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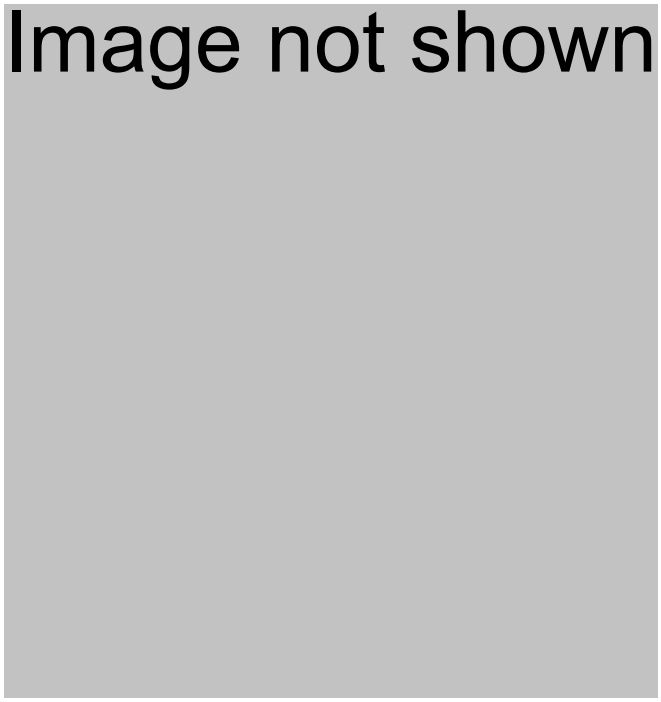
Israeli schools as agents of citizenship: The role of history in creating civic identities



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Abstract

Education has a unique opportunity to affect people's attitudes and behavior. It can both encourage respect and promote cooperation between peoples, as well as fuel conflicts by reinforcing social divisions, prejudices and mistrust. The purpose of this study is to investigate how education is used as a tool in the development of civic identities among Jews and Arabs living in Israel and how distinct narratives are dealt with in the subject of history. Narratives are conveyed to the younger generation through the subject of history, which makes history an essential aspect in the development of a history consciousness. Consequently, the subject of history can be an important forum for reconciliation and conflict-resolution.

The study was conducted at two Israeli Arab high schools and two Israeli Jewish high schools. Altogether, 36 Arab and Jewish students as well as one Arab English teacher participated in focus group interviews. Additionally, three semi-structured interviews were conducted with two Jewish and one Arab history teacher.

The findings of this study reveal that questions of citizenship are controversial. Although the individuals vary in their conceptions and opinions of citizenship, there is a divided civic identity among Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs. A majority of the Arab respondents regard citizenship merely as a judicial status, while most Jewish respondents additionally add a feeling of belonging to the state as crucial. Furthermore, this study reveals that the creation of civic identities and a critical history consciousness depend on each teacher's willingness to include various narratives and perspectives when teaching history. The teacher participants, with exception of one teacher, all teach history in accordance with their own particular narrative. As of spring 2011 it can be concluded that only students with teachers who teach beyond the requirements of the Israeli Education Ministry are exposed to history education that aims at greater understanding of "the other", peace building and overcoming prejudices. These findings indicate that it is the responsibility of individual teachers to create environments open to debates and contradicting views. One explanation emanating from this study is the important functions collective memory and narratives hold in Israeli society as a result of the ongoing conflict. Finally, the findings of this study show that the subject of history is regarded as of minor influence compared to the importance of primary socialization, such as knowledge received from home.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

What is history, but a myth agreed upon?

Napoléon Bonaparte

History is an important element in shaping people's worldviews. But what is history? Is it something that is simply "out there", or is it on the other hand socially constructed? The term 'history' brings about highly different associations. There has been a wave of intellectuals exploring how individual and collective identity is built through memory. Additionally, the difficulties in discovering historical "truths" are increasingly acknowledged (Polkinghorne, 2005). Noll (2001) argues that history is a misunderstood concept, as it commonly implies understandings of the past. History is not happenings of the past, but is rather a person's description of the past. This leads to a definition of history as "a narrative that presents a past" (Noll, 2001, p. 31). According to this definition, a false history created to put a government in a good light is not false. Rather, it is a true history that conveys a lie. People have various reasons for narrating the past. Constructed narratives give information and knowledge about the world seen from a particular perspective (Noll, 2001). A narrative is not merely an interpretation of the past; it also has vital functions such as justifying group existences, attitudes and conducts. Historical narratives create and maintain coherence and cultural reproduction both on an individual and collective level, which are particularly significant in conflict-ridden societies.

Development of a history consciousness and transmittance of narratives to the younger generation is to a great extent achieved through education, where particular ideologies can be efficiently transmitted to a large amount of the population. Narratives are conveyed through history, which makes the subject of history a possible aspect of influence in the development of civic identities. "History has proven itself to often hold people's collective identities, beliefs and attitudes towards the "other" in a firm grip that won't let go" (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006, p. 20). Consequently, history is an important subject when evaluating ongoing conflicts and can be an important forum for conflict-resolution. The following extract from Sayed

Kashua's (2004) novel "Dancing Arabs" illustrates an Israeli Arab's experience of attending an Israeli Jewish high school:

> In twelfth grade I understood for the first time what 48 was. That it's called the War of Independence. In twelfth grade I understood that a Zionist was what we called Sahyuni, and it wasn't a swearword. I knew the word. That's how we used to curse one another. I'd become sure that a Sahyuni was a kind of fat guy, like a bear. Suddenly I understood that Zionism is an ideology. In civic lessons and Jewish history classes, I started to understand that my aunt from Tulkarm is called a refugee, that the Arabs in Israel are called a minority. In twelfth grade I understood that the problem was serious. I understood what a national homeland was, what anti-Semitism was. I heard for the first time about "two thousand years of exile" and how the Jews had fought against the Arabs and British. I didn't believe it. No way. The English wanted the Jews here, after all. In Bible class, I discovered that it was Isaac, not Ismael who'd been replaced with a sheep (Kashua, 2004, p. 117).

The Jewish-Palestinian conflict is a dispute about sovereignty, land, borders, security, water rights, Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees. It is additionally a dispute regarding conflicting historiographies. The above extract illustrates how distinct historical narratives of conflict-ridden societies construct contradictory narratives of the same event or phenomena. The war of 1948 is perceived both as the War of Independence (Hebrew: מלחמת העצמאות) and al-Nakba (Arabic: النكبة), the catastrophe. Moreover, the extract underlines the role of education as transmitter of narratives and how the subject of history is used in the development of civic identities, which leads us to the core of this study.

1.1.1. Objective of the study

The future is in the hands of the children, which makes education an important forum for reconciliation. Education has a unique opportunity to affect peoples mind and behavior and is crucial with regards to promoting mutual respect, coexistence and acknowledgement of "the other"[1]. However, education can also fuel conflict by reinforcing social divisions, prejudices and mistrust between groups and people (UNESCO, 2011). Education can therefore be both part of the problem and the solution, depending on how it is used (Smith, 2010). The purpose of this study is to investigate how education is used as a tool in the development of civic identities among Jews and Arabs living in Israel and how distinct narratives are dealt with in

[1]Said's (1978) writings about "the other" provide an important conceptual tool for this study. The term will be used more broadly in this particular research, implying both Israeli Jews' and Israeli Arabs' bidirectional representation of each other.

education, more specifically through the subject of history. This led to the following problem statement:

How is history used as a tool in development of citizenship and to what extent are various narratives dealt with through education in Israel?

In the attempt to investigate the problem statement, following research questions were developed:

- How do Arab and Jewish students in Israel understand aspects of citizenship?
- What messages are transmitted through teaching the subject of history in relation to distinct narratives, peace building, and overcoming prejudices and politicized differences?
- To what extent do messages transmitted through history affect the development of civic identity?

The cultural and religious diversity in Israel requires some selections. Not being citizens of Israel, Palestinian Arabs from Gaza or the West Bank are excluded from this particular research. Jewish Hassidic communities in Israel live to some extent in separate neighborhoods and students attend separate schools. With support from the state the Hassidic community has maintained a separate educational system where religion has an important role (Lemish, 2003). Hence, Hassidic state-religious schools in Israel have been omitted from this research. Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs are two disparate socio-cultural groups living within the same state. The two groups have disparate narratives of history and are thus most likely to negotiate identity somewhat differently. This makes an interesting site for research concerning history and citizenship.

Education can play an important role in developing students' identities and promoting a feeling of national unity. Various educational aspects are decisive for the development of identity and national unity, such as language of instruction, curriculum, textbooks, school governance, policy-makers, religion, citizenship education and the subject of history (UNESCO, 2011). The two latter will be of attention in this study. Citizenship education can be a formal part of the school curriculum, but it can also take place informally by singing the national anthem, raising and saluting the national flag, celebrating national holidays or through other

subjects such as history (Smith, 2010). By answering the first research question, the respondents' understanding of citizenship will be outlined. This study subscribes to the notion that children of today are the leaders of tomorrow. How history is taught is an important aspect in relation to conflict, along with the type of curriculum, textbooks and teacher instructions (Smith, 2010). The second and third research questions will shed light on how distinct narratives are dealt with through the subject of history and how messages transmitted affects Arab and Jewish students' civic identities. Teaching history can be vital in peace building, as "approaches to history have to recognize that all evidence is open to a variety of interpretations and perspectives, some of which may be divisive" (UNESCO, 2011, p. 242). Many Israeli school children, Arabs and Jews alike, grow up with little or no understanding of other narratives than their own. Narrow and one-sided approaches to history can foster prejudices and lead to the maintenance of separated identities among Israelis.

1.1.2. Significance of the study

Why is such an investigation important? This is a difficult question, which is easier answered by turning to the consequences of not addressing the issues. I suggest that by learning an ethnocentric narrative through the subject of history, violence, negative stereotypes of "the other", and mutual delegitimisation are maintained while reconciliation is prevented. The refugee problem, Jewish settlements in the West Bank and entitlement to Jerusalem are all vital aspects of the conflict, as the compromises necessary in order to reach solutions lack a general consensus. The lack of solutions is not merely an issue of water, land or security, but about identity (Segev, 2010). Identity is deeply rooted in the land, whether called Israel or Palestine. Accordingly, giving up part of the land implies giving up part of one's identity. Outlining understandings of citizenship and investigating the role of history in the development of identities may shed light on how education can be used to challenge the status quo. Introducing a two-narrative approach through education and promoting development of a critical history consciousness among young students can possibly create an opening for peace building on a grass root level. Although difficult to measure potential outcomes, a two-narrative approach can form a readiness among new generations to give up violence as a way of resolving challenges and result in an improved future without conflict, army and war. Finally, an examination of these

issues may shed light on students and teachers' own aspirations as to how history should be taught.

It is not difficult to find writings that criticize Israel in one way or another[2]. Some of these are necessary critics, while others are one-sided interpretations of "reality" representing merely one side or another. The state of Israel has repeatedly been condemned for being a criminal, racist, militant, xenophobic and authoritarian state, as well as a prime violator of human rights (Dershowitz, 2003). Criticism and condemnation by the international community towards Israel is reflected from campuses of Universities, to boycotting of Jaffa oranges and government policies. "Like any other democracy, Israel and its leaders should be criticized whenever their actions fail to meet acceptable standards, but the criticism should be proportional, comparative, and contextual, as it should be with regard to other nations as well" (Dershowitz, 2005, p. 12). Although Israel's imperfections are many there has been an exaggeration of blaming Israel compared to shortcomings of other (neighboring) countries. This being neither a place to defend the Israeli state's policies and actions nor a place to elaborate on the exaggerations of Israel's weaknesses, it is still important mentioning as this study aims at a more contextualized understanding of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict.

A similar comparative study has not yet been found and a neutral (to the extent that is possible), contextualized comparison is needed. It is not uncommon to come across studies that aim at providing "space in the production of knowledge for subaltern voices" (Hammack, 2010, p. 382). The Arab/Palestinian minority in Israel represents such subaltern voices, in which many researchers have devoted their attention. I fully agree with the importance of giving a voice to a subordinate population. However, in this process of knowledge production I find it important to simultaneously give a voice to Jewish adolescents. As I did not find a similar comparative research, a somewhat unusual angle towards the Jewish-Palestinian conflict is presented by letting both "sides" participate in my contribution to the field.

1.1.3. Definitions

Definitions, terms and concepts are intellectual limitations of "reality". Placing individuals within fixed identity labels is in opposition to the qualitative fundament of

[2] See e.g. Naveh (2006), Jawad (2006), Pinson (2008) and Al-Haj (2002).

this study. Although Jews and Arabs to some extent will be used as contradictions by signifying differences in religious belief, culture and perception of history, it is important to keep in mind that these are simplified generalizations. Highly different individuals are often placed in the same category without acknowledging that such oversimplifications leave the diversities that undoubtedly exist unattended[3]. An overwhelming majority of the Arab participants of this research identify themselves as Arab, Muslim and/or Palestinian living in Israel. I have chosen to use the term 'Arab citizens of Israel' throughout this thesis, although most of the respondents additionally consider themselves Muslims and/or Palestinian. It should be underlined that this research exclusively implies Muslim Arabs and not Christian Arabs. It has been argued that the label 'Israeli Arab' created after 1948 to describe Palestinians who remained in Israel is a "stripping of the Palestinian identity" (Hammack, 2010, p. 369). The Arabs were granted Israeli citizenship but received little equality with the Jewish people. Although controversial, I will in this research also use the term 'Israeli Arabs', as this was the widely held identity label among the Jewish respondents. Similarly, in line with the respondents perceptions the Jewish participants will be referred to as Jews or Israeli Jews.

Outlining clear and agreed-upon definitions of Israel's inhabitants would be a demanding exercise, as these are controversial and overlapping. Yet, I found Drummond's (2004) guidelines comprehensible and illuminating. Following is an extract from her attempt to clarify the complex matters of identity in Israel. She initiates with an important aspect that often is forgotten: all citizens of Israel are Israelis. Second, almost all Jews have their cultural roots in Judaism, but there are also secular Jews who feel no or little adherence to the religion. Yet another neglected aspect is the term 'Palestinian', which before 1948 implied a person who inhabited the British Mandate of Palestine whether being Jew, Arab or other. Arabs started referring to themselves as Palestinians only subsequent to the establishment of Israel. Since 1948, 'Palestinian' has involved Arabic language and culture as well as persons

[3] By asking questions about identity as fixed labels and in the attempt of interpreting why certain categories are being prioritized before others, the danger of treating identity as fixed entities increases. Claiming how a group of people outline identity based on how they rank identity labels is a risky business (Torstrick, 2000) and I acknowledge that such assumptions and interpretations are problematic. My intention is not to generalize to "ethnic" groups, neither to place the respondents in fixed categories of identity. The aim is rather to stress the complexities of identity labels and how history is used to reinforce such identities.

that lived or currently live in the area of the former Palestine Mandate. Moreover, not all who speak Arabic are Arabs. In previous centuries Jews and other non-Arabs who grew up in Arab countries spoke Arabic, and from the oldest generation of Jews in Israel there are still those who remember Arabic from their former homeland. While some Jews have always lived in Israel, many have immigrated/returned to the land in recent decades. Some of these immigrants came to Israel voluntarily, while others immigrated as a result of anti-Semitism or expulsion from Arab countries. Finally, Palestinians can be both Muslims and Christians and an Arab citizen of Israel, although controversial, can be both Palestinian and Israeli.

