantworten: a) nein, b) ja, zu jüdischen Israelis, c) ja, zu arabischen Israelis, d) ja, zu Palästinensern, e) ja, zu anderen, nämlich:…]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haben Sie palästinensische Freunde, Bekannte oder Verwandte?</td>
<td>Wurden Sie während Ihres bisherigen Freiwilligendienstes zu Familien nach Hause eingeladen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1=ja, 2=nein]</td>
<td>[Mehrfachantworten: a) nein, b) ja zu jüdisch-islamischen Familien, c) ja, zu arabisch-islamischen Familien, d) a, zu palästinensischen Familien, e) ja, zu anderen, nämlich:…]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabelle 3: Überblick über die verwendeten Items zur Erfassung der emotionalen Nähe

2.3 Stichprobenbeschreibung


Die Teilnehmenden waren im Durchschnitt 20 Jahre alt (SD=1.88), wobei die jüngste Person 18 und die älteste 26 Jahre alt war. Das Geschlechterverhältnis war nahezu ausgeglichen. 55% der Befragten waren weiblich und 45% Prozent männlich. Lediglich 6% der Teilnehmenden gaben an, keiner Konfession anzugehören. 39% waren evangelisch und weitere 39% katholisch. 15% gaben evangelisch-frei kirchlich als Religionszugehörigkeit an. Fast drei Viertel (74%) bezeichneten sich als religiöse Menschen.

Neben der hohen Religiosität zeichnete sich die Stichprobe zudem durch ein hohes Bildungsniveau aus. Mit Ausnahme einer Person hatten alle Abitur (97%). 9% verfügten über eine abgeschlossene Lehre und eine Person wies bereits ein abgeschlossenes Studium auf.

40% der Teilnehmenden absolvierten ihren Freiwilligendienst über den Deutschen Verein vom Heiligen Lande und 27% über den deutsch-israelischen Verein für Rehabilitation Geisen e.V. An einem Volontärsprogramm des Vereins Dienste in Israel nahmen 21% teil. 9% leisteten ihren Freiwilligendienst in einem Projekt des Berliner Missionswerkes und 3% bekamen ihre Freiwilligendienststelle über den internationalen diakonischen Jugendinsatz (IDJE) vermittelt.

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Die Dauer des Freiwilligendienstes betrug im Durchschnitt neun Monate (SD = 2.75).

45% der Freiwilligen absolvierten ihren Freiwilligendienst in Jerusalem und Umgebung, 30% in der Mittelmeerregion rund um Tel Aviv. 6% der Personen waren in Norden Israels in Einrichtungen im Raum Haifa tätig. In der Westbank waren 18% als Freiwillige beschäftigt. Dies beschränkte sich jedoch auf Betlehem und Umgebung.


3. Ergebnisse

3.1 Nähere Beschreibung der Freiwilligenstichprobe

3.1.1 Beweggründe für einen Freiwilligendienst

Die Motive der Teilnehmer, einen Freiwilligendienst in Israel bzw. in den palästinensischen Gebieten zu leisten, waren sehr vielseitig. Besonders häufig nannten die Befragten Interesse an den verschiedenen Kulturen (45%) und Religionen (42%) sowie an der Geschichte des Landes (28%). Daneben erhoffte sich ein Großteil der Teilnehmer, den Konflikt während der Zeit vor Ort besser verstehen zu lernen, um zu einem eigenen Standpunkt zu finden (36%). Faszination für die landschaftliche Vielfalt (21%) und die Mentalität der dort lebenden Menschen (33%) sind weitere Gründe, die die Teilnehmer nannten. Außerdem fühlten sich 33% durch Erfahrungen von Freunden oder Verwandten als Freiwillige in Israel/Palästina ermutigt, ebenfalls einen Freiwilligendienst zu absolvieren. Manche waren sogar zufolge schon einmal im Land gewesen und sahen den Freiwilligendienst als Gelegenheit, für längere Zeit dort leben zu können (12%). Von einigen Wenigen wurde auch die Bereicherung für den persönlichen Glauben (9%) oder Wiedergutmachung für die Naziverbrechen (12%) als Beweggründe für einen Freiwilligendienst genannt.

3.1.2 Erwartungen und tatsächliche Erfahrungen bezüglich des Aufenthaltes vor Ort

Nur wenige Teilnehmer erwarteten vor ihrem Freiwilligendienst, dass die Medien ihnen eine Vorstellung über das Leben in Israel oder in den palästinensischen Gebieten vermitteln könnten (33%). Im Posttest bewerteten sogar etwas mehr als 70% das Bild der Medien als unzulänglich. Die Auswirkungen des Konfliktes auf das tägliche Leben schätzten die Freiwilligen im Pretest noch größer ein als im Posttest. 15% gaben bei der Zweiterhebung an, dass es gar keine Auswirkungen des Konfliktes auf ihr tägliches Leben gebe. Im Pretest hatte keiner der Befragten diese Antwortmöglichkeit gewählt. Bei 36%, im Vergleich zu 6% im Pretest, beeinflusste der Konflikt den Alltag kaum. 15% glaubten in der Ersterhebung, dass ihre Wahrnehmung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes durch ihren Freiwilligendienst kaum bis gar nicht beeinflusst werden würde. Diese Ansicht veränderte sich jedoch bis zum Posttest. Dort gaben alle Freiwilligen an, dass der Aufenthalt vor Ort einen mittelmäßigen (33%) bis großen Einfluss (66%) auf ihre Wahrnehmung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes gehabt habe. Auf die Frage, inwiefern sie erwarteten, dass sie zu dem Konflikt Stellung beziehen müssten, gaben 69% der Freiwilligen an, dass sie das etwas bis sehr erwarteten. Dies bestätigte sich im Posttest nur für 54%. Der Rest der Stichprobe hatte sich bis dahin entweder kaum (33%) oder gar nicht (12%) zum Konflikt positionieren müssen.

3.1.3 Bewertung verschiedener Aussagen über Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen

Die befragten Freiwilligen fühlten sich in dem Ort, in dem sie in Israel/den Palästinensischen Gebieten lebten, zu Hause (M = 4.33, SD = 0.90) und hegten sehr selten Zweifel am Sinn ihres Aufenthaltes (M = 1.88, SD = 1.14). Zwar zeigten sie sich froh über die außerordentlichen Rolle im Konflikt, (M = 4.30, SD = 0.81) waren aber weder der Meinung, dass man als Deutscher in Israel bzw. den palästinensischen Gebieten zu diesem Konflikt keine Stellung beziehen dürfe (M = 1.67, SD = 1.08), noch, dass man sich angesichts der deutschen Vergangenheit mit Meinungsaussagen zum israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt zurückhalten müsse (M = 1.55, SD = 0.87). Auch lehnten sie es ab, den Konflikt einfach zu ignorieren oder eine unbeständige Meinung zum Konflikt zu haben (M = 2.30, SD = 1.16). Sie gaben an, immer wieder offensichtlichen Rassismus gegen die arabische Bevölkerung zu erleben (M = 3.58, SD = 1.12), die sie ihrerseits als durch viele starre Verhaltensregeln charakterisiert beschrieben (M = 3.52, SD = 0.83). Außerdem sahen sie die Menschenrechte der Palästinenser als eher verletzt an (M = 3.61, SD = 1.22). Mit Antisemitismus sahen sich die Befragten hingegen kaum konfrontiert (2.15, SD = 1.15). Ihrer Einschätzung zufolge seien beide Seiten, sowohl die Israelis als auch die Palästinenser, auf ihr eigenes Leid fixiert (m = 3.67, SD = 1.08). Uneinigkeit herrschte bezogen auf die Frage, ob sie Verständnis für das Bedürfnis der Israelis nach Sicherheit

1. Antwortformat der Skala „Aussagen über Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen“: 1 = stimmt überhaupt nicht, 2 = stimmt eher nicht, 3 = weder noch, 4 = stimmt eher, 5 = stimmt genau.

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gewonnen hatten (M=3.30, SD=1.08), oder ob sie die Israelis als ruppig erlebten (M=2.70, SD=1.24). Uneinig zeigten sie sich auch hinsichtlich der Frage, ob sie der israelischen Armee positiv gegenüberstünden (M=2.97, SD=1.29) sowie hinsichtlich ihrer Haltung gegenüber der Militär- und Waffennachbarschaft im Land (M=2.97, SD=1.36). Die der Weiteren herrschte Unentschiedenheit bezüglich des Gefühls, als Freiwilliger zwischen zwei Stühlen zu sitzen (M=3.12, SD=1.29), wie auch hinsichtlich der Einschätzung, ob die emotionale Beschäftigung mit dem Konflikt ein Gefühl der Unruhe hervoraufruckte (M=2.64, SD=1.34).

3.2 Positionierung zum Konflikt in Pre- und Posttest

Hypothese 1: Der Aufenthalt vor Ort hat einen Einfluss auf die Positionierung zum israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt.