The ongoing conflict is commonly referred to as the 'Arab-Israeli conflict' or the 'Israeli-Palestinian conflict'. I find these dichotomies generalizing and a problematization of the concepts is necessary. The term 'Arab-Israeli conflict' leads to the assumption that all or most Arab countries stand unified against their enemy, Israel. Israel is at peace with Jordan, Morocco, Turkey and Egypt to mention some[4]. With regards to the conflict, I have chosen to use a slightly different and unusual term: the 'Jewish-Palestinian conflict'. I acknowledge that the term may cause some reactions. Jews in the United States, France or Canada to mention some may find the term inappropriate, as they do not look upon themselves as in a conflict with the Palestinians. Based on informal conversations with Jews, the conflict does not concern Judaism but is rather a conflict between Palestinians and Jews who live in Israel. Considering the diversity of religious adherence and the amount of secular Jews in Israel, as well as abroad, I suggest that being Jewish and Israeli to some extent is intertwined. While the term 'Jewish' gives religious association, 'Palestinian' is a non-religious term that implies Muslims, Christians and their adherence to a particular geographical area. Yet, I find the term 'Jewish-Palestinian conflict' more appropriate and adequate for this particular context, and it will be used in lack of a better term. Why am I introducing this term? The term 'Jewish-Palestinian conflict' demonstrates the complexities of citizenship, identity as well as the intricate character of the conflict. It acknowledges that not all Israelis are Jews and it gives a more accurate picture that can prevent readers from thinking in dichotomies.

[4] The final stage of this thesis was written during the revolution in Egypt where president Mubarak was forced to resign. Only the future will reveal Egypt's further relationship with Israel.

Throughout this thesis 'Israeli' is used as to denote both Jews and Arabs living in Israel. A change in rhetoric may in the long run have an impact on civil society and civic identity, and therefore, I encourage others to challenge current dichotomies as a continuation of these contributes to the maintenance of status quo.

It is beyond the scope of this research to give a full description of the branches of Zionism/Jewish nationalism or the various agendas of Palestinian nationalism. There is not one unified Jewish or Palestinian narrative. Palestinians from Jordan or Egypt may not adhere to the same narrative as Palestinians from Gaza, the West Bank or Israel. Moreover, individual Israeli Arabs or Israeli Jews may adhere to a narrative that is distinct to others of the same "ethnic" group[5]. The notions of 'Jewish narrative' and 'Palestinian narrative' will nevertheless be used throughout this study, in line with the historical narratives presented in chapter two. Although participants of this research are referred to as Arabs and not Palestinians, this does not imply that they cannot adhere to a Palestinian narrative. Consequently, the term 'Palestinian narrative' will be used in this study to represent a counter-narrative of a "classical" Jewish historical account. Once again, it is important to keep in mind that these are generalizations of "reality".

The Jewish-Palestinian dispute does not only concern inconsistencies of territories and borders, but additionally identification by name. This research concerns Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews within the (contested) borders of Israel and, consequently, I have chosen to use 'Israel' throughout the thesis[6]. This choice will hopefully prevent any confusion with areas of the West Bank and Gaza who, once again, are not of attention in this particular study.

1.1.4. Limitations

Using the method of focus groups (as will be elaborated in section 4.4.1) required some limitations. Transcribing focus group interviews is highly time-consuming and

[5] The term 'ethnicity' is a controversial term. What is the difference between a Jew from Morocco, Iraq, Russia, a Hassidic Jew or a person who converted to Judaism in order to get married? I asked a Jewish friend (Mizrahi, with Yemen origin) whether he felt more connected to a Hassidic Jew or an Israeli Arab. The immediate answer was the latter. As this example demonstrates, people of an "ethnic" group do not necessarily reflect the values of others within the same group (see also Andersen & Biseth, forthcoming). Yet again, it should be emphasized that the intention of this study is not to assign individuals to categories of ethnicity or identity.

[6] See Appendix 1: Map of Israel.

as a result I visited each school no more than two times. The focus groups were conducted in English and the sample was limited to English speaking students. With more time and resources, interviewing students with an interpreter would have widened the access of information and by that possibly representing a wider range of the students. On the other hand, although some conclusions can be drawn from the sample, this research is founded on a qualitative framework where the findings only can be generalized to the people on who the research was conducted.

Identity is a dynamic process and not a fixed product. As the research is not a longitudinal study, changes of identity is not demonstrated and hence it is important to keep in mind that the respondents' stories reflect their up to date understanding of life. Moreover, terms and definitions, the background chapter and analysis of the findings are all based on and affected by my understandings. These will not necessarily correspond with others' interpretations or definitions.

Finally, teacher Ziad wanted to participate in the focus group discussion. Although this was not preferable the sequence still demonstrated the importance of teachers, as will be explained in chapter six. With more time and resources, adding the method of observation could have been a fruitful source of data triangulation. With respect to the validity of the inferences presented in this research, limitations will be elaborated further in the research methodology chapter.

1.1.5. Outline of the thesis

The purpose of the study, problem statement, significance to the field, definitions and limitations has been presented in this chapter. A historical background, ancient origin of the conflict and a short outline of Israeli education and society are necessary for an overall understanding of the conflict. Consequently, a historical background and a short description of society and education will be presented in chapter two.

A theoretical framework is central for the analytical perspectives of the research's findings. Chapter three gives an extensive presentation of the theories used in this study. Osler and Starkey's (2005) aspects of citizenship comprise the first main part of the theoretical framework. These are discussed in relation to questions regarding identity and ethnicity. Thereafter, Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) characteristics of collective memory will be presented followed by a discussion of the functions that narratives of conflict possess and the role of history awareness.

Chapter four presents the methodological choices of this research. The chapter provides a description of the qualitative starting point for understanding the world, procedures of the fieldwork and the validity of this research's findings. Finally, the ethical considerations taken throughout this study is discussed.

The analysis of data is divided in two chapters. Chapter five presents the findings concerning Israeli Jews' and Israeli Arabs' conceptions of citizenship and civic identity, in line with the first research question. Chapter six intends to answer the second and third research questions and is consequently devoted to the role of history in the development of civic identities, which is outlined in chapter five. The role of history teachers and secondary socialization is discussed in addition to attitudes towards a two-narrative approach through the subject of history.

Ultimately, theories, methods and data will be brought together in the attempt of answering the problem statement and research questions. Chapter seven summarizes the findings and discussions of this study and brings the thesis to a close.

Chapter 2: Historical background and Israeli society

Because of the distinctive history of Israel and the various narratives that exist, this background chapter is rather extensive. One characteristic of master narratives is the connection to ancient times, which are used as justifications for conflicts, actions and attitudes. For this reason, I found it necessary to include some ancient history and origins of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict. Narratives about the 1948 war are of particular interest of this study[7] and a short outline of the war and the years leading to its outbreak has been included. The subsequent wars have not been given considerable attention, but may be interesting sites for further research.

Writing a historical background within 15 pages was a demanding task. History is subjective interpretations of "reality" and there will never be unbiased or entirely objective accounts of what happened. The resources used for this chapter and selections done are entirely based on my interpretations and the knowledge I find significant for an overall understanding of the conflict. As already explained, these may not be in accordance with a Jordanian, Egyptian or a Syrian narrative. Neither may they be in accordance with individual Jews', Arabs' or other readers' narratives, which obviously is not an intention. Each an all of the Arab participants of this study are Arab Muslims. The sample has been taken into consideration when writing this chapter, and may therefore not be in accordance with a Christian Arab's historical account. There is a great amount of literature on issues related to the Jewish-Palestinian situation and I encourage further readings for an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the conflict. Yet, some background information has to be included. To begin with a short historical account, origins of the conflict and the 1948 war will be presented, followed by a brief description of Israeli society and education.

2.1. Historical background

The conflict between Israeli Jews and Arabs is in many ways rooted in conflicting historiographies. While Palestinian narratives entail claims that the Jews stole the

[7] The year of 1948 is an important event both for Jews and Arabs, and represents an event where Jewish and Arab narratives probably vary the most. In 1948, the Israeli state was established, which makes an interesting site for research concerning citizenship.

land, counter-arguments state that Jews of the First Aliyah[8] bought the under-populated land legally by Palestinians or absentee non-Palestinians landowners for instance from Beirut or Damascus with no connection to the land. The assertion that Palestine was a land without people is certainly not legitimate. Neither is the claim that the Jews stole the land (Dershowitz, 2003). The "truths" are most likely a synthesis of various historical accounts. Being in a state of conflict, Jewish and Palestinian nationalism have constructed different historical narratives by emphasizing their history selective, which characterize most nationalist movements. Examples of differently constructed historical accounts will now be presented.

2.1.1. Origin of the conflict - Jewish versus Palestinian narrative

The territory causing the conflict has been referred to as Israel, the Holy Land, land of Canaan, the Promised Land and Palestine[9]. The variety of names demonstrates that the Jewish-Palestinian conflict involves highly controversial issues, such as land, religion, identity and distinct historiographies. Both Palestinian and Jewish narratives find answers to these issues by addressing ancient times. The narratives are used as legitimacy of existence, actions and attitudes and, consequently, both accounts are selective, biased and contentious (Rotberg, 2006).

Despite distinct historiographies, both Jews and Arabs are believed to derive from the same ancestor, Abraham/Ibrahim. Jewish historical accounts commence with the migration of Abraham and his family to what was then called the land of Canaan[10]. According to a Jewish narrative Abraham was the first Jew, the founder of Judaism and the father of the Hebrews. Abraham and his family migrated from Ur in southern

[8] The First Aliyah (Hebrew; עלייה) refers to a wave of immigration lasting from 1882-1903, where about 35,000 Jews, mainly Eastern European, came to the land (Jewish Virtual Library, 2011a).

[9] Palestine derives from the word "Plesheth" meaning rolling or migratory and refers to the Philistines' invasion of the coastal area of Canaan (Bowers, 2005). There are conflicting opinions about the Philistines and their arrival. What is certain is that the Philistines had not any connection with Arabs, but had rather Greek origin. With the Roman Empire the Jewish people were exiled and scattered to the Diaspora and the area was renamed "Syria Palaestina", later shortened to 'Palaestina'. According to Bowers (2005), the term was out of use for several years after the Roman Empire, but the English version 'Palestine' was resumed with the British Mandate. Palestine was used to denote the area from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan valley and from the southern Negev desert to the Galilee region in the north (Bowers, 2005).

[10] Ancient Canaan equates modern Israel, Transjordan and parts of Syria and Lebanon. The Canaanites supposedly inhabited the land from Early Bronze Age and throughout the Middle Bronze Age (Tubb, 1998).

Mesopotamia (southern Iraq) by call from God (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011a), north to Haran (Assyrian city in today's Turkey) and finally to the land of Canaan (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011b). As demonstrated by the book of Genesis, God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants. As it was here their past existed many Jews believed, and continue to believe, that their homeland should be established in this particular area (Grosby, 2005). A matching, but yet not completely similar account, is to be found in a Palestinian narrative. The first major Prophet of God and Islam was Ibrahim. There are several similarities between Muslim and Jewish legends of Abraham/Ibrahim, such as God's demand of Abraham/Ibrahim to sacrifice his son as a commitment to God. Although deriving from the same father and despite the similarities, there are disagreements between the different accounts. In accordance with a Jewish narrative Abraham intended to sacrifice Isaac, while a Palestinian narrative believes the identity of this son to be Ishmael. Consequently, Muslims consider themselves descendants of Ibrahim and his wife Hagar's son Ishmael, while Jews believe they descend from Abraham and Serah's son Isaac (Sonn, 2005).

Respectively Pharaonic, Philistine and Davidic eras followed the Canaanites. After these periods the land was split into Judea, Israel and Phoenicia (Brown, 2006). In the year 587 BC the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, destroyed the First Temple build by King David's son Solomon and exiled the Jews. From this year onwards the area was ruled by a number of empires: Babylon, Persian, Greek, Roman and Byzantine Empires (Bowers, 2005). After the death of Muhammad the area came under various Muslim caliphates, ending with the Ottoman Empire (Brown, 2006). As a result of the Muslim conquests most of the population in the area spoke Arabic. Yet, the region of Palestine has never been an independent Palestinian state governed by Palestinians, and Palestinians as a distinct people is relatively new. Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) argue that it was not until late 1970s that Palestinians were identified as a separate nation.

According to a typical Palestinian account, Palestinians are a people with ancient roots long before the Jews arrived. Palestinians have described themselves as a melting pot where people, tribes and cultures have intermingled throughout the centuries (Jawad, 2006). The inhabitants of the land were eventually absorbed into Arab culture after the coming of Muhammad and Islam (Drummond, 2004).

According to this account, Jewish presence in the area is considered minor even in biblical times and Jews were additionally nearly absent for 2000 years. In line with a classical Palestinian narrative, local Arabs have lived and worked on the land since the area of Muslim conquests, only to be displaced by the Zionists (Dershowitz, 2003). "From the viewpoint of the Arab world, foreigners had invaded and now occupied Palestine, home of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest place on earth after Mecca and Medina" (Yousef, 2010, p. 10). Counter-arguments from a Jewish narrative emphasize Israel as the land promised by God and Jewish presence in the area is justified both by archaeology and the book of Genesis.

A central figure in Arab narratives is Muhammad the prophet, the founder of one of today's major religions, Islam. Muhammad was teaching in Mecca, but was in 622 forced to flee to Medina. This marks the beginning of the Islamic era. He won control over Mecca after several battles and started to convert Arabia to the principles of Islam (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011c). The Arab conquests and the spread of Islam initiated about four years after the death of Muhammad, lasting from 636 to 1099 AD (Bowers, 2005). As already mentioned, Palestine has never been an independent state. This does not prevent the emphasis on the centrality of the land in Muslim history. Although the boundaries of the area have varied and its names and rulers have been many, the religious importance is unmistakable for Islam and Judaism (and Christianity). King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel; a conquering that established an Israelite kingdom on the land of Canaan. Muhammad was believed to ascend to heaven from the old city of Jerusalem and the first Muslims did not pray in the direction of Mecca, but towards Jerusalem. The third holiest place of Islam, the sacred Dome of the Rock, is located in the old city of Jerusalem just a few steps away from the Western Wall, which is the most sacred place for the Jewish people[11].

2.1.2. Zionism and Arab nationalism

Zionism and Arab nationalism developed more or less simultaneously in the nineteenth century (Schulze, 2008). Journalist and activist Theodor Herzl was a key Zionist thinker who strongly advocated an independent state for the Jews. His activism led to the establishment of the Zionist organization the First Zionist Congress in 1897 in Switzerland, which was a reaction to European anti-Semitism

[11] See picture, front page (Photo: Hanna Lomeland).

(Schulze, 2008). The adherents of Zionism emphasized the Jewish people's need of an own state and bringing an end to the persecution and discrimination that had taken place in the Diaspora (Torstrick, 2000).