3.2.1 Identifikation verschiedener Einstellungsmuster


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frames</th>
<th>Klassen</th>
<th>Charakteristische Antwortmuster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keine Positionierung</td>
<td>Klasse 7</td>
<td>☐ Überwiegend keine Antwort auf die Fragen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klasse 8</td>
<td>☐ überwiegend „weiß ich nicht“ als Antwort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klasse 9</td>
<td>☐ Im Durchschnitt „weder noch“ als Antwort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War-Frames</td>
<td>Klasse 3</td>
<td>☐ Pro palästinensischer War-Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klasse 5</td>
<td>☐ Pro israelischer War-Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalente Peace-Frames</td>
<td>Klasse 2</td>
<td>☐ Ambivalente Peace-Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klasse 6</td>
<td>☐ Sympathie für die Palästinenser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro palästinensischer Peace-Frame</td>
<td>Klasse 4</td>
<td>☐ Peace-Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Klasse 1</td>
<td>☐ Peace-Frame am Rande eines War-Frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Mit einem pro-palästinensischen Bias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabelle 4: Überblick über die Identifizierten Klassen

3.2.2 Einfluss des Aufenthaltes auf die Positionierung

Die Identifikation der Anzahl der Personen, die im Posttest in eine andere Klasse wechselten, ermöglichte Aussagen über die Auswirkungen des Aufenthaltes vor Ort auf die Positionierung zu treffen. Von insgesamt 33 Personen wechselten 14 Personen im Posttest die Klasse, die restlichen 18 Personen blieben in derselben Klasse, in der sie auch im Pretest gewesen waren. Tabelle 5 gibt einen Gesamtüberblick über den Klassenwechsel der Positionierungsskala. Abbildung 1 zeigt, dass von den insgesamt vierzehn Personen, die ihr Antwortmuster änderten, fünf Personen innerhalb eines pro-palästinensischen Frames wechselten. Von diesen fünf nahmen drei Personen eine stärkere pro-palästinensische Haltung an. Sie wechselten von Klasse 2 oder 4, die beide einem pro-palästinensischen Peace-Frame folgen, in einen pro-palästinensischen War-Frame (Klasse 3) oder (zumindest) in einen pro-palästinensischen Frame, der auf der Kippe zu einem War-Frame steht (Klasse 1) und waren also während ihres Aufenthalts vor Ort zu der Meinung gekommen, dass Israel zur Anerkennung der Rechte der Palästinenser gezwungen werden müsse. Zwei andere Personen nahmen eine gemäßigte pro-palästinensische Haltung ein. Eine dieser zwei Personen, die im Pretest den Konflikt mit einem pro-palästinens-
Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt

---

Drei Personen, die im Pretest eher für die Palästinenser Position bezogen hatten, interpretierten den Konflikt darauffolgend mit einem pro-israelischen Frame: Zwei Personen nahmen eine radikalere Position ein und wechselten von einem pro-palästinensischen Peace-Frame (Klasse 1 und Klasse 2) in einen pro-israelischen War-Frame (Klasse 5). Eine weitere Person blieb bei einem ambivalenten Peace-Frame, verschob ihre Sympathie jedoch von den Palästinensern (Klasse 2) auf die Israelis (Klasse 6) (vgl. Abbildung 2).

Abbildung 3 verdeutlicht, dass sechs Personen von einem pro-israelischen Frame in einen pro-palästinensischen Frame übergingen. Von diesen sechs Personen gaben vier Personen im Zuge des Aufenthaltes vor Ort eine radikal pro-israelische Konfliktinterpretation auf (Klasse 5) und nahmen eher gemäßigte Haltungen zu Gunsten der Palästinenser ein (Klassen 2, 4 und 1). Bei zwei anderen Personen verhielt es sich genau anders herum: sie gaben ihre gemäßigte pro-israelische Position (Klasse 6) zugunsten radikalierer pro-palästinensischer Positionierungs-muster (Klasse 1 und Klasse 3) auf.
Zusammenfassung

Hypothese 1 bestätigte sich, denn der Aufenthalt vor Ort bewirkte für fast die Hälfte der Versuchspersonen (14/33) eine Veränderung in der Positionierung. Die Veränderung des Positionierungsrahmens ließ eine leichte Tendenz in Richtung eines pro-palästinensischen Frames erkennen. Daran schließt sich die Frage an, worin sich Klassenwechsler von Nicht-Wechsler unterscheiden.

3.2.3 Unterschiede zwischen Klassenwechsler und Nicht-Wechsler

Anhand eines Mann-Whitney-U-Tests wurde ein Mittelwertunterschied identifiziert. Die Klassenwechsler der Positionierungsskala stimmten signifikant stärker der Aussage zu: „Ich habe das Gefühl als Freiwilliger zwischen zwei Stühlen zu sitzen (Md=4.00) als die Nicht-Wechsler (Md=2.00; U=55.50, z=-1.99, p<0.05, r=-0.38).

3.3 Positionierung und Ambivalenz in Abhängigkeit der emotionalen Nähe

Hypothese 2a: Je einseitiger die neue emotionale Nähe, desto eher verschiebt sich die Positionierung zu dieser Seite.

Hypothese 2b: Je eher neue emotionale Nähe zu einer Seite tendiert, desto eher wird die Ambivalenz dieser Seite wahrgenommen und desto weniger die der Gegenseite.

3.3.1 Latent-Class-Analyse über die Skala Neue Emotionale Nähe


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modell</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>LOG-LIKE</th>
<th>n(P)</th>
<th>AIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LC1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-406,95</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>881,90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-364,19</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>866,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-341,43</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>890,96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-318,62</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>915,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-308,42</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>964,84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-294,64</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>1007,28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabelle 6: Goodness-of-fit-Statistik der Latent-Class-Analyse

In Klasse 1 befanden sich 70% und in Klasse 2 30% der Teilnehmer. Bei Klasse 1, tendierte die neu erworbene emotionale Nähe in Richtung Israel, wohingegen sich Klasse 2 eher mit den Palästinensern verbunden fühlte.

Im Folgenden werden die spezifischen Antwortmuster der Klassen näher beschrieben.

Klasse 2 schätzte ihre Kenntnis über den israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt etwas besser ein als Klasse 1 und 20% gaben an, über sehr gute Kenntnisse zu verfügen. In Klasse 1 hingegen wählten nur 10% diese Antwortmöglichkeit. Vielmehr schätzten sie ihre Kenntnis vorwiegend gut oder mittelmäßig ein (vgl. Abbildung 4).
Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt

Abbildung 4: Kenntnis des Konfliktes in den zwei Klassen

Klasse 2 ging der Konflikt etwas näher als Klasse 1 (vgl. Abbildung 5).

Abbildung 5: Nähe zum israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt in den zwei Klassen

Abbildung 6: Gefühl der Verbundenheit in den zwei Klassen

Mitglieder der Klasse 1 fühlten sich mehr mit Israel und Mitglieder der Klasse 2 mehr mit Palästina verbunden. Jedoch gaben etwas weniger als die Hälfte der Personen aus beiden Klassen an, dass sie sich Israel und Palästina gleichermaßen verbunden fühlen (vgl. Abbildung 6).
Klasse 2 zeichnet sich ganz deutlich darum aus, dass die Arbeit in ihren Einrichtungen zu 100% überwiegend mit Palästinensern vonstattengeht. In Klasse 1 gab die Mehrheit (65%) an, überwiegend mit jüdischen Israelis zusammenzuarbeiten (vgl. Abbildung 7).

Abbildung 7: Zusammenarbeit in den zwei Klassen

Nur Angehörige der Klasse 1 (17%) gaben an, ihre Freizeit mit jüdischen Israelis zu verbringen, wohingegen nur Mitglieder aus Klasse 2 ihre Zeit auch mit Palästinensern verbrachten (vgl. Abbildung 8).

Abbildung 8: Freizeitgestaltung in den zwei Klassen

Die Ausflugsziele der Klasse 1 lagen mit 61% am häufigsten in Israel und bei Klasse 2 am häufigsten (70%) sowohl in Israel als auch in den palästinensischen Gebieten (vgl. Abbildung 9).

Betrachtet man Abbildung 10, fällt besonders auf, dass Klasse 1 vorwiegend neue Freundschaften zu jüdischen Israelis und Klasse 2 überwiegend zu Palästinensern geschlossen hat. Zu arabischen Israelis haben beide Klassen fast zu gleichen Anteilen neue Freundschaften geschlossen (Klasse 1: 26%, Klasse 2: 30%).

Klasse 1 wurde mit 70% am häufigsten zu jüdisch-israelischen Familien nach Hause eingeladen und Klasse 2 mit 60% am häufigsten zu palästinensischen Familien (vgl. Abbildung 11).
Abbildung 9: Ausflüge in den zwei Klassen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ausflüge</th>
<th>Klasse 1</th>
<th>Klasse 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keine Angabe</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Israel</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in den pal. Gebieten</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gleichermaßen in Israel als auch in den pal.Gebieten</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keine Gelegenheit</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbildung 10: Neue Freundschaften in den zwei Klassen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neue Freundschaften</th>
<th>Klasse 1</th>
<th>Klasse 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keine</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ja, zu jüd. Israelis</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ja, zu arab. Israelis</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ja, zu Palästinensern</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ja, zu anderen</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbildung 11: Einladungen in den zwei Klassen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Einladungen</th>
<th>Klasse 1</th>
<th>Klasse 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keine</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zu jüd. israelischen</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zu arab. israelischen</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zu palästinensischen</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zu anderen</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.2 Neue emotionale Nähe und Positionierung im Posttest

Um die Frage zu beantworten, ob sich durch die neu erworbene emotionale Nähe vor Ort auch eine Veränderung in der Bewertung des Konfliktes abzeichnet, war ein zweiter Schritt nötig. In diesem ging es darum zu überprüfen, ob Klasse 2, die sich durch eine größere emotionale Nähe zu den Palästinensern auszeichnet, auch für diese Position im Posttest bezieht und ob umgekehrt Klasse 1, die durch eine größere Nähe zu Israel charakterisiert ist, sich für Israel positioniert. Mit einem Mann-Whitney-U-Test wurden die Mittelwertunterschiede der beiden Klassen bezüglich der Positionierungsskala für jedes einzelne Item getestet. Bei sechs von 15 Items zeigten sich signifikante Unterschiede.

Die pro-palästinensische Klasse 2 stimmte signifikant mehr der Aussage (npeace02): „Die fortgesetzte Gewalt der Israelis und Palästinenser vertieft die Kluft zwischen den beiden Gesellschaften und führt zu einer Radikalisierung auf beiden Seiten.“ zu (Mdn=5.00) als Klasse 1 (Mdn=4.00; U=60.50, z=-0.097, p<0.05, r=-0.37).

Auch der Aussage (pwar02): „Israel ist unnachgiebig und versucht, die bestehenden Verhältnisse mit Gewalt aufrecht zu erhalten“ stimmte Klasse 2 signifikant mehr zu (Mdn=4.00) als Klasse 1 (Mdn=3.50, U=48.50, z=-2.345, p<0.05, r=-0.42).

Ebenso fand die Aussage (pwar05): „Israels Militäroperationen gegen die Palästinenser sind maßlos und ungerechtfertigt“ bei Klasse 2 deutlich mehr Zustimmung (Mdn=5) als bei Klasse 1 (Mdn=3.00, U=34.50; z=-2.694, p<0.05, r=-0.50).

Bei der Aussage (iwar03) „Das Ziel der palästinensischen Führung ist die Zerstörung Israels“ bekundete Klasse 2 (Mdn=1.50) mehr Ablehnung als die pro-israelische Klasse 1 (Mdn=2.50, U=36.00, z=-2.327, p<0.05, r=-0.44).

Auch das Item (iwar04) „Die Israelis führen einen legitimen Verteidigungskrieg gegen den palästinensischen Terrorismus“ wurde von Klasse 2 mehr abgelehnt (Mdn=1.00) als von Klasse 1 (Mdn=2.50, U=25.50, z=-3.340, p<0.05, r=-0.60).

Die Aussage (iwar02) „Die palästinensische Führung ist nicht zu Kompromissen bereit und versucht, ihre Maximalziele ohne Rücksicht auf Verluste durchzusetzen“ fand bei Klasse 1 signifikant mehr Zustimmung (Mdn=3.50) als bei Klasse 2 (Mdn=2.00; U=42.50; z=-2.32, p<0.05, r=-0.43).

Abbildung 12: Neue emotionale Nähe und Positionierung

Bei den restlichen Items, die nicht signifikant geworden sind, lässt sich dennoch in Abbildung 12 erkennen, dass Klasse 1 die Items, die einen israelischen War-Frame repräsentieren weniger ablehnte als Klasse 2, während Klasse 2 den Items, die für einen palästinensischen War-Frame stehen, mehr zustimmte. Eine Ausnahme stellt das Item: „Die palästinensischen Terroranschläge gegen die israelische Bevölkerung können durch nichts gerechtfertigt werden“ (iwar05) dar. Dieser Aussage stimmte Klasse 2 mehr zu als Klasse 1.

Aufgrund der vorliegenden Ergebnisse stellt sich die Frage, ob tatsächlich die neue emotionale Nähe zu den Unterschieden zwischen Klasse 1 und Klasse 2 geführt hat, oder ob diese Unterschiede zwischen den Klassen bereits vor dem Aufenthalt in Israel oder Palästina bestanden haben. Um dies zu beantworten, wurden die Mittelwerte aus Pretest und Posttest innerhalb jeder Klasse für jedes Item der Positionierungsskala mit einem Wilcoxon-Test getestet. Bei Klasse 1 konnten keine signifikanten Unterschiede zwischen Pre- und Posttest festgestellt werden.
### Tabelle 7: Unterschiede in der Positionierung zwischen Pre- und Posttest bei Klasse 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mdn Pre</th>
<th>Mdn Post</th>
<th>z-Wert</th>
<th>p-Wert</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>npeace 01: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes kann nur auf dem Verhandlungsweg gefunden werden.</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>npeace 02: Die fortgesetzte Gewalt der Israelis und Palästinenser vertieft die Kluft zwischen den beiden Gesellschaften und führt zu einer Radikalisierung auf beiden Seiten.</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>npeace 03: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes muss die Lebensbedürfnisse beider Bevölkerungen berücksichtigen.</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ipeace 02: Es sollte von allen Beteiligten darauf hingearbeitet werden, dass die Israelis in eine angstfreie und friedliche Zukunft blicken können.</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ppeace 01: Es sollte von allen Beteiligten darauf hingearbeitet werden, dass die Palästinenser ein friedliches und selbstbestimmtes Leben führen können.</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar 01: Die palästinensische Führung muss zur Anerkennung Israels gezwungen werden.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar 01: Der israelische Staat muss zur Anerkennung der Rechte der Palästinenser gezwungen werden.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>-1.64</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar 02: Die palästinensische Führung ist zu Kompromissen nicht bereit und versucht, ihre Maximalziele ohne Rücksicht auf Verluste durchzusetzen.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar 02: Israel ist unnachgiebig und versucht, die bestehenden Verhältnisse mit Gewalt aufrecht zu erhalten.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar 03: Das Ziel der palästinensischen Führung ist die Zerstörung Israels.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>-0.57</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar 03: Das Ziel der israelischen Politik ist die fortgesetzte Unterdrückung und Entreichung der Palästinenser.</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar 04: Die Israelis führen einen legitimen Verteidigungskrieg gegen den palästinensischen Terrorismus.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>-0.91</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar 04: Die Palästinenser führen einen legitimen Befreiungskrieg gegen die israelische Besatzung.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar 05: Die palästinensischen Terroranschläge gegen die israelische Bevölkerung können durch nichts gerechtfertigt werden.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar 05: Israelis Militäroperationen gegen die Palästinenser sind maßlos und ungerechtfertigt.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Für Klasse 2 ergab der Wilcoxon-Test jedoch vier signifikante Veränderungen in den Positionierungswerten (siehe Tabelle 8).
Die Erfahrung deutscher Volontäre mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt

Einleitung

Ziel der Studie

Methodik

Ergebnisse

3.3.3 Neue emotionale Nähe und emotionale Ambivalenz im Posttest

Um zu überprüfen, ob durch die neu erworbene emotionale Nähe Klasse 1 eher die emotionale Ambivalenz hinsichtlich Krieg und Frieden für Israel wahrmacht und Klasse 2 die emotionale Ambivalenz für Palästina, wurden ein Mann-Whitney-U-Test durchgeführt. Dabei wurden die Mittelwertunterschiede der beiden Klassen bezüglich der Ambivalenzskala im Posttest für jedes einzelne Item getestet. Der Test ergab drei signifikante Ergebnisse.

Klasse 2 lehnte das Item (ambi01) "Mit Konsequenz und militärischer Stärke kann die Existenz Israels langfristig gesichert werden" stärker ab (Mdn=1.50) als Klasse 1 (Mdn=2.00; U= 45.50, z=-2.358, p < 0.05, r=-0.43).

Tabelle 8: Unterschiede in der Positionierung zwischen Pre- und Posttest bei Klasse 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mdn Pre</th>
<th>MdnPost</th>
<th>z-Wert</th>
<th>p-Wert</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>npce01: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes kann nur auf dem Handelungsweg gefunden werden.</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>-0.82</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>npce02: Die fortgesetzte Gewalt der Israelis und Palästinenser vertieft die Kluft zwischen den beiden Gesellschaften und führt zu einer Radikalisierung auf beiden Seiten.</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>npce03: Eine Lösung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes muss die Lebensbedürfnisse beider Bevölkerungen berücksichtigen.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar01: Die palästinensische Führung muss zur Anerkennung Israels gezwungen werden.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar02: Der israelische Staat muss zur Anerkennung der Rechte der Palästinenser gezwungen werden.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar03: Das Ziel der palästinensischen Führung ist die Zerstörung Israels.</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>-1.89</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar03: Das Ziel der israelischen Politik ist die fortgesetzte Unterdrückung und Entrechnung der Palästinenser.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar04: Die Israelis führen einen legitimen Verteidigungskrieg gegen den palästinensischen Terrorismus.</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>-2.23</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar04: Die Palästinenser führen einen legitimen Befreiungskrieg gegen die israelische Besatzung.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>-1.41</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iwar05: Die palästinensischen Terroranschläge gegen die israelische Bevölkerung können durch nichts gerechtfertigt werden.</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>-2.07</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pwar05: Israels Militäroperationen gegen die Palästinenser sind maßlos und ungerechtfertigt.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>-2.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 8: Unterschiede in der Positionierung zwischen Pre- und Posttest bei Klasse 2

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Mehr Zustimmung fand bei Klasse 2 (Md=4.00) die Aussage (ambi03i) „Die vollständige Rückgabe der besetzten Gebiete würde Israel einen dauerhaften Frieden mit den Palästinensern ermöglichen“ als bei Klasse 1 (Md=2.00; U= 19.50, z= -3.010, p < 0.05, r=0.56). Die Aussage (ambi04i) „Die Rückkehr zu den Grenzen von 1967 würde für Israel ein großes Sicherheitsrisiko darstellen“ fand dagegen bei Klasse 1 (Md=4.00) mehr Zustimmung als bei Klasse 2 (Md=2.00; U= 25.00, z=-2.121, p<0.05, r=-0.44) (vgl. Abbildung 13).

Abbildung 13: Emotionale Ambivalenz in den zwei Klassen

Wie bereits bei der Überprüfung der Hypothese 2a kristallisierte sich auch hier die Frage heraus, ob die neue emotionale Nähe zu den Unterschieden der Klassen in der Ambivalenzskala geführt haben könnte. Deshalb wurde erneut ein Wilcoxon-Test gerechnet, um die Mittelwerte aus Pre- und Posttest innerhalb jeder Klasse für jedes Item der Ambivalenzskala zu vergleichen. Der Test ergab sowohl für Klasse 1 als auch für Klasse 2 jeweils ein signifikantes Ergebnis:

Klasse 1 stimmte im Pretest mehr (Md=4.35) der Aussage(ambi04i) zu: „Die Rückkehr zu den Grenzen von 1967 würde für Israel ein großes Sicherheitsrisiko darstellen“ als im Posttest (Md=3.81; z= -2.48, p<0.05, r=-0.39).

Klasse 2 pflichtete der Aussage(ambi01i): „Mit Konsequenz und militärischer Stärke kann die Existenz Israels langfristig gesichert werden“ im Posttest weniger bei (Md=2.00) als im Pretest (Md=4.00, z=-2.121, p<0.05, r=-0.61).

Zusammenfassung

Die Resultate bestätigen die Annahme, dass sowohl die Positionierung als auch die Ambivalenzwahrnehmung umso stärker zu Gunsten einer Seite ausfällt, je größer die emotionale Nähe zu dieser Seite ist. Die Auswertung zeigte aber auch, dass dafür nicht unbedingt die vor Ort neu gewonnene emotionale Nähe ausschlaggebend war. Vielmehr kann dies nur für Klasse 2 angenommen werden, die sich deutlicher zugunsten der Palästinenser positionierte. Diejenigen, die im Posttest der Klasse 1 angehörten, hatten sich bereits im Pretest eher für Israel ausgesprochen und nahmen auch eher die emotionale Ambivalenz bezüglich Krieg und Frieden für Israel wahr.

3.3.4 Weitere Unterschiede zwischen den Personen aus Klasse 1 und Klasse 2

Da sich nur für Klasse 2 aufgrund der neuen emotionalen Nähe eine Veränderung in der Positionierung zeigte, stellte sich die Frage, ob und worin sich die beiden Klassen sonst noch unterscheiden.

Erste Differenzen ergeben sich bezüglich des Einsatzortes der Freiwilligen. Etwas mehr als die Hälfte der Personen aus Klasse 1 lebte an der Mittelmeerküste und im Norden rund um Haifa, die restlichen Personen aus Klasse 1 in Jerusalem und Umgebung. Auch in Klasse 2 wohnten 40% der Personen in der Region Jerusalem, die anderen 60% hingegen hatten ihren Einsatzort in der Westbank.