Arab nationalism initiated with the first Arab nationalist party founded in 1875 by graduates of the American University of Beirut. It did not advance until between World War I and Word War II. During these years Jewish immigration to Palestine increased (Schulze, 2008). Several institutions were established in this period in order to advance Jewish agriculture, settlements, universities, parties as well as ensuring an enrichment of Hebrew language and culture. At the same time Arab nationalism enhanced as a response to Zionism, foreign rule and struggles over the same territories. Unity, language, culture, independence and self-determination were at the core, particularly anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism due to centuries of Ottoman rule and European foreign control of Arab land (Gelvin, 2007). During the British Mandate many educated Palestinians increasingly became occupied with verifying the Arabness of Palestine and started searching for Arab roots in the area. Since the 1960s, rise in Palestinian nationalism expanded even further. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established in 1964 and the first intifada (1987-1993) marked a noteworthy grass-root mobilization and an increased national Palestinian consciousness (Gelvin, 2007).

The Ottoman Empire entered the side of Germany during the First World War, implying that the British and the Ottomans fought against each other. Britain worked on support from local Arab allies in return for promises of an upcoming Arab independence, which was expressed in the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence letters[12]. However, the British also regarded adherents of Zionism as possible allies (Schulze, 2008). The British government declared through a letter from the Foreign Minister Lord Arthur Balfour November 2, 1917, "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" (Dershowitz, 2003, p. 35). The Balfour Declaration did not, however, declare what this home implied or that Palestine should be turned into a Jewish state. Neither the Balfour Declaration nor the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence letters clarified the actual territories promised, which resulted in both Jewish and Arab leaders believing

[12] Sharif Hussein was Emir of Mecca while Henry McMahon was the British High Commissioner in Cairo (Schulze, 2008).

that the land was promised to them. Arab and Jewish suspicion and wariness towards each other escalated, and so "the seeds for the conflict had been sown" (Schulze, 2008, p. 6).

2.1.3. A prelude to the 1948 war

The Ottoman Empire came to an end with World War I. Four centuries of Ottoman-Turk rule ended and twenty-five years of British directive began. Britain was granted Mandate over Palestine by the League of Nations in 1922 (Schulze, 2008). Being unable to settle the conflict between Zionists and Arabs, the British eventually decided to withdraw from Palestine. February 1947, the United Kingdom handed it over to the United Nations, who acquired responsibility of the area's future. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was established to investigate questions and recommend solutions to the challenges concerning Palestine. November 29, 1947 the majority of the Committee's members recommended a partition and creation of both an Arab and a Jewish state in order for each of the people to create a homeland (Schulze, 2008). According to a Jewish narrative, Zionist leaders did not agree on the recommendations on Jerusalem, but eventually accepted the compromise. The Arab leadership on the other hand refused to allocate territories to the Zionists and rejected the partition plan. The rejection resulted in fights between the Yishuv and Palestinian communities, lasting from December 1947 to May 1948 (Gelvin, 2007)[13].

On May 14, 1948 the Jewish agency and first Prime Minister David Ben Gurion declared Israeli independence. To prevent the creation of Israel, Arab leaders instantaneously decided to go to war. Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq attacked Israel with the official aim of liberating Palestine (Schulze, 2008). Various narratives and interpretations disagree on whether the neighboring countries aimed at liberating Palestine, or if the official aim merely was an attempt to gain control over territories. In line with a Jewish narrative the Jewish David fought heroically against all odds, the Arab Goliath (Gelvin, 2007) and the victory and creation of Israel was a symbol of

[13] The Yishuv refers to Jewish society in Palestine before 1948 (Naveh, 2006).

the Jewish people's rebirth after persecution in Europe and Nazi genocide (Sa'di & Abu-Lughod, 2007)[14].

There has been a wave of "New Israeli Historians" (Rogan & Shlaim, 2001, p. 7) who challenge and re-write the traditional version of Jewish history, such as the one presented above. Jawad (2006) argues that war was far from the Palestinian people's collective mind and that provocative Palestinian groups were a small amount of the population who also conducted crimes in Palestinian society. Jawad (2006) states further that Arab countries were not solely responsible for the war. According to a Jewish narrative, the war started November 30, 1947 as a result of various Arab attacks. The first attack targeted a bus on the way to Jerusalem. The second attack came twenty minutes later on another bus where seven passengers were killed. A few days later, stores of Jews in Jerusalem were burned and plundered. According to Jawad (2006), however, the war began as a result of terror attacks in Palestinian villages conducted between November 30 and December 13, 1947. An explosion on a civilian gathering near the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem's Old City as well as attacks in several villages at this period caused the death of 60 civilians and created the point of no return (Jawad, 2006).

Due to limitations comprehensive descriptions of the various historical accounts will not be elaborated further (see e.g. Jawad, 2006 and Dershowitz, 2003). It suffices to say that the "truths" about the 1948 war depend on the eye that sees. What can be concluded with certainty is Arab comprehension of the war as al-Nakba. Whether being among the 80 percent that became refugees or those who remained in the newly established Israel, Nakba marked a change in both individual and collective Palestinian/Arab life. On one hand it destructed Palestinian communities and future national aspirations. On the other hand, Nakba is understood as a starting-point of Palestinian collective memory and national identity and serve therefore as an challenger to Jewish historiography.

Whether being understood as Nakba or War of Independence, the new state was born at a high price. Many lives on both sides were lost, three-quarters of a million

[14] Several wars have been fought in the wake of Israel's establishment, among them in 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 2006 and 2008/2009. Additionally, violent activities keep breaking out continuously.

Palestinians became refugees and several wars have been fought in the aftermath of 1948. Nonetheless, the state of Israel was created and years of nation building were about to start[15]. The historical accounts are decisive for people's perceptions of issues regarding identity and citizenship. An influential aspect in the transmittance of these accounts and the development of civic identity is the educational system.

2.2. Society and education

With a heterogeneous population representing countries from all over the world Israel is characterized as an immigrant society (Krausz & Glanz, 1989). Jews and others (non-Arab Christians and not defined by religion) encompass approximately 79,7% of the population, while 20,3% are Arabs (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Liberal Jews, Hassidic Jews, Muslim Arabs, Christian Arabs, Druze and Bedouins are examples of the diversity in Israeli society. The early leaders of the new Israeli state produced new categories of identity: 'Ashkenazi' Jews from Europe, 'Mizrahi' Jews from communities in Arab countries, 'Israeli', 'Israeli Arab' and 'Palestinian'. An additionally category is 'Sephardim', implying Jews who left Spain and Portugal after the 1492 expulsion (Jewish Virtual Library, 2011c). This term is today commonly used interchangeably with 'Mizrahi'. Mizrahi Jews originate from countries such as Iraq, Yemen or Morocco. Consequently, they are Jews with Arab descent and therefore also, although many may not define themselves as such, 'Arab Jews'. The term 'Arab Jew' is today predominantly used to describe Jews who currently lives in Arab countries (Shenhav, 2006). Hassidic communities stand strongly out against secular or modern Orthodox Judaism, with dissimilar views on Israel's right to exist, Jewish settlements and gender issues to mention some. Israel represent a diverse society and disagreements about land, citizenship or solutions to the conflict go beyond the superficial Arab-Israeli dichotomy.

2.2.1. Israel – a democracy?

Israel has been portrayed as one of few countries in the Middle East that meets most democratic criterions according to "Western" democratic systems. A main argument

[15] Smith (2010) argues that it is important to distinguish between the terms 'nation-building' and 'state-building'. 'Nation-building' refers to the development of a state where citizens share the same social, cultural and religious background. However, as a result of increased globalization and movement of people the homogeneous nation-state has been challenged. 'State-building' underlines equal rights of citizens regardless of ethnic, religious or cultural identity.

used by those advocating a Jewish state is that democracy and Zionism are compatible. The possibility of being both a democracy and a Jewish nation-state has, however, been highly debated. Smooha (2005) operates with different forms of democracies. An elaboration of his types of democracies is beyond the scope of this chapter. The category of interest is what Smooha (1999) labels 'ethnic democracy'. An ethnic democracy recognizes ethnic differences, provides certain collective rights but fails to treat all citizens equally by giving privileges to the ethnic majority. Formal citizenship and certain benefits are provided to the minorities and give them democratic opportunities to a certain extent. Smooha (2005) identifies conflicting areas that arise in ethnic democracies, such as symbols, holidays, equality, collective rights and language[16]. The minority of an ethnic democracy is disadvantaged in these areas, but can through democratic processes struggle for better conditions. Israel meets several of the criteria that characterize a democracy, such as voting rights, elections, change of governments, civil rights, free press and a judiciary. Yet, there are major weaknesses, among them protection of minorities, languages issues and the Law of Return[17]. Other shortcomings concern official holidays, national symbols and policies regarding non-Jewish citizens of Israel[18].

Arabs who remained in the land after 1948 were automatically granted Israeli citizenship. However, the continuation of the conflict has created the perception of Arab citizens of Israel as non-loyal, secondary citizens. The ongoing Jewish-Palestinian conflict intensifies this perception and Arabs both in and out of Israel are continuously considered a security risk. However, an often-omitted aspect is that Israel's treatments of its Arab citizens are far better than in neighboring Arab

16 Hebrew and Arabic are official languages in Israel. Arabic is medium of instruction in Arab schools and Hebrew for Jewish students. Nevertheless, linguistic injustice is prevalent. Hebrew is a compulsory secondary language in Israeli Arab schools, starting from fourth grade. Jewish children learn Arabic, but for fewer years and often as a selective subject (Landau, 1993). Hebrew is the de facto official language and a necessity for communication such as in court, at health services or when applying for jobs.

17 The Knesset adopted the "Israeli Law of Return" July 1950. Section 1 of the Law proclaims; "every Jew has the right to immigrate to the country" (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010). In other words, every Jew throughout the world is a part of the Jewish nation and has the right to immigrate to Israel, be granted citizenship and get social rights (Canetti-Nisim & Pedahzur, 2003).

18 In March 2011 the Knesset approved the Nakba Law, which prohibit state funds from being used on commemoration of the Nakba (Michaeli, 2011).

countries. Most Palestinians in Syria or Egypt have not been granted citizenship and are consequently in lack of citizenship rights. The majority of the Palestinians scattered around Arab countries, except some Palestinians in Jordan, have the status as refugees and their living conditions are far from adequate (Hawary, 2001). Challenges of integrating the former enemy into the Israeli state are clearly evident, as will be demonstrated in chapters five and six. Surveys have been done in order to better understand the extent of Israeli Arab satisfaction on both an individual and a collective level, being citizens of a state established against their will. Ghanem's (2002) study indicates that Arabs in Israel are satisfied on an individual level of modernization, but not on the level of collective change[19]. The individual Arab citizen of Israel has experienced modernization and changes since 1948. These changes imply decline in birth rate, rise in educational level, better quality of housing, gender equality, employment and improvements in services and living standard. Yet, the situation of Arab citizens of Israel as a group reveals greater dissatisfaction on issues concerning equality with Jews, budgets and resources, abilities to plan their own future, improved participation in local authorities or full partnership in the government (Ghanem, 2002).

According to Ghanem (2002) a majority of Arab citizens of Israel recognize the state of Israel. In the 2001 survey 50.7% replied that they recognize Israel's right to exist, while only 15.6% answered negatively (Ghanem, 2002). Whether Arab citizens of Israel recognize Israel's right to exist or not is a question of identity and to what extent Arabs feel they hold equality as Israeli citizens. Both in the 1995 and the 2001 survey, Arabs living in Israel were asked to select one of several options that best described their identity. The options were Arab, Palestinian Arab, Israeli Arab, Israeli, Israeli Palestinian, Palestinian in Israel/ Palestinian Arab in Israel or Palestinian. 73.7% chose an option including 'Israel' or 'Israeli' in the 2001 survey, while 82.3% selected such a definition in the survey of 1995 (Ghanem, 2002). Ghanem (2002) interprets his findings as implying that Arabs in Israel consider themselves as Israeli citizens. He does not, however, clarify and/or elaborate about aspects of citizenship. As will be shown in chapter five, a majority of the Arab interviewees feel little or no belonging towards the state of Israel. Citizenship is considered merely as a judicial

[19] Ghanem's study (2002) is based on data from surveys of Arab citizens of Israel, which were conducted in 1994, 1995 and 2001.

status and, hence, Ghanem's (2002) conclusions do not correspond with the findings of this research.

Before turning to an examination of identity and its important functions in conflict-ridden societies, let us now continue with a short presentation of Israeli education. Both formal and informal education are decisive factors in the development of civic identities. The remaining part of this chapter will present a short description of education in Israel, the history curriculum and a history project developed to promote increased understandings of "the other's" narrative.

2.2.2. Education and the subject of history

An important driving force in nation building is education. The educational system plays an important role in promoting particular ideologies as well as creating a national consciousness. Educating future citizens is a challenging task for conflict-ridden and divided societies (Naveh, 2006). After 1948 and until contemporary time education in Israel has faced vast challenges in the process of integrating a large quantity of immigrant children, whether these being Palestinian, Israeli Arabs, Jews or others (Scribd, 2010). In 2003, Israeli elite expressed concerns regarding a lack of historical knowledge among youths in Israel. Fragmentation of Israeli society was interpreted as a weakening of a Zionist historical consciousness, a concern in which Israeli leaders have taken seriously. Education has served as an important tool in the attempt of solving these concerns, such as by integrating immigrants and non-Jews into a Jewish, unified identity.

Education is compulsory and by attending 12 years of education students are expected to become responsible citizens, which is an underlying assumption of education in most societies. Education in Israel constitutes of pre-primary, primary education (1-6), intermediate school (7-9), secondary education (10-12)[20] and higher education. Education is divided into various educational sectors: state schools, state religious schools, Arab and Druze schools and private schools (Zembylas & Bekerman, 2008). With separate schools Arabs have the ability to maintain their language and culture. Messages transmitted through education are, however, under strict supervision of the Israeli Education Ministry to the extent that is possible (Torstrick, 2000). This control

[20] Secondary school is used synonymous with high school and will further be referred to as high school education.

implies omission of what could be "a potential threat to Zionist historiography" in the curriculum (Pinson, 2007, p. 340). Separate education makes interaction truly challenging and while some Jews and Arabs coexist peacefully, others live their lives completely without any form of interaction. As will be shown in this study, an overwhelming majority of this study's respondents are satisfied with separated schools, Jews and Arabs alike. It should therefore be underlined that there is a difference between segregated schools where minorities are obliged to attend distinct schools, and separated schools where the parting is a matter of mutual choice (Smith, 2010) [21].

Overcoming achievement-gaps between various groups of the populations has been a major concern of the Israeli Education Ministry. Two legislative acts of education were passed in Israel in 1949 and 1953 to ensure students' right to education independent of race, religion or gender (Altinok, 2010). Nevertheless, large gaps in achievement between students from different ethnic background persist. A central focus of the Israeli education system was the inequalities between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews, whereas inequalities between Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens rarely were touched (Altinok, 2010). In respond to critiques, the Israeli Education Ministry presented in the 1990s two five-year plans for Arab-speaking citizens of Israel, which aimed at improving the Arab sector on aspects such as study hours, reducing drop-out rates, school buildings and increasing the number of students entitled to matriculation certificates (Altinok, 2010). Although far from adequate even today, the plans resulted in several improvements in the Arab sector, such as a relatively more balanced picture of Arabs and Palestinians.

Curriculum and textbooks are important aspects of education, as they are tools in the transmittance of a society's ideology to new generations (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). History legitimizes group existence and justifies acts and attitudes and the subject of history is particularly important when building a new state. There have been vast disputes concerning teaching history in Israel and the history curriculum has experienced some transformation since 1948. The first history curriculum was

[21] Hand in Hand Centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel is a network of bilingual schools that works to provide as many Israeli students as possible integrated education (Hand in Hand, 2011). Consequently, Israeli students have the choice to attend mixed schools.

incorporated in 1954. The following was not published until 1975 while the current history curriculum was introduced in 1995. One central aim of the new core curriculum of 1995 is addressing the fragmentation and identity crisis that characterizes Israeli society. Further aims are critical reading skills, interpretation of written texts and the development of critical discourses regarding Israel's past. To what extent these aims have been met is yet to be revealed[22]. The current curriculum ignores Arab narratives to a great extent and learning "the other's" narrative was at the point this thesis was written still not approved by the Education Ministry. The Education Ministry's preliminary plan for the next school years' curriculum entails, according to circulated copies, the reinforcement of Jewish and Zionist values while Jewish-Arab coexistence is unmentioned (Kashti, 2011).

2.2.3. "Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative"

It was not until I set off interviewing that I discovered my precise choice of topic developed in Norway, currently is dealt with by peace-workers in Israel and the West Bank in the form of a dual history project. A joint school textbook named "Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative: Palestinians and Israelis" developed by the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) provides a new way of learning history. Jewish and Palestinian history teachers have been working together to develop two separate but interdependent narratives, translated to Arabic, Hebrew and English. The students get the opportunity to read, learn and understand both Palestinian and Jewish narratives simultaneously in their own mother tongue. Each page of the book is divided into three equal sections: the Jewish narrative, the Palestinian narrative and in the middle empty lines where the students can create and express their own critical thoughts. The aim of the project is learning about "the other's" narrative through school textbooks and additionally acquire increased understanding of one's own historical account. By doing so, education could contribute to resolving the conflict and possibly "moving education from being part of the conflict to be[ing] part of the solution" (Adwan, 2010). Although the Education Ministry currently bans their history textbook, PRIME is continuously working for the advancement of multi-narrative approaches to nation-wide methods.

[22] As in most conflict-affected countries, more resources are used on military than the educational sector. Increased financing does not guarantee better education, however, under-financing will most likely lead to failure (UNESCO, 2011).

The Jewish teacher participant Benjamin is one of the co-authors of PRIME's textbook. He explains that although the difficulties in utilizing the book are vast, challenges are even more intricate for Palestinian students and teachers in the West Bank. Yearly meetings by the participants of the project reveal challenges Palestinian teachers face by using the book, such as threats and pressure from both parents and authorities. Yet, the Palestinian Education Ministry approved the history textbook at the end of 2010. For the first time a Jewish narrative is presented to students in two schools in the West Bank (Kashti, 2010). The Israeli Education Ministry, however, does not approve the textbook. If teaching material on the Palestinian narrative of the conflict is discovered, the particular teachers are called for consultations. Attempts have been made to implement the textbook in Arab schools in Israel. According to Benjamin the textbook is a challenging experiment in education and the implementation has not yet been a success. Arabs in Israel are often referred to as someone in the middle when it comes to questions of identity and belonging, which will be elaborated in chapters five and six. Previous experiences have uncovered that learning two narratives simultaneously is confusing both for students and teachers, promoting constant feelings of having to choose one side or another. Consequently, attempts to implement the history textbook in Arab schools in Israel were brought to an end.

I repeatedly tried to get interviews with key persons at the Israeli Education Ministry to get their opinions about multi-narrative approaches in history. Responses were given neither to phone calls, mails, nor to other efforts to get in touch. Consequently, my interpretations of the Israeli Education Ministry's attitudes towards a two-narrative approach are based on a Haaretz article[23], written by head of the Education Ministry's pedagogical secretariat, Dr. Zvi Zameret. The article was published as a reaction to the history book "Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative", and was titled "A Distorted Historiography" (Zameret, 2010). Zameret (2010) begins with referring to various attacks and massacres on Jews in the Arab world, criticizing Israeli teachers and students for lacking knowledge on anti-Jewish riots. On the other hand, he claims, most students and teachers have knowledge about the "Nakba". The textbook is criticized for representing a distorted historiography and claims that both narratives are incomplete and misleading. He bases these claims on the total numbers

[23] Haaretz (Hebrew: הארץ) is a daily Israeli newspaper known for its liberal opinions.

of Arab refugees resulting from the 1948 war, which is represented differently in the Jewish and the Palestinian narrative in the history book. Moreover, Zameret (2010) justifies his critique on numbers of victims of the Deir Yassin massacre[24]. This narrow-minded focus on numbers of refugees or victims of a massacre neglects the importance of moving beyond the numbers and focus on understanding each other's narrative, which obviously will differ from each other to some extent. He fails to comprehend that it is possible to acknowledge other narratives although these not necessarily are in harmony with one's own. Zameret (2010) uses these arguments as explanations to why the Education Ministry banns the textbook, encourages further principals to do the same and by doing so, "guaranteeing that children will study only approved materials" (Zameret, 2010).

In contrast to the statements of Zameret (2010), the particular choices of existing theories relevant for this research attempt to illuminate the complexities of citizenship, collective memory and narratives. I will now move on to a presentation of the theoretical framework of this research, which will be the foundation of analysis in chapters five and six.

[24] Deir Yassin is a village, famous as the site of a massacre in 1948 (Jawad, 2006). While most historians, according to Zameret (2010), set the numbers killed between 90 and 120 the Jewish narrative states that 250 people were killed. The Palestinian narrative includes about 100 dead in the 2003 edition and 250 in the 2009 edition, thus being criticized by Zameret for changing their representation of history.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

> The theoretical framework is derived from the orientation or stance that you bring to your study (Merriam, 2009, p. 66).

Interpretations of findings are influenced by the researcher's experiences, biases and world-views. One aspect that affects the interpretations is selection of a theoretical framework. The purpose of this study is to investigate how education is used as a tool in development of citizenship in Israel and how diversity of narratives is dealt with through the subject of history. Parts of the theories were organized prior to the fieldwork. I abandoned theories and added others after conducting fieldwork. The two major theories of this research are citizenship and collective memory, which I consider productive for the problem statement and the research questions. The choice of theories aims at demonstrating how individuals understand citizenship and the conflict, and hence, the theoretical framework is rather broad. To begin with, the meaning of citizenship may vary depending on political setting and time and as a result of difficulties in defining citizenship. The respondents' perception of citizenship will most likely differ, and consequently, Osler and Starkey's (2005) aspects of citizenship are used as a framework for analysis. By emphasizing various aspects of citizenship it is acknowledged that Israelis differ in their way of negotiating civic identity. The second main theory is collective memory and its functions in conflict-ridden societies. The aspect of history consciousness will be presented, as it is important for contemporary understanding of both one's own group and the adversary. This presentation will hopefully contribute to an understanding of how ethnic groups create particular historical pictures and why these are so important in conflicts.

3.1. Citizenship

> Pluralistic societies are increasingly facing the question of how to deal with internal issues of social inequalities and cultural diversity and, at the same time, to build a shared civility among its different national, ethnic, religious and social groups (Al-Haj, 2002, p. 169).

Citizenship can be interpreted as "members of a political community" (Painter 1998, p. 93) and is a debated topic in most democracies. An important requirement of citizenship is access to civil, political, social and economic rights (Raijman & Semyonov, 2010). However, the concept has a variety of meanings and is used differently in various settings and societies, which soon will be elaborated.

Consequently, one clear definition of the concept is unfeasible. Across the world there has been a renewed interest in citizenship education, particularly when dealing with divided and conflict-ridden societies[25]. Citizenship education can formally be a part of the school curriculum or it can be part of subjects such as history. Messages transmitted through citizenship education serve as a form of socialization, where students learn who is considered citizens of the state, attitudes towards various groups and relationships with other people (Smith, 2010). Matters of citizenship in Israel are often up for debate concerning immigration, the controversial relationship with Israel's non-Jewish citizens and the 'Law of Return'. Recent regulations to the 'Citizenship Law' in Israel require potential citizens not only to swear loyalty to the State of Israel, but also to "swear loyalty to a Jewish and democratic state and vow to abide by its laws" (Haaretz Editorial, 2010). Among the Israeli Arabs there are those who oppose the characterization of the state as being Jewish. Accordingly, being a deeply divided country causes inconsistencies on issues regarding citizenship, identity, loyalty/disloyalty and sense of belonging.

3.1.1. Aspects of citizenship

There are many definitions of being a citizen of a state and one might feel solidarity and connections both at local, national, regional and/or global levels. Osler and Starkey (2005) highlight three dimensions of citizenship: citizenship as a status, a feeling and practice. Initially, citizenship as a status refers to citizenship merely as an internationally accepted legal position, as demonstrated by the following quote: "The world is organized on the basis of nation states and almost all of the world's inhabitants are legally citizens of a state, whether it be demographically huge, like China and India, or tiny, like Vanuatu or Belize (Osler & Starkey, 2005, p. 10). According to the quote, residents possess citizenship as a legal status regardless of the political regime. Citizenship in this dimension describes the relationship between state and individual where the state usually provides education, health care, infrastructure and laws in return for taxation, military service or other duties (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Painter (1998) states that civil rights, political rights and social rights implies the right to a fair trail, freedom of speech, a free press, the right to vote and stand elections as well as rights to health care and education.

[25] Programs of education for citizenship address barriers to full citizenship and challenge issues such as racism, violent acts, xenophobia, extreme nationalism and intolerance (Osler & Starkey, 2005).

This does not guarantee, however, the feeling of belonging, which is Osler and Starkey's (2005) second aspect of citizenship. Merely possessing legal rights are, according to this dimension, inadequate in order to hold full citizenship. The identity aspect of citizenship put emphasis on belonging to and feeling emotionally included in an imagined community (Anderson, 2006). Individuals are likely to vary in their attachment to a state. Although most democratic states aim at equality for its citizens, this may not always be the reality. Groups or individuals who experience discrimination and exclusion are less likely to contribute to and partake in society. Accordingly, if participation is lacking so too is the sense of citizenship (Osler & Starkey, 2005).

Citizenship is socially constructed and inclusion/exclusion to societies are dynamic processes and a matter of discussion, struggle and negotiation (Pinson, 2007). In addition to civil, political and social rights, citizenship also encompass acknowledgement by other citizens in the society. Some citizens desire to belong but experience barriers to citizenship in forms of exclusion, as illuminated by the following quote: "Citizenship as a feeling is often considered to be a question of identity. But even the choice of identity can be denied. Self-ascribed identity can be overruled by an excluding society" (Osler & Starkey, 2005, p. 13). Cultural uniqueness is one characteristic of citizenship, meaning that those with cultural values differing from the widely held collective identity may experience exclusion from the imagined community. National holidays, food, music or sport are aspects in which feelings of national identity commonly are promoted. Osler and Starkey's (2005) third dimension is citizenship as practice, which is related to democracy and awareness of human rights. Shortly, the aspect stresses that active citizenship requires access to human rights. As this aspect was given no attention by the respondents, it has not been included in the analysis of the findings.

The ideal of full and equal citizenship implies equal rights, participation, equivalence among citizens and feelings of inclusion and belonging. Banks (2004) argues that if a person lacks one or several of the aspects mentioned above, the likelihood of gaining full and equal citizenship decreases, which the following quotation illustrates:

> Becoming a legal citizen of a nation-state does not necessarily mean that an individual will attain structural inclusion into the mainstream society and its institutions or will be perceived as a citizen by most members of the dominant group within the nation-state. A citizen's racial, ethnic, cultural, class, language, and religion's characteristics often significantly influence whether she is viewed as a citizen within her society (Banks, 2004, p. 5).

As will be presented in chapter five, Arab respondents of this study highlight the difference between legally being citizens of a state and inclusion to the society's imagined community. Arabs in Israel speak Arabic; they attend separate schools and many live in separate neighborhoods where traditions and customs are maintained. The separation makes it difficult, if not unmanageable, to be acknowledged as equal with Jews, and Israeli Arabs are accordingly degraded as "secondary" citizens.

In addition to various aspects of citizenship, Osler and Starkey (2005) introduce the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship. Cosmopolitan citizenship implies recognition of a common humanity as well as solidarity with other people. One cannot feel solidarity with others unless one can sense solidarity with other people in one's own society. By defining citizenship in broader terms based on tolerance and respect for diversity, students can learn to understand what it means to be a part of diverse societies (UNESCO, 2011). Cosmopolitan citizenship recognizes human diversity, universal values and the entitlement of fellow citizens to equal rights. Nevertheless, cosmopolitan citizenship may in many cases be the aspiration rather than describing a matter of fact, and cosmopolitan citizenship may be perceived as unpatriotic. Such perspectives neglect the forces of migration and globalization, which cause some citizens to feel belonging beyond one particular state (Osler & Starkey, 2005). To a great extent, inclusion and exclusion are based on understandings of identity and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. Identity and ethnicity influence conceptions of citizenship and will therefore be given attention in the two following sections respectively.

3.1.2. Identity and socialization

> What is it that currently makes men and women all over the world, from every kind of background, rediscover and feel impelled to assert in various ways their religious affiliation, when the same people, only a few years earlier, would spontaneously have chosen to put forward quite different allegiances? What makes a Muslim in Yugoslavia suddenly stop calling himself a Yugoslav and proclaim himself first and foremost a Muslim? What causes a

> Jewish worker in Russia who all his life has regarded himself a proletarian, suddenly begin to see himself as a Jew? (Maalouf, 1996, p. 88).

Being of Lebanese origin, an Arab deriving from a Christian family but who immigrated to and currently lives in France, the novelist Amin Maalouf is a good example of the complexities of identity. Millions of people live in divided societies with different allegiances. Due to increases in migration and a greater degree of interconnectedness, multiple allegiances is expected to become the norm rather than the exception (Maalouf, 1996). Consequently, Maalouf (1996) challenges the perception of identity as reduced to one single affiliation, as the above quote demonstrates. The extract additionally emphasizes how certain aspects of one's identity become vital if that particular part is under threat, which soon will be elaborated. Maalouf (1996) argues against the prevalent perception that it is adequate to say that one is Arab, French, Serb, Muslim or Jew when proclaiming one's identity. There is no such thing as two identical Arabs or two identical Jews and every individual varies from others. Yet, we still tend to place highly different individuals under the same category. Frequently, particularly in media, entire populations are judged as being smart, hardworking, arrogant, primitive or resistant to change. It is disregarded that an Israeli Jew could have much more in common with a fellow Arab citizen of Israel than with his own great-grandmother from Iraq.