Weitere Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Klassen betraten die Beantwortung der Skala „Aussagen über Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen“. Ein Mann-Whitney-U-Test ergab, dass Klasse 1 der Aussage: „Ich habe viel Verständnis für das Bedürfnis..."
der Israelis nach Sicherheit gewonnen" signifikant mehr zustimmte (Mdn=4.00) als Klasse 2 (Mdn=2.00; U=36.50, z=2.894, p<0.01, r=-0.52).

Außerdem bekundete Klasse 1 (Mdn=4.00) im Vergleich zu Klasse 2 (Mdn=2.00) signifikant mehr Zustimmung zu der Aussage: „Ich stehe der israelischen Armee positiv gegenüber“ (U= 30.50, z=-2.616, p<0.05, r=-0.49).

Der Aussage: „Die Menschenrechte der Palästinenser werden mit Füßen getreten“ pflichtete dagegen Klasse 2 signifikant mehr bei (Mdn=4.50) als Klasse 1 (Mdn=3.00; U= 45.00, z=-2.64, p<0.05, r=-0.47).

4. Diskussion


4.1 Bild der Freiwilligendienstleistenden

Die Ergebnisse des deskriptiven Teils zeichnen ein Bild der Freiwilligen als Gruppe motivierter junger Menschen ab, die sich schon vor ihrem Aufenthalt mit dem israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt beschäftigt haben, eine große emotionale Nähe zum Konflikt aufweisen und sich außerdem bereits deutlich dazu positionieren. Ihre Erwartungen deckten sich in der Folgezeit meist mit den vor Ort gemachten Erfahrungen und sie fühlten sich im Land heimisch.

4.2 Einfluss des Aufenthaltes vor Ort auf die Positionierung

Wie aus dem deskriptiven Teil der Studie hervorgeht, hatten sich die Freiwilligen bereits vor ihrem Aufenthalt vor Ort sehr ausführlich auf den Freiwilligendienst vorbereitet und sich mit Themen bezüglich des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes beschäftigt. Entsprechend hatten sie bereits vor ihrem Aufenthalt vor Ort a priori Mentalen Modelle hinsichtlich des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes ausgebildet. Dennoch konnte Hypothese 1, die sich mit dem Einfluss des Aufenthaltes vor Ort beschäftigte, bestätigt werden. Die Ergebnisse der Pre-/Posttest-Vergleiche hinsichtlich der latenten Klassen bekräftigen für fast die Hälfte der Teilnehmer die Annahme, dass sich der Aufenthalt vor Ort auf ihre Positionierung zum israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt auswirkt.

Warum bei manchen der Freiwilligen der Aufenthalt vor Ort zu keiner Veränderung in der Bewertung des israelisch-palästinensischen Konfliktes führte, kann dagegen unterschiedliche Ursachen haben. Zum einen ist damit zu rechnen, dass einige der Freiwilligen bereits vorher Mentale Modelle ausgebildet hatten, die während des Aufenthaltes durch persönliche Erfahrungen zusätzlich bestätigt wurden. Zum anderen besteht aber auch die Möglichkeit, dass während des Aufenthaltes gesammelte Informationen, die den a priori gebildeten Mentalen Modellen widersprachen, ausgeblendet wurden.


Im Umkehrschluss würde dies bedeuten, dass Personen, bei denen es zu einer Veränderung in den Mentalen Modellen durch den Aufenthalt vor Ort kam, besonders sensibel für Inkongruenz waren. Die Ergebnisse einer weiteren explorativen Analyse unterstützen diese Vermutung. Sie zeigen erstens, dass Personen, deren Aufenthalt vor Ort Einfluss auf die Positionierung hatte, viel eher der Meinung waren, sie säßen als Freiwillige zwischen zwei Stühlen als diejenigen, die ihre a priori Mentalen Modelle beibehielten. Zweitens stellte sich für die Personen, bei denen der Aufenthalt Einfluss auf die Ambivalenzwahrnehmung gehabt hatte, öfter die Frage, was sie in diesem Land eigentlich wollten.

4.3 Positionierung und Ambivalenz in Abhängigkeit von der emotionalen Nähe

Hypothese 2 konnte ebenfalls bestätigt werden. Es zeigte sich, dass je mehr sich die Freiwilligen emotional einer Partei nahe fühlten, sie sich für diese Partei positionierten und auch, dass sie die emotionale Ambivalenz dieser Seite viel mehr wahrnahmen, als die der Gegenseite. 2013 by verlag iren regener berlin

Zu beachten ist jedoch, dass die Freiwilligen der vorliegenden Arbeit nicht ausnahmslos das Verhalten der favorisierten Par- tei guthielten und das der anderen Partei verurteilten. Dies zeigt sich zum einen daran, dass Angehörige der Klasse 1 (grö- ßere emotionale Nähe zu Israel) den Konflikt nicht eindeutig in einem israelischen War-Frame interpretierten. Zum anderen wird das bei der Beurteilung palästinensischer Terroranschläge deutlich. Klasse 2, die eine größere emotionale Nähe zu den Palästinensern aufwies und sich auch für diese positionierte, sah die palästinensischen Terroranschläge auf die israelische Bevölkerung keinesfalls als gerechtfertigt an.


Auch Freiwillige, die während des Aufenthaltes eine größere emotionale Nähe zu den Palästinensern entwickelt (Klasse 2), wiesen bereits im Pretest eine Positionierung für diese Gruppe auf. Diese Position verstärkte sich durch den Aufenthalt vor Ort und führte zu einer noch deutlicheren Parteiergung für die Palästinenser.


Literatur


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Der Friedensprozess im Bawku-Konflikt in Ghana: Herausforderungen und Perspektiven


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The peace process in the Bawku conflict in Ghana: Challenges and prospects

Many conflict resolution measures have been used and continue to be used in order to bring peace to Bawku, but the area does not yet experience lasting peace. This paper examines the challenges and prospects of the peace process in the ethnic conflict in the Bawku Traditional Area, in the Upper East Region of Ghana. As part of this, the study also examines the mechanisms used to resolve the conflict by both government and CSOs/NGOs and how the conflict can be resolved to enhance peace in the area. The study reveals that the Bawku conflict needs to apply a more participatory approach to resolving the conflict than the current ad hoc approaches do.

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The peace process in the Bawku conflict in Ghana: Challenges and prospects


Abstract. Many conflict resolution measures have been used and continue to be used in order to bring peace to Bawku, but the area does not yet experience lasting peace. This paper examines the challenges and prospects of the peace process in the ethnic conflict in the Bawku Traditional Area, in the Upper East Region of Ghana. As part of this, the study also examines the mechanisms used to resolve the conflict by both government and CSOs/NGOs and how the conflict can be resolved to enhance peace in the area. The study reveals that the Bawku conflict needs to apply a more participatory approach to resolving the conflict than the current ad hoc approaches do.

1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War saw a spate of new and different conflicts in many parts of the world with Africa getting her share of these conflicts (Ali, 2006; Yeomans, 2003). These new conflicts were more internal within the state and permeated by causes such as ethnic conflicts between rival ethnic groups, internal conflicts, conflicts over succession and power struggles within the state and conflicts over the control of state resources (Kaldor, 2007; Boege 2006; Idowu, 2005). Most of these conflicts in several parts of Africa have often been driven by ethnic contest for power, land, resources, the struggle for identity and, in recent times, class struggles for political control of state power (Osaghae, 2005). These ethnic conflicts, such as the Sudanese, Burundian and Democratic Republic of Congo’s conflicts, have created deep-seated hatred and destructions with their attendant manifestations of genocide, mistrust, inequality in the distribution of power and resources among ethnic groups in these states. These new conflicts, therefore, required new approaches to manage, regulate and resolve them since they had devastating consequences on development. The challenge, however, became the new possible conflict resolution approaches and mechanisms that could be used both at the local and national levels to end these new conflicts (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall, 2007).

There arose therefore in the 1990s, a wide range of new approaches and mechanisms to regulate and resolve these conflicts through a number of resolution processes that involved the use of international statesmen, international and regional organizations, the involvement of neighbouring countries, peace support operations and civil society organizations (CSOs) (Geladima, 2006; Konteh, 2006). Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2007) note that a cross-fertilization of resolution approaches to these conflicts became the preoccupation of conflict resolution in the 1990s. The almost fifteen year conflict in Liberia, for instance, was resolved effectively through the adoption of a number of these resolution approaches, including the mediation efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which included the deployment of the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the peace agreement finally signed in Accra in 2003 and the formation of an all-inclusive transitional government (Itheme, 2006).

However, the protraction and intractability of some conflicts on the continent question the effectiveness of most of the resolution approaches and mechanisms in Africa. The conflicts in Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Niger Delta rage on, despite efforts to resolve them. As a result, the challenges associated with the resolution approaches call for alternative resolution mechanisms that can be used to bring a final resolution to the conflicts in the continent.

Ghana, although is internationally acclaimed as the most peaceful country in West Africa, has some pockets of conflicts that are mainly inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic disputes that result from disputes over chieftancy, land, identity and resources and ethnic struggles for state political power. (Kendie & Akudugu, 2010; Tskata & Seini, 2004). Some of these conflicts involving land, chieftancy and ethnic politics have been resolved and managed over the years through a combination of NGO/CSO, government and religious bodies’ efforts and committees of enquiry. For instance, the most devastating conflict in the history of Ghana between the Konkomba and Nanumba/Dagomba1 in 1994/95 which claimed over 2000 lives was

1. This conflict took place in the Northern Region of Ghana between thechiefties of Dagomba and Namuga against the acephalous tribe of the Konkomba who have hitherto been under the authority of these chiefties. It was their demand for their own paramount chief and recognition that resulted in the conflict. It has often been described as the most deadly in the country since 2000 lives were lost. See Tskata, D. & Seini, W. (2004), Identities, inequalities and conflicts in Ghana. CRSE working paper. Oxford: GRISE and Mahama, I. (2003), Ethnic conflicts in Northern Ghana. Tamale: Cyber Systems.
resolved through the joint mediation and reconciliation efforts of the Permanent Negotiation Team made up of several CSOs and government, and the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI) (Mahama, 2003).

However, an overview of many of these resolution efforts and approaches used in Ghana reveals that many conflicts remain unresolved and have assumed a protracted nature. Several of the resolution mechanisms used in the conflicts have not been effective in bringing lasting peace to these areas. Managing and resolving ethnic conflicts, in fact, remains very difficult because deep-seated issues such as identity and values which border on the entirety of a person’s life always remain at the top of ethnic conflicts (Coleman, 2000). The Bawku conflict is no exception to this.