It is difficult to sustain various allegiances if one continually is forced to support one side or another. Identity is what prevents one individual from being identical to another and is made up of a number of factors, such as allegiances to religion, nationality, village, family, gender, neighborhood, team, union or a group of people. We can without difficulty move from one affiliation to another, implying that "each of us has multiple identities, from the most intimate family circle to the widest circle of humanity" (Smith, 2010, p. 21). Most of the factors that constitute one's identity are acquired through life step by step and they change both with time and environments. Influences of others are of major relevance in determining a person's affiliation to a particular group, as illustrated through the following quote:

> Those around him mould him, shape him, instil into him family beliefs, rituals, attitudes and conventions, together of course with his native language and also certain fears, aspirations, prejudice and grudges, not forgetting various feelings or affiliation and non-affiliation, belonging and non-belonging (Maalouf, 1996, p. 25).

The home, neighborhood and the school are all important in the creation of individual identities. Berger and Luckmann (1967) stress that one is not born as a member of society. Primary and secondary socialization are processes individuals undergo in order to become members of societies. Primary socialization is commonly conceived as the most important form of socialization. An individual is born into "an objective social structure" defined by "the significant others" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 131). The child adapts to his/her mother, father, grandfather or older sister's attitudes and beliefs about "reality". Those surrounding the child form his/her consciousness; give him/her an identity and consequently "the individual's first world is constructed" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 135). The child is not passive at this stage of socialization, but has no choice in the selection of significant others.

Socialization is never complete, which leads us to the next form of internalization: secondary socialization. The main challenge of secondary socialization is that it has to deal with an already subjective and constructed reality. Realities internalized through primary socialization tend to persist and thus new contents need to be imposed on the existing reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Secondary socialization challenge and/or transform the reality previously taken for granted as the inevitable "truth". At this stage, individuals recognize that the world defined by their significant others may not be the only possible way of perceiving the world. The educational system is a major agent in processes of secondary socialization through textbooks, teacher instructions, ceremonies and holidays. Messages transmitted through schooling reach a large amount of the younger generation and take place during formative years in which students to a certain extent are open to new perspectives (Bar-Tal, Rosen & Nets-Zehngut, 2009). Davis (2010, cited in Smith, 2010) argues that education systems unlikely operate in totally positive or negative ways. Some parts of the education system may support the conflict, while other parts advocates change and peace building.

One influential aspect of education systems is teachers. "Teachers are the most important factor in determining the quality of learning. They also import values, model behavior and play an important role in socialization. Teacher recruitment and training needs to include 'conflict-sensitivity' (Smith, 2010, p. 22). Smith (2010) argues that teachers and teacher education are central keys in the quality of education, as they are the mediators of messages and values presented in the curriculum. The

role of the teacher is to bring new contents to the child's established and constructed world. To what extent individuals get affected by secondary socialization varies, depending both on the individual, the teacher and the methods used when presenting new contents. Teachers are expected to convey institutionally explicit meanings, such as those accepted by the authority. Berger and Luckmann (1967) claim that secondary socialization entails a high level of anonymity, as teachers are detached from their individual performers. As we will see in chapters five and six this may not always be the case, particularly not in conflict-ridden societies.

A person's identity consists of a dual process of self-ascription and acknowledgment by other people (Emberling, 1997). Yet, acknowledgement by outsiders may not be consistent with one's own self-ascription (Hammack, 2010). Identity negotiations are complex processes and characterized by a number of discourses on affiliation and collective identity. Stigmatization from within Israeli society for being Arabs as well as from other Arab countries for being Israeli citizens, Arab citizens of Israel are forced to "negotiate identities as they construct a hyphenated self" (Hammack, 2010, p. 368). Arabs living in Israel have since 1948 been a part of two different worlds and experience "cross-pressure" as a minority (Smooha, 1999, p. 11). Adapting to the majority on one hand as well as preserving their heritage on the other is two parallel socialization processes influencing Israeli Arab's identity. Smooha (1999) calls these identity processes 'Palestinization' and 'Israelization'[26]. 'Israelization' entails absorption into Israeli society, acknowledgement of Israel's right to exist, definitions in Israeli terms and seeing one's own future in Israel. Smooha (1999) argues that as 'Israelization' advances, Arabs experience emotional ties to Israel and appreciate the benefits of living in Israel. This argument does, however, not shed light on collective satisfaction, which according to my respondents is inadequate. Moreover, it neglects aspects of citizenship, such as those previously mentioned in this chapter. Smooha (1999) states further that resistance to Zionism eventually will fade out resulting from 'Israelization' as well as objections to Israel as a Jewish state. Ultimately, 'Israelization' contributes to decreasing adherences to a Palestinian narrative.

'Palestinization' implies a recovering of Israeli Arabs' lost identity after 1948 by focusing on Palestinian identity and strengthening a sense of belonging to Palestine.

[26] Various writers have embraced Smooha's (1999) aspects of 'Israelization' and 'Palestinization (see e.g. Hammack, 2010 and Pinson, 2007).

Whether it be color, language, religion or nationality "people often see themselves in terms of whichever one of their allegiances is most under attack" (Maalouf, 1996, p. 26). Such feelings gather people who share the same allegiances together in order to challenge the adversary. Assertion of identity becomes an act of liberation: "If they feel that 'others' represent a threat to their own ethnic group or religion or nation, anything they might do to ward off that danger seems to them entirely legitimate" (Maalouf, 1996, p. 31). Differentiation and fixed identities serve as basis for inclusion and exclusion to an imagined community. Let us now turn to questions of ethnicity and how exclusion can encourage feelings and acts of xenophobia.

3.1.3. Ethnicity

The study of ethnicity has been referred to as B.B. (before Barth) and A.B. (after Barth), as Fredrik Barth contributed to a paradigm shift in the field of ethnicity (see e.g. Emberling, 1997). Within a primordialist perspective ethnicity is regarded as based on shared blood ties, race, language, beliefs and attitudes. The boundaries of ethnic identity are believed to be set by nature, externally given and individuals are considered as born into their ethnic identity[27]. Contrary to this model of identity is the instrumentalist perspective, focusing on boundaries as a result of human action (Torstrick, 2000). Barth (1969) moved the concentration from cultural traits within boundaries towards construction and maintenance of the subjectively acknowledged boundaries. Moreover, Barth (1969) challenged the equation between race, culture and language and reduced the definition of ethnicity to the following: "Ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves" (Emberling, 1997, p. 299). This definition emphasizes social boundaries and maintenance of boundaries that define groups and not "the cultural stuff that it encloses" (Barth, 1969, p. 15). Ethnic groups are not simply based on territorial boundaries. Maintenance of the borders when interrelating with others involves inclusion and exclusion of a determined membership. Further, it implies norms and standards of behavior and ways of acting (Barth, 1969). Barth moved the attention away from objective differences to the distinctions the actors themselves considered significant.

[27] Emberling (1997) argues that Barth's use of the word 'boundary' is unfortunate, as the word gives associations to sharp dissimilarities between various groups even though the characteristics that define these boundaries are not clear. Ethnic identity is one of several social identities. Thus, one should not perceive ethnicity as absolute, but as based on perception of difference. This demonstrates that ethnicity depends on the context (Emberling, 1997).

"Objective" differences such as language or other cultural characteristics could no longer serve as the main legitimate distinction between groups. Nevertheless, as underlined by Maalouf (1996), ascription and acknowledgement by others are significant as differences in cultural features such as language, religion, culture, cuisine, architecture and clothing distinguish ethnic groups from each other. These differences are strengthened in conflict-affected areas, which reinforce national inequalities (UNESCO, 2011).

Particularly in conflict-ridden societies, reinforcement of differentiation could encourage feelings and acts of xenophobia. Fear and crime are interrelated and "the emotions of fear or insecurity don't always obey rational considerations. They may be exaggerated or even paranoid; but once a whole population is afraid we are dealing with the reality of fear rather than the reality of threat" (Maalouf, 1996, p. 28). Negative stereotypes and mutual de-legitimization have characterized the relationship between Jews and Arabs, although not everyone, for decades. "Xeno" derives from the Greek word "xénos", meaning foreigner or stranger. "Phobia" stem from the word "phóbos", which means fear. Xenophobia has been defined as "an irrational fear or distrust of foreigners" (Bordeau, 2010, p. 4). Contrarily to racism, xenophobia implies prejudicing people not based on physical characteristics, but on the belief that certain groups do not belong to the nation or community. There are several explanations to xenophobia, among them social, psychological, cultural and political factors. Canetti-Nisim and Pedahzur (2003) suggest that a combination of the mentioned factors contribute in generating fear and xenophobia. Canetti-Nisim and Pedahzur (2003) acknowledge the various explanations, but give particular attention to what they term 'political xenophobia'. Political xenophobia implies "hostility towards members of certain ethnic and national groups" (Canetti-Nisim & Pedahzur, 2003, p. 309). Israel consists of generations of "foreigners" and has been described as a melting pot. There are nationalists who feel strong loyalty to their country and its traditions, believing native-born people should have more rights than foreign-born citizens and deeming immigrants as a threat to the country's national identity. If not dealt with, political tension between various groups that exist in Israel can develop into xenophobic acts and attitudes.

Torstrick (2000) refers to the often used equation "people = nation = state", which

implies “the people who constitute the nation have the right to be represented by the state” (Torstrick, 2000, p. 22). This is a problematic equation. While a nation consists of a community sharing culture, ethnicity and history, a state is a political sovereign entity with defined geographical borders (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2010). A nation has been defined as an imagined community, which the following quote demonstrates: “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communication” (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). We often regard those from the same community as ourselves, someone we pretend to care about even if we do not know them (Maalouf, 1996). In present-day Jewish orthodox tradition one needs to have a Jewish mother in order to claim a Jewish nationality. Hitler executed people born by a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, people who today would not be considered as Jewish by the orthodox tradition. Palestinians living in Israel may speak Hebrew and live according to an “Israeli-Jewish” lifestyle. This is not to suggest, however, that he or she can claim a Jewish nationality (Torstrick, 2000). Issues of identity and ethnicity raise questions as to whether boundaries are defined by residence, lingua franca or a particular lifestyle and additionally by whom these boundaries are set.

How the past is narrated affect understandings of citizenship. Transmittance of collective memory and narratives of conflict are important aspects regarding development of civic identities. Therefore, I now turn to the role of collective memory in conflict-ridden societies.

3.2. Collective memory – narratives of conflict

“People effortlessly feel that they share a common culture when it can be demonstrated to them they have evolved from a common past” (Singh, 2006, p. 66). One rationale of narrative structuring is to give meaning to past events and occurrences. Narratives give information and knowledge about the world seen from a particular point of view. Yet, “narrated descriptions of life episodes are not mirrored reflections of what occurred” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 10). Understanding of the past changes as new experiences are gathered, which affects people’s interpretations and perspectives. In addition to provide understandings of the past, narratives also involve interpretations in light of current understandings (Polkinghorne, 2005). What is more,

historical narratives facilitate maintenance of cultures and traditions. Thus, historical narratives create coherence and cultural reproduction, both on an individual and collective level. By presenting a common past and common expectation for the future, historical narratives function as a form of socialization. Finally, narratives enforce differentiations particularly in conflict-ridden societies by ascribing different pasts to different groups (Straub, 2005). The collective narrative does not necessarily tell the truth, but is rather constructed in order to serve particular needs of the group. Accordingly, narratives can be biased, selective and distorted and various groups may construct distinct narratives of the same event (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006).

Understanding the world in a meaningful and organized way is a basic need for human beings. Both individuals and collectives strive for a feeling that the world in which they are a part of is organized and predictable (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). For many people such meanings derive from their membership of a particular group. Members of a society socially construct their world according to their needs. Social constructions serve as fundaments for the development of collective narratives of societies (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Narratives of intractable conflicts and their functions will here be given particular emphasis, as Jewish and Palestinian narratives have been and still are constructed during times of conflict.

3.2.1. Functions of collective memory

Collective memory possesses fundamental functions for societies in conflict. Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) provide four themes characterizing collective narratives. First, narratives justify the goals and outburst of the conflict. Failing to achieve the goals is believed to threaten the existence of the group. Second, narratives present one's own group in a positive manner where the adversary is given responsibility for the outbreak and continuation of the conflict. Third, narratives of collective memories tend to delegitimize "the other" by focusing on the inhumanity of the opponent. Finally, resulting from long periods of suffering and losses the inhuman and evil "others" impose the conflict, while one's own group is the victim (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). The four characteristics are part of a "psychological repertoire" (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006, p. 22) constructed by members of a society in order to ensure survival of their group. These psychological conditions imply loyalty and solidarity to a particular society/country, unity, shared beliefs, attitudes and emotions (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). The psychological repertoire is expressed in books, films and media

or by actions of leaders. In addition, family members and the educational system play important roles in exposing the younger generations to the repertoire.

Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) present six major functions of narratives and collective memory in times of conflict. First, collective narratives shed light on and give information about the conflict. Fear, stress, uncertainty and unpredictability are common sentiments deriving from conflict. Narratives provide information and answers to questions that may arise as a result of conflict, such as responsibility or outbreak of the dispute. The second function of narratives is justification of acts such as violence, harm or aggression towards the adversary. In intractable conflicts group kill and harm each other, in which a sacred value in most societies is violated, sanctity of life[28]. Sharpening a sense of differentiation is the third function of narratives. Narratives of conflicts give responsibility of the situation to the opponent, while glorifying one's own group or society. Next, narratives justify goals and the necessity of continuing the allocation of resources to resist the enemy. Of this follows patriotism and readiness to sacrifice to defend one's own group. Fifth, narratives assign particular meanings to political messages. While one group perceives policies as compromises, these may be regarded as empty promises by the opponent part of the conflict. Finally, narratives hold crucial functions with regards to identity, in which members of the same group describe themselves as a unified entity, in contrast to other collectives.

Metz (1972, in Zembylas & Bekerman) argues for two different kinds of memories. First, memory is selective recollection of past that represent one's own narrative as the superior. The second category is memory that disrupts taken-for-granted historical narratives by focusing on common human suffering. The latter suffering promotes solidarity and opens the attention to misery other than our own. Questioning one's own narrative and learning to hear "the other's" pain is demanding both for students and educators, as it requires awareness of the divide between "the other" as a group versus individuals. A broadening of the second category may be challenging when a state strives for maintenance of traumas in collective memory[29]. Moreover, freeing

[28] Intractable conflicts are defined as conflicts lasting at least 25 years (Bar-Tal et al., 2009).
[29] Starting from 2011 non-Jewish students in Israel will be obliged to study Holocaust. The Education Ministry have decided that Holocaust will be a topic on the history matriculation exam, as the topic is considered improperly addressed (Zelikovich, 2010).

oneself from a collective memory requires acknowledgement of other sources of the past as legitimate. Focusing on human suffering is not about remembrance versus forgetting historical trauma. It regards remembrance of suffering as common and a widening of the memory as to include the narratives of the adversary.

Zembylas and Bekerman (2008) argue that students and teachers need to be continuously engaged in critical examination of collective memories in order not to fall back on one's original narrative. In order to prevent the latter from happening, the development of a critical history consciousness is a requirement. Therefore, let us briefly take a look at history awareness and its importance for self-reflection and understandings of "others".