The Bawku conflict is a deep-seated and longstanding ethno-political conflict between two ethnic groups - the Kusasias and Mamprusis in the Bawku Traditional Area of Ghana. The conflict is identity-based, and revolves around the claim for traditional political power (chieftaincy) between the Kusasias and Mamprusis. The contest between the Kusasias and Mamprusis over the Bawku chieftaincy has its roots in colonial times. Since the 1930s, the conflict has taken different twists and has remained intense and unresolved, and therefore protracted. The primary actors in the conflict – the Kusasias and Mamprusis – have taken entrenched positions making resolution efforts difficult and almost impossible.

The peace process in the Bawku conflict has mainly been characterized by a combination of government and CSOs/NGOs efforts. The colonial Governments established the Opoku-Afari Committee in 1957 to help resolve the conflict when disputing claims for the chieftaincy started. A number of laws and decrees passed in Ghana, which although were not directly intended for the Bawku conflict only, have also been used in helping to end the conflict, but these have failed. These included the National Liberation Council (NLC) Decree 112 and the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) Law 75. Governments have also used mediation to help end the conflict. In 2008, the then President of Ghana, John A. Kufuor, invited both the Kusasias and Mamprusis to The Castle (seat of Ghana’s Government) to broker peace between them. This was followed by mediation by the National Peace Council (NPC), a body established by the Government of Ghana to promote peace-building and conflict resolution in the country.

In March 2009, following the outbreak of violence, the Vice President of Ghana, John Mahama, embarked on a mediation mission to help resolve the conflict between the two factions. This was again followed by a visit by President Atta Mills on May 28, 2009 to Bolgatanga (capital of the Upper East Region) to help broker peace. The two ethnic groups have also resorted to the law courts to back their claim for the Bawku skin. These include writ filed by the Mamprusis at the divisional court to reverse the Governor General’s decision in 1957, the Kusasias’ counter writ at the Appeals Court (the highest court of Ghana at the time) in 1958 to overturn the ruling by the divisional court; and again the Mamprusi court action for their claim to the Bawku skin in 2003. All these court actions have apparently failed to bring an end to the conflict. Governments have also instituted peace-keeping operations, deploying security personnel to the area and the imposition of curfews to manage the conflict, but the conflict still rages on.

A number of CSOs/NGOs since 2001 have also made efforts at mediating to end the conflict through peace building processes and conflict resolution mechanisms. These efforts include the Bawku Peace Agreement reached between the stakeholders in the conflict at the Damango Peace Agreement, which was spearheaded by a consortium of NGOs mediating in the conflict, including Action Aid Ghana, the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEPE), Advocacy Peace Group - IBIS (West Africa), the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Christian Council of Ghana and the Bawku East Women’s Development Association (BEWDA). The National Peace Council (NPC) has also mediated and drawn up a roadmap to peace. In addition, an Inter-ethnic Peace Dialogue – the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BIPEC) was recently formed in 2009 by both ethnic groups to help resolve the conflict. The aforementioned efforts seem to have failed to bring the needed resolution of the conflict and peace to the Traditional Area.

The apparent failure by all peace efforts to resolve the conflict raises questions about the resolution methods and therefore the peace process in the area. Questions that remain to be answered are: why is the Bawku conflict not resolved despite the various approaches that have been used at finding lasting peace? What is militating against the peace process? What alternative measures can be used to bring lasting peace to Bawku? 1 It is against this background that this paper seeks to examine the peace process in the conflict in the Bawku Traditional Area and the alternative resolution mechanisms that can be used to resolve the conflict or complement both government and CSOs/NGOs efforts at finally resolving the conflict to enhance peace and development in the area. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: section two presents the methodology used; section three discusses theoretical and conceptual issues; the empirical results and discussions are examined in section four and section five finally gives the conclusion and prospects for peace in Bawku.

1. These were the military governments in Ghana from 1966-1969 and from 1981-1992 respectively.
2. This is used to refer to the title of the paramount chief in the area. Note that the skin (of an animal) is the title of power of chiefs in Northern Ghana whilst the stool is the title of chiefs in Southern part of Ghana. Therefore there is the tendency to refer to the chieftaincy in a particular as the area’s skin or stool in Ghana. Hence, the name the Bawku Skin.
3. Damango is where the peace agreement was reached. It is the capital of the West Gonjo District Assembly of the Northern Region of Ghana.

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2. Methodology

The study adopted mixed methods in both its analysis and data collection. That is, both quantitative and qualitative methods. A descriptive case study approach was used for the study to allow for a detailed description of the topic. A total of 220 respondents were involved in the study. The purposive sampling method was used in selecting key informants comprising chiefs, community leaders, youth leaders, women groups, the Bawku Municipal Chief Executive (MCE), members of parliament, the security agencies, assembly members and heads of CSOs. This technique was to enable the selection of respondents who were relevant to the study and also had relevant information for the study. Fourteen communities in the area were purposively drawn, taking into consideration the fact that they had been the scenes of the conflict. These communities were mainly in the Bawku Municipality (BMA) because the conflict is mainly centered in the BMA. Zebilla and Garu in the Bawku West District (BWDA) and Garu-Tempani District (GTDA) respectively were also purposively chosen because they did have occasional outbreak of violence. Thereafter, the simple random sampling technique was used to choose 110 residents in these communities as shown in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saabon-Gari</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingande</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Natinga</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Natinga</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daduri</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possum</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zabgu</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zawi</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarabogo</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pusiga</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bazua</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binduri</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zebilla</td>
<td>BMA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garu</td>
<td>GTDA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Sample distribution of community residents. BMA = Bawku Municipal Assembly with Bawku as capital; BWA = Bawku West Assembly with Zebilla as capital; GTDA = Garu-Tempani District Assembly with Garu as capital.

A list of the population of the communities within the traditional area was used as sampling frame for the general residents, which was obtained from Ghana’s 2000 Housing and Population Census and also the population of communities in the area from BMA’s office. After obtaining the list of the fourteen communities, a lottery method was used to select the respondents in households. Each household, from the communities selected, in the list was assigned a number on a paper and then a selection of the sample was drawn by taking out the list of households in a container by the research assistants. After getting the selected sample, one person in this household was interviewed. However, in some instances, selection of the sampled population was made to take care of people’s profession like teachers, market women, farmers etc.

The 220 respondents involved in the study were distributed as follow: 60 respondents were involved in the focus group discussions and unstructured interviews whilst 160 respondents were used for the structured interviews. The sample size comprised 18 government functionaries made up of the Bawku MCE, three members of parliament from Bawku Central, Pusiga and Binduri constituencies, 14 assembly members and the commanders of the police and military. The traditional authorities included the Bawku Naba, the Mamprusi regent, five sub-chiefs from the Kusasis and five from the Mamprusis and two each from other ethnic groups (Hausa, Mossi, Bimoba, Busanga and Dagombas). There were also 10 community elders from the Kusasis and 10 from the Mamprusis who were involved in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). In all four FGDs were conducted. In terms of gender distribution of the general respondents, males constituted 55.5 percent (61) of the respondents whilst females consisted of 44.5 percent (49). All of the 42 traditional rulers were males. Out of the 18 assembly persons, only two were female. The largest (39.1%) of the general respondents were in the 35-44 age group whilst respondents above the age of 75 years were the least in this study (0.9%). Out of the 42 traditional authorities, majority (72%) were in the age group of 55-64 followed by the age group 65-74 (37%). With the 18 assembly persons, the majority (57%) were in the age group 35-44 whilst age 25-34 was the least (16%).
Six heads of CSOs involved in peace building activities in the area made up of one each from the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Actionaid Ghana, the Bawku East Women’s Development Association (BEMDA), the Presbyterian Church-Bawku, the Catholic Church – Bawku and the Muslim Community- Bawku and the two co-chairmen of the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BIPC). The women and youth groups involved one Kusasi women group, one Mamprusis youth group and a Kusasis youth group, each made up of 10 members at separate fora who were all involved in the FGDs. The general respondents were made of 40 Kusasis, 40 Mamprusis and 30 from other tribes. These respondents included farmers, teachers, students, health personnel, market women and business men, all randomly selected. The distribution of the sampled population is shown in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Residents</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Actors</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth and Women Groups</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Functionaries</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BI EPIC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sample distribution of actors

The main instruments used for the data collection were interview schedules, interview guides and focus group discussions. The data were analysed using interviews of respondents through descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and content analysis of transcribed interviews and documents on the conflict.

3. Theoretical and conceptual issues

Conflict occurs when two or more parties pursue incompatible interests or goals through actions that the parties try to undo or damage each other. These parties could be individuals, groups or countries. The parties’ interests can differ over access to resources, the control of political or traditional power, their identity and values or ideology. The realization of these needs and interests by people can lead to conflict. When two groups or individuals such as ethnic groups pursue incompatible interests and needs which could either be political, economic, social or cultural, they can engage in conflict which can be violent. In the case of the Bawku conflict, the needs of both the Kusasis and Mamprusis include who owns the chieftaincy. The needs of both ethnic groups remain very fundamental, uncompromising and non-negotiable. As a result, the interest of the two ethnic groups to get the chieftaincy results in violent conflict.

3.1 Protracted social conflict theory

The protracted social conflict (PSC) theory, which is also referred to in some circles as the social conflict theory, mainly has its underpinnings in Azar’s model of Protracted Social Conflict. The protracted social conflict theory examines the root causes, effects and the implications of conflicts in a society or country which are protracted or intractable. Thus, the theory examines conflicts which keep recurring and seem almost irresolvable.

Coleman (2000) says that an intractable conflict is one that is often intense, deadlocked and difficult to resolve. The common characteristics of intractable (protracted) conflicts include occasional outbursts of conflicts which are often intense, persistent and vicious; their effects are often pervasive affecting all aspects of a person or community’s social, political and economic life and tend to also affect institutions; and there is hopelessness for a constructive resolution. The causes of intractable conflict usually include questions of values, claim to identity, cultural norms, power, resources, human needs, past history of ethnocentrism, discrimination, colonialism and abuse (Coleman, 2000). According to Bar-Tal (2000), intractable conflicts are often viciously violent and durable which result in the construction of a conflictive ethos, which provides the dominant orientation to the society. He believes that in such conflicts, “conflict resolution leads only to the formal termination of the conflict” but not the real conflict.

The protracted social conflict theory identifies a plethora of factors as being responsible for intractable conflicts. This theory

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pays attention to ethnic and other forms of communal conflicts and emphasizes that the sources of these protracted conflicts are more internal (within a state) rather than external (Azar, 1990). These sources, according to Azar (1990), include cultural, political, economic, colonial and institutional factors. Protracted conflicts usually tend to affect all sectors of a society’s development because of the intensity and recurrence of violence.

In sum, the protracted social conflict theory is an all-encompassing theory that looks at conflict from the structural, cultural, ethnic, political, economic, religious, human needs as well as social factors. Mail, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1999) suggest that, in resolving protracted social conflicts, there is the need to properly manage ethnic dominance, provide economic opportunities for people and the state (government) should protect and provide minority needs and rights. Proper needs satisfaction remains important for resolving protracted social conflicts (Coleman, 2000). Also, Bar-Tal (2000) argues that resolving such conflicts needs a successful reconciliation process, which in turn requires a change of the conflictive ethos and formation of the alternative peace ethos

The Bawku conflict fits well into a PSC because its sources involve claim to values, identity, power as well as cultural contestation. The continuous and vicious cycle of violence in Bawku makes the conflict defy any workable solution despite all interventions that government and NGOs have made and are still making. With the nature of protracted conflicts, they tend to affect all aspects of a society especially peoples’ livelihood and the society’s local-level development. The Bawku conflict continuously results in violence which tends to affect commercial activities, agriculture and all aspects of social activities in the area (see Bukari, 2011).

3.2 Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution is an integral part of peace and conflict studies and development discourse (Richardson Jr. & Sen, 1996). Conflict resolution aims at identifying the main causes of a conflict so as to put an end to the conflict to ensure sustainable peace. The United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2001) maintains that a conflict is resolved when the root causes of that particular conflict are identified and addressed. Conflict resolution seeks to design solutions through a joint-problem solving approach. When a conflict is successfully resolved, the conflict is transformed and becomes a catalyst for deep-rooted enduring positive change in individuals, relationships and structures (development) (UNDESA, 2001). Thus, successful resolution of a conflict will ensure sustainable peace which would lead to improved security and good relations among people which could lead to human well-being and general development.

Conflict resolution brings an end to a conflict where the disputing parties are satisfied and the conflict is genuinely and truly resolved. Many approaches and methods could be used in conflict resolution. These include mediation through a third party intervention, negotiation, alternative dispute resolution, collaboration, arbitration and conciliation. The appropriate method may depend to a large extent on the nature and type of conflict involved (Best, 2006). Generally, the various methods of conflict resolution are usually a process in that each requires a certain procedure and time and not just a one way approach (Best, 2006). Peace keeping remains one important method that is used to respond to violent situations in times of conflict. In An Agenda for Peace 1992, Boutros Boutros-Ghale indicates that peace keeping is one of three ranges of instruments for controlling and resolving conflicts between and within states.

Godongs (2006) maintains that mediation by a third party (institutions and bodies) helps to identify the root causes of conflicts in order to address them. Godongs believes that mediations are collaborative and reconciliatory to help to design solutions through a joint problem-solving approach to conflicts. With regard to the Bawku conflict, conflict resolution has been sought after with the aim to end the conflict with almost all the methods mentioned above being used to bring the conflict to an end.

3.3 Ethnic conflict resolution

Resolving ethnic conflict remains by far the most difficult since ethnic conflicts involve assaults to people’s identity. Addressing deeply rooted cultural, identity, economic, socio-political and geographical issues and concerns are important in resolving ethnic conflicts. This requires effective communication and third-party intervention through transparent mediation. Third party intervention in ethnic conflict resolution is very important because getting ethnic groups to negotiate in conflict situations is very difficult (Richardson Jr. & Wang, 1993). This is because the issues involved in ethnic conflicts are always uncompromising and non-negotiable until a neutral party who is trusted by both feuding parties steps in to mediate for a compromise. Third party intervention has been a prominent feature of the peace process in the Bawku ethnic conflict.

In resolving ethnic conflicts, we ought to look out for potentially underlying factors to the conflict rather than focusing so
much on ethnicity (Lipchitz & Crawford, 1995). Lipchitz & Crawford (1995) maintain that we should assess elements of multi-ethnic social contacts as well as political and economic factors and issues of power underlying the conflict. This requires setting up early-warning systems and using local NGOs to help in mediation efforts. Also, Irobi (2005) reckons that civil society groups and NGOs are very important in resolving ethnic conflicts since they are often trusted by conflicting parties to mediate. This trust gives NGOs the urge over state institutions to achieve successful resolution of a conflict. Aygeman (2008) recommends that ethnic diversity and ethnic conflict in Ghana can be resolved through:

- The de-policisatation of ethnic conflict resolution and mechanism processes
- Empowering and strengthening decentralized structures of governance at the local level to deal with conflict
- Strengthening and empowering the Traditional Councils, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs in their conflict resolution roles through proper funding.
- Establishing joint consultative committees comprising representatives from the warring factions in the resolution of ethnic conflicts.
- The use and involvement of local NGOs in conflict resolution instead of international organizations.

In sum, these methods proposed by Aygeman are being pursued to resolve Bawku conflict which will be discussed below.

4. Empirical results and discussions

This section of the paper discusses the views of respondents on the peace process in the Bawku Traditional Area highlighting the conflict resolution methods used, their effectiveness and challenges and the prospects for peace in the area.

4.1 Non-resolution of the Bawku conflict

In this study, 82.7% of respondents mentioned that they are aware of resolution methods used in the past whilst 17.3% responded to the contrary. This indicates that many residents of the area know of measures that have been used to resolve the conflict. The approaches that have been used over the years in resolving the Bawku conflict which were identified by respondents include mediation, reconciliation, peace keeping, and arbitration.

One major approach that government has used over the years in attempting to resolve the conflict is peacekeeping which involves deploying security agencies made up of the police and the Rapid Deployment Force to the area. Respondents were aware that the security agencies made up of the police and the armies have been using joint patrols and swoops to retrieve illegal arms, mounting road blocks and maintaining law and order to keep the peace. A respondent remarked: "the army and the police have been moving around the entire town and various strategic places to respond to any outbreak of violence and to deal with perpetrators of the conflict". Opinion leaders and government functionaries also stated that the police and the army have been deploying peace keeping operations to the area since the 1980s whenever violence occurs to maintain peace. They also indicated that a permanent army base has been established at Bazua2 for easy deployment in the events of violence. According to the police, over 300 men have been deployed to Bawku since 2007, and these men were deployed from five (5) regions namely the Upper East, Eastern, Upper West, Brong Ahafo and the Greater Accra regions3. The army was made up of the Rapid Deployment Force and the Air Borne Force.

Also, one of the approaches in managing conflicts whenever violence occurs is the imposition of curfews to mitigate the effects of the conflicts. In this study, respondents identified the persistent impositions of curfews as one of the ways that government employs in an attempt to resolve and manage the conflict. Curfews are essential in the management of conflict situations. Though these restrict the movements of people and bring some hardships to them, it helps in maintaining law and order and curbing violence.

The most frequent approach in resolving this conflict is mediation. Mediation, according to Godongs (2006), is most often a form of negotiation by third party intervention which is voluntary and neutral in helping conflicting parties to resolve their conflict. Respondents mentioned that many institutions have used various methods in mediating to resolve the conflict. They indicated that CSOs/NGOs have since 2001 been involved in mediation efforts in the conflict. These include a consortium of NGOs made up of the Catholic Relief Services, WANEP, World Vision, Action Aid and the inter-faith dialogue; the Kumasi Peace Talks in 2010 facilitated by WANEP and supported by the UNDP. IBIS-West Africa and BEWDA; mediation of

1. At the district, regional and national levels in Ghana, the traditional authorities have councils that look into chieftaincy issues including the arbitration, adjudication and settlements of chieftaincy conflicts.
2. Bazua is a community located in the Bawku Municipal Assembly. It is about four kilometers from the Bawku Township.
3. Ghana is administratively divided into 10 regions. Each region has a number of metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDCs) for local government participation.
Bawku Traditional Area still remains a conflict-prone area and the stakes are still high and the main cause (the Awedoba’s down tradition) is still in dispute. It also emerged that there is a formation of the current Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BlEPC) which is made up of 20 members comprising various ethnic groups in the area: Kusasis, Mamprusis, Mossis, Busangas, Hausas, Dagombas and other tribes and co-chaired by both Mamprusis and Kusasis. The BlEPC was formed following the Kumasi Peace Talks in 2010 which were facilitated by WANEP attended by all stakeholders. Committee members interviewed indicated that the committee was in the process of meeting the various factions to lay down their arms to stem down the violence in the area and also release seized lands back to their owners. A process of purifying the land was started through the “rites of the cult of the earth”.

According to the security agencies and general respondents, since May 2010, there has been a ban on motor riding within the Bawku Municipality. This has helped to stem down the rate of violence and also curb the use of motor bikes to carry weapons to kill people. A respondent commented that: “although the ban on motor riding has made transportation difficult in the area, it has been used since May this year (2010) to stop people from carrying guns to shoot their opponents and easily escape”.

The use of arbitration remains one of the main methods of attempting to resolve the conflict over the years. These arbitrations are mainly through the houses of chiefs and the court systems. According to a Mamprusi opinion leader, the National Chieftaincy Tribunal of the National House of Chiefs arbitrated in the Bawku case and gave its ruling on 20th May, 1982 in favour of the Mamprusi using laid down tradition. This was corroborated by a Kusasi opinion leader who, however, disagreed that the arbitration followed laid down tradition. This was also confirmed by the Report of the Ruling of the National Chieftaincy Tribunal of the National House of Chiefs (May 20, 1983). It was also revealed that the court system has been used as a means of trying to end the conflict. Respondents stated that since 1957, various rulings have been made by the courts with regard to the conflict. An opinion leader mentioned that: “the various court judgments included the divisional court ruling of 1957, the Court of Appeal ruling of 1958, and the Supreme Court ruling of 2003”. This confirms Awedoba’s (2009) assertion that the law courts have dealt with the issue since the 1950s.

A critical look at all these measures at resolving the conflict indicates that the conflict still remains unresolved. This is because the Bawku Traditional Area still remains a conflict-prone area and the stakes are still high and the main cause (the Bawku skin) of the conflict is still in dispute. I believe that most of these methods rather attempts at managing the conflict to reduce the spate of violence and killing than conflict resolution that will see the end of the conflict.