3.2.2. History consciousness

There is no general acceptation of the term 'history consciousness'. I understand the term in line with Straub (2005), who considers history and history consciousness as the "orientation-forming, narrative construction of a unity of temporal differences conceived as a meaningful structured processual form, in which fundamentally collectively significant experiences and expectations are articulated" (Straub, 2005, p. 54). History is not limited to what we learn through formal schooling, but is a part of learning and experiences throughout our lives. The concept of history consciousness was developed in the 1970s and 1980s with Professor Karl-Ernst Jeismann as a pioneer (Eikeland, 2004). During this period the interest in history consciousness in society increased and the field of history didactics was established as a subject and acknowledged as a scientific discipline. History didactics aim at exploring how history consciousness develops and changes and its significance for contemporary self-ascription. Jeismann was particularly preoccupied with the role of history education in forming a history consciousness, which is of major attention in this study. A central aim when conveying history is to develop skills that provide students with the ability to draw independent interferences. A precondition for such skills to develop is an environment that promotes open debates and contradicting views (Eikeland, 2004). Jeismann advised against developing a history consciousness based on one or a few perspectives. History consciousness should be developed through education in a way that is open to different interpretations according to each individual student's self-understanding. Jeismann advocated utilizing different

perspectives when transmitting history through education, promoting awareness of that certain historical content dominates while other perspectives are disregarded.

Moreover, Jeismann focused on the function of history consciousness in contemporary society (Eikeland, 2004). History consciousness affects interpretations of the past, understandings of present as well as perspectives and anticipations for the future. Awareness of history and its development is closely connected to identity, our understandings of who we are as well as understandings of "other" people distinct from ourselves. Historical awareness is thus important for both self-reflection and when relating to people from other religious, cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Different ethnic groups develop historical pictures, such as with whom to identify or whom to portray as the enemy. Developing wariness when it comes to using history as allocation of blame for specific historical acts was yet another aspiration (Eikeland, 2004). Prejudices and negative sentiments towards certain groups create a boundary between "us" and "them". Such attitudes can develop into nationalist discourses where those sharing culture, language or collective memory are more entitled to societal benefits than others (Osler & Starkey, 2005).

3.3. Closing remarks

In this chapter, several theories have been discussed in light of the thesis' research questions. To correlate the participants' responses with the various aspects of the matter, Osler and Starkey's (205) aspects of citizenship are presented. Identity, socialization processes and ethnicity are all linked to the discussion of citizenship, as these are aspects that influence the perception of citizenship itself. Including various aspects of what constitutes citizenship may contribute to a broader understanding of the complex reality in which Israeli students negotiate identity.

Notions of citizenship, identities and the maintenance of ethnic borders are all affected by conceptions (and misconceptions) of history. Thus, Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) notions of collective memory are granted a great part of this theoretical framework. Functions of collective memory are discussed in addition to a presentation of history consciousness. This theoretical framework intends to contribute to a broader understanding of the importance historical narratives hold in conflict-ridden societies.

Theory is “a set of concepts used to define and/or explain some phenomenon” (Silverman, 2006, p. 13). The particular choices of theory in this research will also serve as a framework for the analytical perspectives. The data gathered through fieldwork will be interpreted, analyzed and discussed with the theoretical framework close in mind in chapters five and six. Before the analysis of the findings can take place, it is necessary to elaborate on the methodologies employed throughout this research.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.1. Research design

One central aim of this research is to examine messages transmitted through history and their implications for civic identities. Thus, I found it necessary to locate the study within a qualitative research paradigm. Within this framework, understanding the world from individuals' point of view and their descriptions of the world is important. Face-to-face interaction is accordingly a requirement in order to accomplish and produce social knowledge (Bryman, 2008). The qualitative research paradigm guided my choice of methods, which I will elaborate further in this chapter.

This research aims at exploring the role of history in creating civic identities and how messages transmitted through schooling affects a feeling of membership in Israeli society. Bryman (2008) describes research design as a structural frame for collection and analysis of data. I chose a comparative design as it fit my intention of studying "two contrasting cases using more or less identical methods" (Bryman, 2008, p. 58). Two contrasting situations, in this case Jewish and Arab students, teachers, schools and narratives, have been compared to get a better understanding of the objectives of this research, described in chapter one. The aim of using a comparative design is to "seek explanation for similarities and differences or to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in different national contexts" (Bryman, 2008, p. 58). This study does not entail different national contexts, yet the comparative design is not limited to comparison between countries and is still suitable for this particular research. Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs are two ethnic groups living under the same state and are therefore meaningful contrasts that most likely will provide divergent responses. This leads to the next section on how individuals for this study were selected.

4.2. Sampling

The objects of social sciences are often people and their social world (Bryman, 2008). This research required particular categories of people: Israeli Jewish and Israeli Arab high school students and teachers. Purposive sampling was chosen to ensure relevance between sample and research questions (Bryman 2008). Two levels of purposive sampling occurred. Initially, purposive sampling was used in the sampling of schools. The reason for choosing this particular kind of sampling was to make sure

that the cases differed from each other in terms of key characteristics, in this case the social settings of Arab and Jewish schools. In order to ensure a certain variety of cases, samples were chosen from diverse districts and somewhat distinct socio-economic environments[30].

One example of purposive sampling is snowball sampling. The snowball effect was employed in the first stage of the sampling, basing the choices on locality, relevance and access (Bryman, 2008)[31]. Snowball sampling is a form of purposive sampling in which "the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contact with others" (Bryman, 2008, p. 184). Through social media I got in touch with radio host Elihu Ben-Onn, who introduced me to his network within education. This allowed me to get in touch with education departments, principles and finally participants for this study.

Direct communication with the participants was considered a requirement in order to ensure that information was not lost during translation. I additionally regarded an interpreter as a deficient alternative particularly in the focus groups, as this would interrupt the dynamics of the discussions. As I did not want to use an interpreter, adequate English skills were a requirement for participation. Consequently, the teachers and school administration were responsible for the selection of student participants. Aside from English skills the research topic did not require certain kinds of participants, as everyone is affected by the conflict to some extent or another and has history as a mandatory subject. Thus, a non-probability sampling method was used when choosing students for the focus groups. A limitation of snowball sampling is that the sample is not representative of the population. The teachers selected the student participants and their judgments have most likely affected the sampling process (Bryman, 2008). The teachers from school B, C and D all stated that their best

[30] See Appendix 2: Contextualization of schools and participants.

[31] I experienced slight challenges during this phase. One school refused to allow me to conduct the fieldwork at their school, while another required the interview guide in advance. The interview guide was discussed among teachers and key persons at the school for a week, before deciding to let me carry out the research at their school. Both contact persons and the administration at some schools seemed sceptical, assuming that my intention was writing disapprovingly about their school. One contact person pointed out my Norwegian nationality and resisted helping me if I was "one of those pro-Palestinian activists". I repeatedly explained the purpose of the study, which in the end with the exception of one school, provided me permission to conduct the research.

students were selected for participation in the research, which eliminates the sample of being random. Hence, sampling biases have occurred as parts of the students, such as non-English speakers, had no chance of being selected in the sample (Bryman, 2008). Making generalizing to the wider population is not an aim of this research, which makes snowball sampling suitable for this research.

The student participants of this research consist of high school students, history teachers and one English teacher. Altogether, 17 Jewish and 19 Arab Muslim 10th, 11th and 12th graders participated in the research. High school students were chosen for different reasons. As already mentioned students with adequate English skills was a requirement for participation. Moreover, students beyond the stage of primary socialization were favorable. Secondary socialization is usually associated with adolescence as the individual at this stage start recognizing that the previously taken-for-granted world defined by their "significant others" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967) may not be the only version of "reality". Adolescence is a time when the process of identity development initiates and when the adolescent through social interaction increasingly acquires greater awareness in society (Hammack, 2010). Identity formation is ongoing and significant at all ages. High school students might, however, be more able to express their understandings related to citizenship and narratives than primary aged students, as learning about various wars does not occur at primary education. The sample is accordingly considered suitable for providing answers to the research questions of this study. Although probably preparing themselves mentally at this time the students have not yet served the army, which is another reason for choosing this particular age group. As this research does not elaborate on the role of the military in nation building and development of identity, it should suffice to say that army service to some extent affects national identity and understandings of the world.

Teachers have a central role in providing new contents to students' existing internalized reality, as individuals vary in their capabilities to acquire new kinds of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). I conducted three semi-structured interviews with two Jewish and one Arab history teacher. Additionally, one English teacher wanted to partake in the focus groups, and I took advantage of this opportunity to observe the interaction between students and teachers. By interviewing teachers I got the opportunity to compare their answers with the students, thus acquiring a more

extensive understanding of how history is used as a tool in creating civic identities. All of the interviews were recorded, except the last part of the first teacher interview. I committed the classic mistake of turning the recorder off after the interview ended, and valuable information was not recorded. I took notes and spent some time immediately after the interview to sum up the last 15 minutes of the conversation. For the rest of the interviews I kept the recorder running as long as possible, in order not to commit the same mistake again.

A fraction of the students who participated in this research had not yet learned about wars and conflicts in class, such as the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 or 1982 (Focus group one). This does not imply that they do not have knowledge about these historical conflicts. When interviewing these students the focus was on existing knowledge from home, media and surroundings. By conducting interviews both with students that did study the wars and those who did not, although not the intention, I believe the validity of the study increases as it stresses the fact that students learn both throughout primary socialization and in the course of education. My intent is to examine the subject of history to attain an understanding of how historical knowledge is systematized through education. Home, society and friends all hold crucial roles in shaping individuals, and thus, it would be unfeasible to identify the subject of history as the only factor of affection.

Through employing a non-representative sample my findings can only be generalized to the population from which the sample was taken (Bryman, 2008). This is in line with the qualitative framework this research is built on. Being aware of the limitations, the study can provide insights into usage of multi-narrative approaches in the subject of history, complexities of identity negotiation and notions of citizenship among Israeli students and teachers.

4.3. Contextualizing the fieldwork

The interviews were conducted less than two years after the war in Gaza during winter 2008/2009, Operation Cast Lead. Previous studies show that notions of identity and citizenship are closely connected to conflict and its degree of intensity[32]. One Arab interviewee expressed the difficulties in communicating with the Jews after the Operation Cast Lead:

[32] See e.g. Ghanem (2002), Hammack (2010), Shoham, Shiloah and Kalisman (2002).

> This war [was] too hard for the Palestinians, for the Arab people who live in Israel. It became worse after the war, but you have to communicate with the Jewish people, you can't say anything! We felt sorry [referring to the Holocaust], but after the Gaza war, we didn't feel sorry anymore because they do the same (Noor, 11th grade Arab student).

The interview extract above illuminates the fact that understandings of the conflict are not fixed or static, but rather flexible and most likely to change with time. Thus, the political environment needs to be taken into consideration. The interviews were additionally conducted during a time with a right-wing/ center-right government with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his aspirations towards recognition of Israel as a Jewish state (Meital, 2010). If or to what extent this affects students' responses cannot be know with certainty.

4.4. Qualitative interviews

Research methods have to be appropriate in relation to the research questions (Bryman, 2008). Following research questions were developed for this study: How do Arab and Jewish students in Israel understand aspects of citizenship? What messages are transmitted through teaching the subject of history in relation to distinct narratives, peace building, and overcoming prejudices and politicized differences? And finally, to what extent do messages transmitted through history affect the development of civic identity? A central aim of this study is to investigate the subject of history, distinct narratives and the development of civic identities. In line with qualitative research the research questions are relatively open-ended and will be investigated by using qualitative interviewing. "Knowledge of the social world is relative; any account is just one of many possible ways of rendering social reality" (Bryman, 2008, p. 697). Understanding the world of the participants through talk and interaction is a central tenet of this research and the research aims at understanding rather than proving the existence of social phenomena.

Qualitative interviewing is, however, a very broad term describing different ways of interviewing. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used for several reasons, among them to maintain flexibility and a conversational character when interviewing. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) list wide-ranging critiques to the quality of interview knowledge. Pointing out some of the listed aspects, qualitative interviews have been accused of focusing on individuals rather than social interactions, taking interviewees responses for granted, ignoring emotional aspects of knowledge and

focusing on thoughts and experiences rather than action. Consequently, qualitative research interviews have been criticized for being unscientific, subjective, biased and unreliable. This not being the place to present counter-arguments, it suffices to refer to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who state, "The force of the interview is its privileged access to the subjects' everyday world".

Quotations from students and teachers are as close as possible to their original form, with some exceptions in form of comments in square brackets. When considered necessary words have been added in order to grasp the meaning of the quotations. Transcriptions of the interviews were completed the same day or no longer than a few days after the interviews were conducted. Although adjusted to some extent, main headlines and subthemes for the thematic analysis were developed in advance of the interviews. After each interview, I spent roughly half an hour writing descriptive field notes for eventual upcoming use. A tape-recorded was used with the consent of all participants.

4.4.1. Focus group with students

The focus group method is "an interview with several people on a specific topic or issue" (Bryman, 2008, p. 473). As the topic for this thesis is highly controversial, a benefit of using the method of focus group was that the respondents were able to challenge each other's views and opinions, which would not happen in questionnaires or one-to-one interviews. This is in line with a central aim of the focus group method, which is "not to reach consensus, or solutions to, the issue discussed, but to bring fourth different viewpoints on an issue (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 150). The method of focus group emphasizes the perspectives of the participants, which is in line with a qualitative framework (Bryman, 2008). A major reason for using focus groups was additionally the possibility to "study the ways in which individuals collectively make sense of a phenomenon and construct meanings around it" (Bryman, 2008, p. 476). The focus group method allowed me to get access to a wide variety of opinions on the same subject at the same time. It is time-consuming and demanding to transcribe a focus group interview, which consequently required limitations in number of focus groups. Seven focus group interviews were conducted: four interviews with Jewish high school students and three with Arab high school students. The original intention was to conduct eight focus groups at two Arab and two Jewish high schools. At one Arab school, however, nine students were included

in the same focus group instead of being divided into two separate interview groups. Aside from this, the size of the focus groups was approximately four or five students. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes to 1,5 hour with open-ended topics prepared in advance. The questions included personal experiences on the subject of history, matters of identity and issues related to citizenship[33].

Although the method of focus group seemed advantageous for this research, it entails some limitations. Bryman's (2008) list of limitations covers my experiences of conducting focus groups. First, the researcher has less control over the proceeding of the interview. This was particular evident when interviewing Arab students, where a great majority were preoccupied with sharing their feelings of injustice and discrimination on other issues not relevant to this research. This is a question of the role of the moderator and to what extent the researcher should involve in the focus group interview. The interview guide became the solution to this challenge, as it helped me maintain the red thread of the interview. Moreover, data resulting from focus group discussions are more difficult both to transcribe and analyze. Figuring out who said what was at times demanding, particularly when two or more participants spoke at the same time. Yet another challenge was students who were not involved in the discussion, which also is a question of the role of the moderator. As a moderator I still experienced the need of toning down the dominant interviewees and including less active students. This was done by asking for other opinions and addressing students by body language and eye contact. Finally, a limitation worth mentioning is that participants may tend to express "culturally expected views" in a group context (Bryman 2008, p. 489). Previous research suggests that the level of individual satisfaction among Israeli Arabs is generally higher than collective satisfaction (see e.g. Ghanem, 2002). Whether the respondents spoke from a collective or individual point of view cannot be known with certainty. Although being aware of this limitation, I do not find this aspect crucial and thus it will not be given further attention. Despite the limitations I found focus groups beneficial for this particular study and its research questions, for the reasons already mentioned.