4.2 Evaluation of the conflict resolution methods

In the study, 80% of respondents believed that the resolution methods used in the past have not been effective in resolving the conflict while 20% stated that they were effective. Respondents said that the various methods used were not the right approach since most of these methods were temporary, ad-hoc, had no early warning systems and did not provide permanent solutions to the conflict. A respondent said that: “the measures / methods used to resolve the conflict sometimes only succeeded in calming the spate of violence but do not address the underlying issues in the conflict”.

Many respondents believed that the past methods were not all-embracing and acceptable to all parties. This is because the
methods do not reflect the true issues in the conflict. Thus they do not point to the truth with regard to the underlying issues in the conflict. The methods are also biased and lack trust and transparency in the peace process. A Mamprusi opinion leader stated that, "The methods are not effective because there is lack of honesty, commitment and fairness in the approach to attaining peace in the area. They are also not all-inclusive, broad-based and there is lack of commitment for peace by some groups who want to see the conflict continue. This was why we withdrew from the BIEPC initially, since there was no transparency and fairness in the work of the committee."

This confirms Kendie and Akudugu (2010, p. 6), opinion that "conflict resolution is only possible through cooperation and negotiation and the elimination of suspicion through transparent negotiations where all actors are seen as equal partners". Respondents also mentioned that there is always no implementation of reports of peace agreements. They opined that no action is taken after the mediations and peace talks. Respondents also said that the measures over the years had not involved the residents and general public, especially the youth.

4.3 Challenges militating against the attainment of peace in the Bawku Traditional Area

There are usually a number of factors that protract conflicts. These factors become polarized making it difficult for the attainment of peace despite efforts made to resolve the conflicts. As observed by Azar’s (1990) protracted social conflict theory and Coleman’s (2000) description of protracted social conflict, a plethora of structural, cultural, ethnic, political, economic, religious, human needs as well as social factors challenge conflict resolution. In the study, respondents stated the following as challenges that militate against the attainment of lasting peace in the Bawku traditional area:

First of all, the interference of politicians, government and influential people from the area who keep supporting and fueling the conflict, mostly financially. The respondents claim that politicians at the national level and within the area have been using politics to perpetrate the conflict. They particularly mentioned the fact that both factions hide under both the National Democratic Congress (NDC) (the ruling party in Ghana since 2009) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) (the main opposition party) and have in fact been supported by both parties. This corroborates Lund (2003) assertion that there is naked political influence in the Bawku conflict that makes it difficult to resolve. This also supports Awedoba’s (2005) observation that governments of these political parties cannot be trusted to help resolve the conflict because of their past involvement.

Ethnic marginalization and lack of mutual respect for each other. The continuous defense of ethnic identity of the two factions leads to intense hatred, discrimination and stereotypes among the people. They cited the celebration of traditional festivals, specifically the Samanpeed and Damba festivals. Related to this is ethnic bashing, polarization, hate preaching, misinformation, rumour mongering and the transmission of false history to the youth. According to youth groups, elders and tribal leaders keep polarizing the area along ethnic lines by preaching hatred and transmitting false history about the issues in the conflict to the young ones. This tends to protract the conflict by creating deep seated suspicion making it difficult for the factions to negotiate a peace settlement. A member of the BIEPC said this is the greatest challenge of the committee.

Also, the proliferation of illegal and sophisticated arms/weapons. Many illegal and sophisticated arms like AK 47 and G3 assault rifles continue to be used in perpetrating violence. One of the security personnel said: "there are some weapons used in this conflict which we the security don’t even have. On one of the outbreaks of violence, a guy was firing a gun that we didn’t even know its name. Where they get these guns from is really puzzling and this is the major problem why the conflict cannot be resolved".

Moreover, there is lack of neutrality and bias by the security agencies. The security agencies according to respondents remain very biased towards one faction – arresting them whilst members of the other factions who are known to have killed others walk about freely. Some Mamprusi respondents claim that their tribe mates have been arrested and remanded at the Navrongo Prisons whereas Kusasis who have committed crimes were released and are walking around town. This results in impunity in the area as a result of the political support. A respondent stated that "people kill, loot and burn without getting punished. They even boast about how others die in the conflict".

Non-implementation of peace agreements and reports due to lack of political will. According to respondents, decisions of the houses of chiefs, committees of enquiry, court actions/orders and peace agreements reached are always not abided by or implemented. Some heads of CSOs/NGOs said lack of political will makes it difficult for the implementation of peace agreements and mediation pacts and this is the greatest challenge to peace building in Bawku.

1. Samanpeed is the main traditional festival celebrated by the Kusasis every December to mark the end of the harvesting season while Damba is celebrated by the Mamprusis. Although celebrated to mark the birth of Prophet Mohammed, Damba has assumed a traditional form.
2. The prison is the largest in the Upper East Region (where Bawku is located). It is located in Navrongo, the capital of the Kassena-Nankana District.

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Furthermore, mistrust of mediation and negotiation efforts due to bias of governments and some CSOs/NGOs. Some key informants mentioned that there is high suspicion and mistrust among some factions of the mediation and negotiation efforts of governments and some CSOs/NGOs. A Mamprusi opinion leader stated that "our withdrawal from the 2001 Damango Peace Initiative was due to bias and lack of confidence/trust in some of the NGOs and the way things were being handled".

In addition, criminal elements especially armed robbers taking advantage of the situation to operate. According to respondents, armed robbery is a major challenge to the peace process since many armed robbers take advantage of the conflict to rob and kill people. However, a Mamprusi respondent disagreed that it is armed robbers who do the robbing and killing. He questioned: "How is this armed robbery when people are identified by their tribe and robbed and killed? When for example, the robbery occurred on the Sankansi (major business town located in Togo, not far from Ghana's eastern border with Togo) road, it was only Mamprusi who were robbed and killed."

High illiteracy rate and unemployment in the area especially among the youth. An MP in the area said that high level of illiteracy is one factor that makes it difficult to resolve the conflict. A divisional chief interviewed asserted that apart from the high illiteracy rate, unemployment remains a challenge to the conflict because the youth continue to idle and are used continuously to perpetrate the violence. His assertion supports the Economic Theory of conflict which sees lack of employment as a major factor that propel people to fight (Collier, 2006).

Finally, the influence of other minority tribes in the area, especially the Mosiis, Hausa and Bisas who tend to back factions in the conflicts. A respondent accused the other tribes of continuously 'beating war drums' through backing one faction both financially and physically. A Kusasi respondent stated that: "the Mosiis at Possum1 are even more involved in this conflict than the Mamprusi. They support the Mamprusis in perpetrating violence and contribute weapons to their cause in this conflict and even their pronouncements polarize the society. But for them, we and the Mamprusi could have resolved our issue amicably."

4.4 Ways of resolving the conflict

The study reveals that 53% of the respondents believed that the conflict can be resolved whereas 47% believed that it can never be resolved. Those who said the conflict cannot be resolved say that since the inception of the conflict, various methods have been used and have totally failed to bring a lasting solution to the conflict. Respondents mentioned the following as new ways of resolving the conflict:

Since the matter is about chieftaincy, it should be referred to the appropriate quarters. Thus, it should be referred to the National House of Chiefs to resolve it amicably or arbitrate on it, independent of government and politicians. This confirms Agyeman (2008) proposal that chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana can be resolved by strengthening and empowering the Traditional Councils, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs in their conflict resolution roles through proper funding.

The use of peace building activities which are new and more proactive than previous methods. These would include intensive peace education and campaigns in schools, community levels and in the media by sensitizing people, especially the youth, on the due processes of getting their grievances addressed. Also, mediation and negotiation processes must be done through trust and confidence building of the two factions by trustworthy mediators. The CSOs/NGOs mentioned that there is the need for periodic and sustained community stakeholder dialogue, consistent peace education targeting the youth through the formation of youth peace clubs and self-negotiation between the factions using the inter-ethnic peace committee. An MP mentioned the need to identify the actual frontrunners (influential people) like the actual influential youth leaders and actively involve them in the negotiation process because often the CSOs/NGOs do not involve the 'true frontrunners' in this conflict.

The involvement of the Nayiri (king of all Mamprusi in Ghana who is headquartered in Nalerigu in the Northern Region of Ghana) in mediation and negotiation efforts. This is because the Nayiri plays an important role since he has absolute control over Mamprusi in Bawku and is therefore an integral part of the conflict. Mamprusi respondents and some Kusasi respondents stated that mediation efforts have always failed to involve and recognize the role of the Nayiri in the conflict.

The use of neutral parties from other countries and international bodies such as the UN, AU and ECOWAS. They believed that the bodies within the country don't have the capacity to find a solution to the conflict. A key respondent commented that: "I don't think that Ghana has the capability to help solve the conflict since the state has soiled its hands in the issue and lacks neutrality to resolve the conflict. The CSOs/NGOs have failed several times to resolve the conflict. Neutral bodies outside Ghana should be allowed to resolve the conflict for us."

1. Possum is a community found in the Bawku Township. The Mosi is the main ethnic group that resides in Possum. Note that the conflict has led to ethnic seclusion where each ethnic group resides in its own community.
The pursuit of traditional methods of resolving the conflict. This should be done by following the traditional methods started by the BI EPC. Thus, the pacification and blood cleansing rites (the rites of the earth cult). Some key informants also said that the use of the BE EPC is the only solution to the conflict. Clear pronouncement as to who own the chieftaincy. Some key informants said that the conflict can be resolved once and for all if there is a clear pronouncement as to who own the chieftaincy. One of them said: "the conflict can be resolved if the central government and the houses of chiefs tell the truth about the true owners of the land and chieftaincy in Bawku. They know who the usurpers are. So they must go ahead to declare who the real owners of the chieftaincy are to end this protracted conflict."

An assembly member said that the perceived NPP/NDC support must be seriously dealt with by letting leaders of these parties to pledge their support for the peace process in Bawku by openly withdrawing support for any of the factions in the conflict. He said that: "politicians do not want to isolate themselves from the conflict but keep playing the political card to win votes. If the NDC and the NPP stop supporting the Kusasis and the Mamprusis, they will stop fighting". A traditional chief said that: "the conflict can be resolved if the Bawku people are left alone to negotiate among themselves without any interference or support from politicians and other people".