The qualities of various interviews varied and some interviewees gave more information than others. Participants of some focus groups challenged each other

[33] See Appendix 3: Interview guide – focus groups with students

naturally, while my role as a facilitator was more required in other groups in order to reach a discussion. After conducting a few interviews I saw the benefit of having students with close friendship to each other or from the same class, as this made the discussions more dynamic. In general, the students challenged each other more towards the end of the interviews, as they then appeared to be more at ease with the situation. Therefore, conducting two focus group interviews with the same group of students could have been fruitful with more time and resources. One challenge I faced was students who started discussing in Hebrew or Arabic when disagreements were vast. Another challenge was students who, although with competent English skills, expressed little confidence concerning their own language proficiency. The challenges solved themselves without me interfering too much as there was always one or several of the interviewees who translated the topics just being discussed. I encouraged their English skills with the aim of them continuing the discussion in English and I made sure that no misunderstandings of the translation occurred by asking conforming questions.

Creating a friendly and open atmosphere was important as the interview topics covered controversial and emotional issues. All of the interviews were conducted in safe environments at the participants' schools such as classrooms, library and dorms, and snacks were provided in order to create an informal and relaxed setting. Each interview started with a briefing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Information was given orally in keeping with confidentiality issues, explaining the purpose of the study and that all measures were taken to ensure anonymity. I explained that the transcribed files would be anonymous, accessible only for my supervisor and myself, and that the audio files would be deleted May 2011 or no later than December 2011. Finally, I made sure that no answers were right or wrong, which hopefully created an environment open for contradicting views as well as prevented students from giving me answers they might think I wanted to hear.

I have some experiences with using the method of focus groups, as this was my second fieldwork[34]. Being a good interviewer requires great amount of practice and I

[34] Part of being a student at Development Studies at Oslo University College (2008/ 2009) is doing a two-months fieldwork and writing a fieldwork report together with fellow students. "Education – a social vaccine for HIV/AIDS?" was my group's topic, focusing on HIV/AIDS

found it important to continuously make reflections on myself as an interviewer. After each interview I wrote down aspects I needed to improve on in field notes. My role as an interviewer was additionally reflected upon during transcription. When transcribing I discovered that on a few occasions I unconsciously fell for the temptation of asking leading follow-up questions. This too was taken into consideration and information resulting from leading follow-up questions has not been included in this study.

4.4.2. Semi-structured interviews with teachers

Traditional one-to-one interviews were used when interviewing teacher participants. One reason is the difficulties in getting several teachers to meet at the same time. Another purpose for choosing semi-structured interviews is the controversial character of this study. A central motive for using one-to-one interviews was to ensure that teachers freely could express their opinions without fellow colleagues being present. A semi-structured interview entails topics to be covered instead of predictable questions (Bryman, 2008). Questions were not necessarily posed in a specific order and questions outside the interview guide were asked as well[35]. This makes a semi-structured approach flexible and dynamic. I found the flexibility particular beneficial in the first teacher interview (school A). The teacher appeared to be involved in a project that works for inclusion of various narratives in the history curriculum. Being involved in the project most of the topics were answered without me having to ask them. In this case, the interview guide merely functioned as a guideline. Three history teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. In the wake of the fieldwork and towards the end of the writing process, the idea of additionally conducting focus groups with teachers appeared. Although difficult to organize and realize, this could have given fruitful information to the study.

4.4.3. Other methods

Educational matters are frequently covered in the media. Articles by journalists and documents representing the Israeli Education Ministry gave me insight on the public discourse on diverse topics of education. On one hand, documents can be viewed as representing the "reality" of a particular organization (Bryman, 2008). On the other

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preventive measures that are being taken through the educational system in two villages, Kibaha and Mlandizi, in Tanzania.

[35] See Appendix 4: Interview guide – individual teacher interview.

hand, documents should be read and interpreted carefully. Atkinson and Coffey (2004, in Bryman, 2008) argue that documents represent a separate reality, written with specific purposes in mind and other sources should additionally be used. Unfortunately, I did not get in touch with key persons from the Israeli Education Ministry despite several efforts. In addition, their English webpage was at the time this thesis was written outdated. Data concerning the Education Ministry's policies has been used without other sources of information and the readers of this study should carefully take the validity of this particular data into account. I will now turn to this important criterion of research.

4.5. Validity

"Validity refers to the approximate certainty of the truth of an inference or knowledge claim" (Lund, 2005, p. 8). Validity is a vital criterion when considering the quality of a research, both when conducting quantitative and qualitative research. There are different definitions of the concept of validity. Kleven (2008) lists four: construct validity, statistical validity, internal validity and external validity. Each of these types depends on the inferences being drawn, as illustrated through the following quote: "Validity is a property of inferences, and the relevance of various types of validity depends on what kinds of inferences are drawn, not on what kind of methods used to collect the data" (Kleven, 2008, p. 221). In other words, it is the interpretation or inferences that needs to be valid and not only the research methods.

"We cannot claim that our indicators give a complete representation of the construct" (Kleven, 2008, p. 225). The researcher will unavoidably affect the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data in some way or another. Acknowledging the role of the researcher in the process of knowledge construction is crucial in the production of quality knowledge. The interviewer is the main instrument in this process and the research quality depends to a large extent on the skills of the interviewer (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). My reflections are based on a constructionist point of view, considering knowledge as socially constructed. Hence tanking as a premise that we can only know the social and historical world through understanding and interpretation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Knowledge is not collected by the interviewer but is generated through conversation and interaction, as the following quote indicates: "Knowledge is neither inside a person nor outside in the world, but exist in the relationship between persons and world" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.

53). This is not to suggest that a research interview is an open conversation or free dialogue between two equal partners and the power aspect needs to be taken into consideration (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). An interviewer needs to be knowledgeable, structuring, clear, gentle, sensitive, open, steering, critical, remembering and interpreting (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). To this list Bryman (2008) adds the skill of being balanced and ethically sensitive. The abilities listed cannot be acquired by reading books, but requires amounts of practice. Nevertheless, by keeping these criteria in mind and being aware of my role as an interviewer, the quality of the interviews and accordingly the creation of knowledge have hopefully enhanced.

Awareness and openness to unexpected phenomena might contribute to "a multiperspectival construction of knowledge" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 170). Nobody is value free or completely objective and biases are likely to occur in various stages of a social research. Biases can be unconscious and "unacknowledged biases may entirely invalidate the results of an interview inquiry" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 170). A crucial concern of the study was to remain open to unexpected findings as well as conducting the study as nuanced and contextualized as possible. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) call this awareness reflexive objectivity, implying that one is sensitive about one's prejudices as well as acknowledging the privilege the researcher possesses when it comes to knowledge producing. Objectivity as freedom from bias means that knowledge is reliable, in the sense that it is controlled and not affected by personal prejudice (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Being aware of biases is extremely important when doing research in order to get as valid results as possible. I have used diverse books, articles, newspapers and web pages representing "both sides" with the purpose of crosschecking facts and representations. Using various sources of data when studying social phenomena is called 'triangulation' (Bryman, 2008). The triangulation of data has hopefully led to more valid inferences and representations of the conflict.

Nevertheless, in the end I had to make up my mind how to handle and interpret the sources of data. Not being characterized neither by pro-Palestinian nor pro-Israel attitudes seemed at times demanding. The fact that a large amount of literature, media and intellectuals are positioned in one way or the other made it demanding to maintain a neutral point of departure. Writing the historical background was

particularly challenging, where countless narratives of the same events are prevalent. Therefore, being a conflict with a variety of opinions, my writings and interpretations may not correspond with others. The Jewish-Palestinian conflict is highly political and contentious and I will not pretend that I do not have political opinions that may affect my interpretations in some way or another. Personally, I find many government policies towards non-Jews and Arabs in Israel, the West Bank, Gaza and immigrants to be inadequate. Nevertheless, I find much international criticism towards Israel greatly exaggerated[36]. As written in the introduction, representation merely of one side will not provide increased understanding or solutions to conflict-ridden societies. The lack of neutral and contextualized research, to the extent that is possible, is a main inspiration for writing this thesis.

4.6. Ethical considerations

Preservation of ethics is important, particularly when involving youths, minority/ethnic groups or political issues. The guidelines of the National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway's (NESH) have been used as tools for ensuring ethic standards throughout this research. NESH (2006) present a comprehensive list of important areas in research ethics. Respect for individuals, group rights and children's rights for protection have been of particular relevance for this research.

Respect for individuals have been ensured in several ways. One obligation is to provide information about the research that is understandable for the participants (NESH, 2006). Consent forms were developed in advance[37]. However, as the research involve adolescents under 18, purpose of the study and other relevant information were explained orally in an understandable and age-specific language prior to each interview, ensuring my obligation to inform the interviewees (NESH, 2006). A guarantee was made that all information would be treated confidential. When doing fieldwork at institutions the participants may experience little chance of avoiding participation. I explained to the students that participation was voluntarily in order to respect the freedom and right to participate (NESH, 2006). Part of the research entails behavior and values of religious and ethnic groups. Showing respect for the values and beliefs of others were particularly important in the analysis process, taking the participants' self-image and understanding of the world seriously. This is connected

[36] See e.g. Dershowitz (2003).
[37] See Appendix 5: Consent form.

to yet another guideline: "research on other cultures and times" (NESH, 2006). Wariness of classifications and unreasonable generalizations, as explained in chapter one, are important as this ultimately can lead to stigmatizations of the group (NESH, 2006).

Because of the political and sensitive nature of the research and for confidentiality reasons, I have used pseudonyms on every respondent in line with "the obligation to respect confidentially" (NESH, 2006). In the field notes and in the transcribed notes the respondents were each given a letter (A, B, C, D etc.) as substitutes for names, and later on a fictive name used throughout the thesis. However, NESH (2006) points out that people can be identified indirectly through background information. This has been taken into consideration to the greatest extent possible when writing background information of the respondents in order to reduce the risk of harm. A researcher has a "responsibility to reflect on the possible consequences not only for the persons taking part in the study, but also for the larger group they represent" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.73). Long-term effects and other possible threats are difficult to measure, and when writing up the results the risk of causing harm has been weighted against the quest for "truth" (NESH, 2006). With firm restrictions from the Education Ministry during the time this thesis was written, the findings of this research could, in a worst-case scenario, cause negative outcomes:

> Intentionally or not, research has an impact on society. Research can help provide information needed to make informed decisions in the public and private sectors. Research can uncover circumstances worthy of criticism, and can help clarify alternative choices of action and their potential consequences (NESH, 2006).

I acknowledge that the study entails a risk of harm, such as for teachers who currently teach from a Jewish and a Palestinian narrative without approval from the Education Ministry. On the other hand, the study can possibly contribute as an argument for a two-narrative approach through history education.

During an interview with a teacher a one and a half minute siren interrupted the interview. The siren turned out to be a check of the local warning system in case of war. This particular interview affected me personally, due to some of the teacher's extreme right wing statements about Arab citizens of Israel. While transcribing and re-listening to the interview/siren it occurred to me that I can never be fully

acquainted with the background of the interviewees. Many of the participants are likely to know someone who died or got hurt as a consequence of the conflict. Living with the situation from childhood, where checkpoints and green-clothed soldiers are a part of everyday life, shapes people's opinions. From the incident with the siren I found it necessary to constantly strive for an understanding of all opinions, whether they are extreme or liberal, and show "respect for the values and motives of others" (NESH, 2006). Doing research is about creating mutual relationship, acting sensitive towards the respondents and accepting all opinions as valid. This was of high concern during every interview. Each and all of the students and teachers responded positively to participating. They showed excitement and serious effort in sharing personal and sensitive experiences with me, a complete stranger. Thus, I owe to present their views as accurate as possible, giving them a voice through my creation of knowledge.

4.7. Closing remarks

The timetable did not go as planned, as expected, due to unpredicted structure in the education schedule. The schools resumed after summer vacation September 1st, which I was aware of. What I was not informed about was the many holidays that take place throughout September, in which Jewish schools are kept closed[38]. The unpredicted holidays caused some delay of the interviews and change in the original plan. As I was spending both the autumn and spring semester in Israel, I was not in an urgent need to finish the interviews. Hence, the time was used on data presentation and analysis of already gathered data. I worked on the transcribed data, which was experienced as beneficial for conducting new interviews. Data gathered through the methods described in this chapter will now be presented and analyzed in the two subsequent chapters.

[38] Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Simchat Torah are the September holidays where schools are kept closed.

Chapter 5: Perceptions of citizenship among Israeli students

5.1. Understanding citizenship

> You are not on an island. Your work must occur in the context of what is already known (Thomas, 2009, p. 30).

Theory provides a framework for understanding phenomena and by combining the findings with what others previously have done about similar matters I will be reminded that I am not on an island, but on the mainland. The first chapter intends to take a closer look at how some Arab and Jewish students and teachers in Israel comprehend citizenship, in line with my first research question, "How do Arab and Jewish students in Israel understand aspects of citizenship?" According to Silverman (2006) phenomena cannot be understood by social science without theories, therefore, the theories presented in chapter three will be used throughout the analysis in order to contextualize, discover links and connect my findings with those of others (Thomas, 2009).

Citizenship has been defined as "members of a political community" (Painter, 1998, p. 93) and is a debated topic in most democracies. Israel is a conflict-ridden, divided country, which generates inconsistencies on notions of citizenship and identity. By emphasizing aspects of citizenship it is acknowledged that individuals differ in their way of negotiating civic identity. These understandings will be scrutinized further in the next chapter, when examining to what extent teachers and the subject of history have an effect on the development of citizenship. This will hopefully provide increased understandings of Israeli schools as agents of citizenship.

5.1.1. Aspects of citizenship

There are many definitions of being a citizen of a state. As described in the theoretical framework, dimensions of citizenship have been of attention in this specific research. The Arab and the Jewish students have slightly different understandings of citizenship. While citizenship for most Arab students is perceived merely as a judicial status, a repeated aspect among the Jewish students is a sense of belonging to the state, in concurrence with Osler and Starkey's (2005) respectively first and second dimensions of citizenship. Serah articulates an idea of citizenship that includes the notion of contribution:

> For me you are not a citizen unless you give something back to the country. I see neither Jews nor Arabs that do not go to the army as real citizens (Serah, 10th grade Jewish student)[39].