Another opinion leader believes that the conflict can be resolved when there is the provision of employable opportunities in the area for the youth. These he said could be dry season farming and skills training in order to get the youth busy to prevent them from fighting and killing each other. Security personnel believe that the conflict can be resolved when the culture of impunity is dealt with. Justice must be given to people who break the peace irrespective of their tribe or political party. They also said that the two factions should use the law court to resolve the conflict rather than resort to violence.

5. Conclusion and policy implications

The study of the Bawku conflict indicates that many challenges and bottlenecks confront the promotion of peace in the traditional area in spite of the many measures that have been instituted to resolve this protracted ethnic conflict to ensure co-existence and peace in the area. These challenges have made the conflict very protracted and needs to be confronted head-strong. The blatant political infiltrations by the state make the state not trust-worthy in its bid to lead any resolution and peace building efforts, and this remains the biggest challenge. Lack of trust in mediation efforts and the amassing and use of illegal arms by residents of not only Bawku, but other parts of the Traditional Area are also problems. With these challenges attaining peace in the Bawku Traditional Area is not only difficult, but very challenging to all stakeholders.

Government needs to strengthen and maintain security in the area to minimize the effects of conflict on local development efforts by ensuring impartiality in the work of the security agencies. Also, government must make efforts to deal decisively with the problem of impunity. The efforts of the security agencies in enforcing law and order must not be interfered with, especially in punishing perpetrators of violence from all factions without favour. There should be justice and equity in dealing with perpetrators of violence across the ethnic divide.

It is important to adopt traditional approaches which are acceptable and cultural-sensitive to all the tribes. The current BI EPC which is using traditional approaches/methods must be encouraged and supported to help build peace and finally resolve the conflict. It is equally crucial to identify challenges and weaknesses of the approaches/methods of the BI EPC and deal with them to ensure the participation of all ethnic groups and parties in the peace process.

Also, there is the need for government to fund the activities of peace building activities. The current Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee (BI EPC) must be resourced and funded to help build peace and resolve the conflict. This is because one great challenge of the BI EPC is lack of funds to carry out its peace activities. Also, the seeming lack of transparency and fairness, perceived by the Mamprusis in particular, in dealing with issues in the area such as the celebration of traditional festivals need to be seriously dealt with through dialogue. The committee must also work independent of state or government influence. CSOs/NGOs must rather facilitate the activities of the committee towards self-negotiation. The involvement and inclusion of the Nayiri in all future negotiations and mediation efforts are paramount in the peace building and conflict resolution process. This is because of the power and recognition he has among the Mamprusis and can help to find a solution to the conflict.

Similarly, there is the need for a proper stakeholder analysis of actual parties in the conflict to engage them in the negotiation and mediation process. Very often, key stakeholders are not involved in the conflict resolution process and all need to be identified and brought on board in the resolution process. These stakeholders include youth and women groups and people from the other parts of the traditional area like Zebilla and Garu, who often are not included in mediation and negotiation processes.

Moreover, government needs to focus on the provision of economic opportunities in the area, especially among the youth. Unemployment is a major causative factor of conflict in the area. Providing employable and other opportunities for the youth can help to stem the trend of violence and build peace in the area.
The use of the court system (arbitration and adjudication) tends to polarize the area further and does not bring a resolution of the conflict. This is because the use of the court system since the 1950s has not helped to end the conflict, but rather polarize the area. Parties to the conflict must recognize the need to engage in dialogue rather than resorting to the court system for redress.

In a nutshell, it is also possible for the two ethnic groups (The Kusasis and Mampruis) in this conflict to consider power sharing as an alternative. This power-sharing can be fashioned out such that either each group has its own chiefs which rule its people or the power is rotational between the two ethnic groups. This can be done through proper laid-down procedures and clear-cut rules about the power-sharing.

References


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Beverly Keever was a young journalist when US troops started to intervene in the conflict between South and North Vietnam. Keever had a desire to see the world and a fervent interest in East Asian countries and cultures. Thus she decided to visit Vietnam as the conflict began to “heat up.” It was meant to be a short visit, but it ended being a long chapter or several chapters of her life. Keever reported from Vietnam from 1962 until 1969. When she left the country, she had worked there longer than any other Western journalist before her. Now about 40 years later, she has written her memoirs about that time. The reason for this, she notes, is that in Iraq and in Afghanistan the United States is repeating the same failures and errors which happened in Vietnam.

During the seven years Keever worked in Vietnam, the top level of the South Vietnamese state and army changed eight times. Each change produced several changes and instability in the rest of the country. One “coup” on the top level could lead to the replacement of numerous chiefs in the provinces. The US Ambassador in Saigon was changed five times, but the top US general only three times. Everything else changed, but Keever stayed. Partly because of these kinds of changes, organizations often have no memory, but Keever has. Her archives are rich and detailed. If someone can tell reliably “what it was like” in those years, it is surely Beverly Keever.

The book is well-written. Its text is fluent, vivid and analytical. The general political frame is well drawn, while one has the feeling of being consistently in touch on the grass-roots level. One feels the strange or even bizarre atmosphere of a life in which every moment can be the last, and life is often an interaction of masked figures whose real faces remain unknown. Thus twenty years after leaving Vietnam, Kiever learned that one of her closest friends and colleagues was a hard-core spy. The life of this man, Pham Xuan An (“a spy who loved us”), could be compared to the wildest legends of Second World War espionage and, has already been depicted in at least two biographies. Keever offered asylum to An’s wife and children in United States after North Vietnamese troops seized Saigon in 1975, and she was expecting to meet them all again, which in fact never happened. An died in 2006 as a senior lieutenant general in the North Vietnamese army. Still worth noting is that An’s closest friend during the war was of course a long-time CIA agent.

Keever describes chronologically her life and work beginning with her arrival in Saigon at the beginning of 1962 up until her departure seven years later. She worked first as a freelancer, later as a correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune and still later for the Christian Science Monitor, gaining international recognition and a good reputation for her work, among other things in the form of a Pulitzer Prize nomination.

After arriving in Saigon, Keever witnessed the different phases of the US and South Vietnamese strategy to keep the “communists” out – as well as their failure. The South Vietnamese government first tried to create so called “strategic hamlets.” That meant villages protected and guarded by American and South Vietnamese soldiers and by the residents themselves. This proved to be impossible. Guerrillas were there already, and it was impossible to know who was who. And if they were not, they came either by force or by cunning. It remains unclear to what extent the failure of this strategy was due to military weakness, the nationalist or patriotic “instinct” of the population, the promise of social reform made by the guerrillas or by their cruel physical terror. In any case, the peasants were caught in the crossfire. In the daytime American or South Vietnamese troops came with their guns, in the night guerillas were everywhere with their guns and knives.

After futile efforts to provide shelter and security for the villages, a more radical step was taken. Old villages were destroyed, and villagers were forced to leave their homes and to move to new areas and new villages. After that the guerilla movement was to be faced and destroyed in the evacuated areas. But the guerillas were too clever to fall into this trap. They withdrew, and if they didn’t and met their end on the battlefield, the guerillas and North Vietnam were always able to recruit new cadres to an astonishing extent, which meant an inconceivable loss of human life. As such, this strategy of burning and destroying villages may have been one fateful factor in recruiting new guerillas.

The final step was the escalation of the war in North Vietnam and in surrounding countries in order to destroy the moral backbone of the North Vietnamese people and government and to destroy the routes along which guerillas could infiltrate South Vietnam.

The North Vietnamese were however like the Russians in Stalingrad: it was impossible to break their will. It also proved that there are limits even for a superpower beyond which it can’t go when its own media machinery, as well as the rest of the world is observing. According to Keever, journalists were
very free to move around and to report on their observations. This freedom of journalists was greatest in Vietnam. In Iraq it was already considerably reduced.

There is almost a scoop in the book still for today. In 1968 Lyndon Johnson was ready to start peace negotiations. Richard Nixon, who was elected president later in 1968, was conniving with both the South Vietnamese and the North Vietnamese governments, causing the South Vietnamese president to reject Johnson's peace initiative. Keever, who had developed a good network of sources, had a scent of this connivance and reported on it just before the presidential elections. However, the Christian Science Monitor couldn't confirm Keever's information with other sources. Thus the Monitor lacked the courage to publish Keever's report. The question remains: what if her story had been published? Would Richard Nixon still have been elected president of the United States? And would the war in Vietnam have ended earlier if Nixon had failed in his campaign?

Keever witnessed and eye-witnessed all the phases mentioned above, as well as several skirmishes and battles. The most violent was probably the siege of the Khe Sanh airbase, whose name may still be remembered today, even in Europe. Battles are so vividly depicted that it is almost a drawback of the book. It is almost possible to read the book as an exiting narration concerning the last war against native American Indian tribes, renamed “communists” and “Viet Cong.” However, the brutality of the events and the fact that Keever tries to also find the viewpoint of those “tribes” may help avoid this.

There are some interesting details in this book which were worth of mentioning. One of them was the allusion to colonial wars mentioned above. Americans tried to find names for their heavy artillery taken from the history of its Indian wars (“Tomahawk” for example). Could it really be that they didn’t notice their own role in the light of this metaphor? Or were the 1960’s still too early for that?

Another interesting aspect in this book is the fate of the “Montaignards” (“hill people”). They were tribes among whom Americans found some support in the middle of the guerilla-controlled areas. What do we know about them now?

Keever also mentions some things which are not always very well-remembered. One of them is the use of cruel terror by the guerilla movement, along with its promise of social reform. Another aspect is the use of children to spy on adults in Vietcong-controlled areas. This almost always happens in radical left-wing revolutions.

A last word in the text is given to An, a friend, colleague – and spy. In an interview, he was asked if he regretted anything. He was responsible for the end of so many lives anyway. “No,” said An, “no regrets. I had to do it. This peace that I fought for may be crippling this country, but the war was killing it. As much as I love the United States it had no right here. The Americans had to be driven out from Vietnam one way or another.” Since then US troops have again already been in places where they haven’t a right to go with similar kinds of results. Hasn’t anyone learned anything and what there is to be learned? Keever’s message may be that pure military interference produces only catastrophes for each party to a conflict. There must be some social point of view guiding actions rather than military force. Some kind of positive program is needed. This is so easy to say, but much more difficult to accomplish in rapidly changing situations where many different actors are pursuing their (supposed) interests. However if this message can be communicated by books, then Keever’s is an excellent attempt.

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