Serah's comprehension of citizenship is shared by an overwhelming majority of the Jewish participants, where contribution is a repeated topic. One is not a citizen, whether Jewish or non-Jewish if one does not contribute to the country. Rotberg (2006) argues that service in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) is a major key for inclusion to Israeli-Jewish society, as army service is regarded to be good citizenship[40]. The following extract is from a discussion about citizenship between the 11th grade Jewish students Yarden, Ayelet and Ruth from focus group five, debating on aspects of citizenship:

> Ayelet: They [Israeli Arabs] don't see themselves as part of the country, but I don't know if even Israeli Jews see them as part of the country.
>
> Yarden: The most important thing is that *they* start seeing themselves as part of the country, because if you see yourself as part of the country you contribute and the country gives you stuff.
>
> Ayelet: Yes, the country gives you stuff, but they are still second-class citizens! I do think that in certain ways they get less from the country.
>
> Yarden: Because they *give less* to the country!
>
> Ayelet: But that's a circle!
>
> Yarden: And they have to break that circle by saying 'I want to be part of Israel and I'll contribute!'
>
> Ayelet: Or do they?
>
> Yarden: I think so!
>
> Ruth: It is like two people pointing at each other with a gun and no one will put his gun down first.
>
> Yarden: We don't know how to approach them. Let's say there will be a Palestinian country. We don't know if they will say 'Ok, we will go to Palestine because we are Palestinians', or 'no, of course we are Israelis'. We don't know what will happen. If they say the latter, join the army and pay taxes – then I will know that they are Israelis no different from me. But as for

[39] As described in section 4.6 (*Ethical considerations)* pseudonyms are used throughout this study in order to preserve the respondents' anonymity.

[40] Acceptance into elite military units, academic studies and further employment is based on scores acquired on the matriculation examination, called the bagrut certificate (Jewish Virtual Library, 2010b). After high school the majority of Jewish students (in addition to a fraction of Druze and Israeli Arabs) attend two or three years in the IDF.

> now I don't know and I don't think the Israeli state should invest money in their infrastructure or education.
>
> Ayelet: But as long as you are legally defined as a citizen *now*, then you cannot only invest money in the Jews, because they don't even know if *they* will stay! I mean, not every Jew born here stays here! Many Jews have double citizenship! As long as you have the Israeli ID card you should have the same rights!
>
> Yarden: Of course we should treat everyone equally, but there is always the fear of the unknown. Even if we treat them equally and give them citizenship here, will the Arabs start seeing themselves as *Israeli* Arabs, will they remain peaceful? If you see yourself as an Israeli, if you contribute to the state, if you serve in the army, if you pay taxes – then there are no difference between you and me. That's what being a citizen in a country is about. It is about contributing to the country. If they would do this, they would be Israelis!

The students from the focus group do not reach an agreement on how to "break the circle", using the words of Yarden. The extract from the discussion illustrates the varieties of views that exist among individuals concerning understandings of citizenship[41]. As previously mentioned, a majority of the Jewish students are preoccupied with contributions to the country, although acknowledging the challenges, for instance, with Arabs serving in the army. Yarden, who describe himself as an atheist and 7th generation Israeli, considers citizenship in line with Osler and Starkey's (2005) first dimension of citizenship; citizenship as a status. The state offers education, health care, infrastructure and legal protection in return for taxation, military service or other duties (Osler & Starkey, 2005). However, Yarden additionally emphasizes the aspect of feeling belonging to the state, arguing that Arabs have to start consider themselves as Israelis. Yarden's statements are in great opposition to Maalouf (1996), as he gives no attention to the possibility of possessing various affiliations at the same time, such as being both Palestinian and Israeli. Yarden adds that issues of citizenship and contribution are not exclusively a matter concerning Israeli Arabs. A fraction of anti-Zionist orthodox Jews do not recognize the state of Israel and rejects Israel's right to exist until the coming of Messiah **(**Wilcockson, 2005**)**.

Like Yarden, Ayelet highlights citizenship as a status, but from a slight different angle. According to her, certain civil, political and social rights towards the Arab citizens are inadequate, which function as a barrier for full inclusion to Israeli society.

[41] See Appendix 6: Interview extract.

Ayelet challenges Yarden by suggesting that acknowledgement of others is crucial in order to feel equal as citizen of a state. Ayelet makes a difference by carefully using the term 'Israeli Jews' and, hence, demonstrates her opinion that both Jews and Arabs should be referred to as Israelis. 'Israeli' juxtaposed with 'Jew' does not exclusively occur among Jewish respondents. In the wake of a question about history and identity, Arab teacher Jabbar replies: "They said the *Israelis* lived here 3000 years ago. But the first people living here were Canaan. Canaan is Arab people. Therefore, it is land for the Arabs, not for the Jews!" (Jabbar, Arab history teacher)[42]. When asking one Arab student what it means to be an Israeli citizen the immediate association is a Jewish person. Another student responds: "The Jewish people. We have the ID. *Just* a blue ID", (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student). The Arab respondents' associations of Israelis as Jews may be explained by the biblical meaning of 'Israel'. Israel is the name given to Jacob, one of the Patriarchs and the spiritual ancestor of Judaism (Judaism 101, 2011). The lack of Arab recognition as Israelis supports the suggestion made in this study that the Israeli-Arab dichotomy results from a created separation maintained both by Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs.

Jewish student Yafit, daughter of American immigrants to Israel, differs in her perceptions of citizenship. Ignoring that many Arabs in Israel describe themselves as Palestinian will not, according to her, lead to increased affiliation or acknowledgment of an Israeli identity. Yafit offers following reflection:

> Maybe it is a matter of where you see yourself, where you *belong*. If one for instance is a Chinese student in the United States, which is also a country basically based on immigrants, he is allowed to see himself as a Chinese, because that is what he *is*! He contributes to the United States, he got his green card, a job and he is a peaceful citizen! (Yafit, 10th grade Jewish student).

By recognizing human diversity and fellow citizens entitlement to equal rights, Yafit can be placed within Osler and Starkey's (2005) concept of cosmopolitan citizenship. Her arguments shed light on the fact that individuals are likely to vary in their attachment to a state or a nation. The different comprehensions of civic identities may be a result of various socialization processes. This does not, however, erase the

[42] The link between the Canaanites and Arabs is a controversy beyond the scope of this study. It should suffice to say that the Canaanites were people who inhabited the area at the time of the earliest settlers (Tubb, 1998).

recognition of a common humanity. In contrast to Yarden's background of being 7th generation Israeli, Yafit's reflections is colored by growing up as a Jew in the United States. According to Ayelet, it does not have to be a problem to live in Israel, yet not consider oneself Israeli. Her argument concurs with Smooha (2005) who claims that it does not necessarily have to be a contradiction between Palestinian nationalism on one side and Israeli citizenship on another. Osler and Starkey (2005) argues that feeling connected to more than one state is ever more common, which is a result of increased migration and globalization. Ayelet emphasizes equal treatment regardless of ethnicity or the feeling of belonging to Israel. She believes that Arab affiliation towards Israel only can be possible if an acknowledgement of Arabs as equivalent Israelis will take place. Cultural uniqueness may serve as a barrier to citizenship where those in lack of the cultural distinctiveness are excluded from the imagined community. Ayelet's information supports the conception of civic identity as constituting both of self-ascription and acknowledgement of others (Emberling, 1997). Before we will turn to the next section and a further elaboration of civic identity accentuation among Israeli students, Arab interviewees' understandings of citizenship will be presented.

Although seeing their future life in Israel, becoming an Israeli citizen is not an aspiration among the majority of the Arab respondents, even if imagining a future-scenario with complete equality:

> How can we feel that we belong here when they are torturing us and killing us everyday in Palestine and Gaza? They came and took over our country and they say that this is their country, but it is not! (Nawar, 11th grade Arab student).

As can be read from the above quote Nawar uses the word "us", considering herself as part of the Palestinian nation. She emphasizes the importance of citizenship as a feeling, similar to how it is discussed by Osler and Starkey (2005). However, in the same statement she positions herself outside of this aspect of citizenship, based on empathy and identification to the Palestinian people and their lost land. The statement "they came and took over our country" leaves Jewish presence in the area, the UN vote and the fact that Palestine never was an independent country unattended. Arabs in Israel have the right to a fair trial, freedom of speech, a free press, the right to vote and stand for elections, as well as rights to health care and education. However,

feeling no belonging to a certain imagined community decreases the likeliness of contribution to and participation in that particular society, and thus too the likeliness of achieving full citizenship. Arab student Malik passionately argues about this aspect in conformity with his narrative:

> The Jews want you to think how they think! They want to plant their thoughts, their emotions, *everything* into us. That is what they've been trying to do since the '48. They have plans to change the young people's minds to become Israelis. It is not about identity for us, it is about *land.* This is *our land*! You can't come and shoot us; you can't come and strangle us. When they came in 1948 they tortured and killed everyone in their way, until they got what they wanted! They don't even have the right to be here! (Malik, 11th grade Arab student).

Like Nawar, Malik does not acknowledge Israel's right to exist. In line with a classical Palestinian narrative, Malik's utterances leave historical Jewish presence in the area unattended. According to Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) characteristics of collective memory, Malik delegitimizes the opponent and highlights his own people's victimization. Malik conceives his Israeli citizenship merely as a judicial status that makes his life as an Arab in Israel a bit more manageable. When asked about citizenship, some students hesitate and emphasize that there are mixed opinions regarding aspirations towards becoming Israeli citizens beyond the judicial aspect. Some students argue that it is better to live in Israel than in Palestine or Gaza, but state at the same time that living without equality is not an adequate alternative either. There are also those who question and challenge widely held opinions, such as Aminah who claims: "It doesn't matter for me to admit that I am an Israeli citizen" (Aminah, 12th grade Arab student). Aminah utters that she might go to the army one day, even if she describe herself as a peaceful person. Aminah's way of consulting identity is atypical, compared to other Arab students of this study. Her confession generates strong reactions by her fellow students in the focus group, such as 12th grade Arab student Asad's, claiming that he will never be an Israeli citizen and having his mind brainwashed like the Jews'. Although individuals of this research vary in their attachment to Israel, the latter represents the majority's reactions towards becoming Israeli citizens beyond the aspect of a judicial status.

No matter how the Arab students define citizenship and future aspirations, they all agree on the feeling of being discriminated against. Although being Israeli citizens by judicial status, none of the Arab respondents consider themselves as equal Israeli

citizens. The responses support the argument that if one is in lack of one or several of citizenship aspects, one is less likely of gaining full and equal citizenship (Banks, 2004). What is equal citizenship? The feeling of being discriminated against when it comes to language, protection of minorities or the 'Law of Return' to mention some prevent the enjoyment of full and equal citizenship. I suggest that equal citizenship implies the enjoyment of civil, political and social rights, acknowledgement by others as well as self-ascription as equivalent Israeli citizens. Let us now turn to civic identity accentuation among this research's participants.

5.1.2. Civic identity accentuation – diversity of meanings

Torstrick (2000) argues that national identities reduce the complexity of identity to dichotomies. Frequently, Israelis are equated with Jews and Palestinians with Arabs. Such dichotomies neglect the fact that some Jews are Arabs and some Palestinians and Arabs are Israelis. There are Arabs that recognize Israel's right to exist, while a fraction of Jews do not consider themselves Israeli citizens until the coming of Messiah. Questions of identity are complex matters. While being Muslim or Jew implies a religious identification, Palestinian or Israeli signifies belonging to a particular area. Thus, although controversial, one can draw the conclusion that Jews living in settlements in the West Bank can be called 'Palestinian Jews'. This term was in fact the case during the British Mandate, where the population was divided into 'Palestinian Arabs' and 'Palestinian Jews' (Stockman-Shomron, 1984). 'Palestinian Jew' is not a common term of identification today, even with respect to Jews who live in the West Bank. Why is that? Particular ways of identification has important function in maintaining (constructed) differences among ethnic groups. By restraining identities as fixed, collective memories are maintained. Fixed identity labels lead to exclusion of "the others" who are believed to lack such a unified identity (Torstrick, 2000).

Questions of citizenship are closely connected to questions of identity. A majority of the Arab students report no identification with their Israeli civic identity, feeling no or minimal bond to the term 'Israeli'. 'Muslim', 'Arab', 'Palestinian', 'citizen of Israel' and in most cases a combination of these are the responses when asking how the

students prefer to identify themselves[43]. In line with Maalouf (1996) the variety of answers demonstrates the complexities of identity and contradicts perceptions of identity as reduced to one single affiliation. 11 of 19 Arab students consider themselves as 'Arabs' or 'Arab Muslims living in Israel'. Six of 19 rank 'Palestinian' as describing their identity best followed by 'Arab' and 'Muslim', leaving the Israeli aspect of their identity unattended. No more than two of the interviewees describe themselves merely as 'Palestinians', while only four of 19 include 'citizen of Israel' as part of their identities. 'Citizen of Israel' is, however, ranked least after 'Arab', 'Muslim' and 'Palestinian'. These four students add that although being citizens, they do not feel a belonging to the state of Israel. Citizenship for these students implies merely an ID card, which makes it easier to move freely within or out of the country. Having an Israeli ID, but feeling a belonging to Palestine is not considered contradictory by these interviewees. Pinson (2008) suggests that the notion of multiple identities is Arab youths' solution to the challenging process of negotiation identity. Describing identity first and foremost in terms of religious or cultural affiliation, such as being 'Muslim' or 'Arab', secures a sense of location in a situation of double exclusion.

Jewish history teacher Lilach considers 'Arabs living in Israel' and 'Israeli Arabs' as two sides of the same coin: "I don't see the difference. Maybe they define themselves in a different way, but I don't see it!" (Lilach, Jewish history teacher). Lilach considers Arabs in Israel who do not see themselves as Israeli citizens to be highly dangerous for Israel. Her notions on citizenship imply being faithful to Israel. She explains:

> The situation here in Israel is very difficult; it is not a simple one. The Arabs in Israel [are] a big problem in the situation. There are some of them that decided all the way to be Israelis and they are being faithful to the Israeli state. But there are also Arabs here in Israel who wants to be Palestinians and not to be loyal citizens. I think that they can't be here. If they help Hamas or act against Israel or make Israel more dangerous, you can't be here! If you don't want to be Israeli, to be loyal, go away! (Lilach, Jewish history teacher).

[43] As already mentioned, asking questions about identity by using fixed labels poses the danger of treating identity as fixed entities, which is not the intention of this study. The aim is rather to stress the complexities of identity among Jews and Arabs in Israel.

As can be read from the extract above, Lilach neglects the possibility of identification towards a Palestinian identity while at the same time being loyal to the state of Israel. This view places Palestinians in Israel as secondary citizens, and neglects not only their narrative but also Arabs sense of belonging to a specific territory, Palestine (Pinson, 2008). As can be read from the quote above, Lilach draws a dichotomy between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs, by allocating Arabs as the "big problem" in Israel. This dichotomy sharpens the sense of differentiation between Israeli citizens, in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) second function of narratives. Expressing hostile attitudes towards a certain group, Israeli Arabs, Lilach's utterance represents a case of a nationalist discourse, which in the worst cause could promote xenophobia (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Xenophobia, as we have seen, has been defined as "an irrational fear or distrust of foreigners" (Bordeau, 2010, p. 4) and is based on political tension and the belief that certain groups do not belong to the community. Arabs in Israel who characterize themselves as Palestinian are, according to Lilach, dangerous to the Israeli state and, accordingly, these individuals should not be allowed to continue possessing their Israeli citizenship.

As shown in section 2.2.1, Ghanem's study (2002) reveals that an overwhelming majority of 77,2% Arabs in Israel would want to continue living in Israel even subsequent to a possible establishment of two states. The findings of this study support that a majority want to live within Israel. This aspiration does not automatically imply a desire to become Israeli citizens. One Arab student explains:

> I do not consider myself as an Israeli citizen. I have the nationality of Israel, but I consider myself first Arab. The Jews learn from their history that they don't have to communicate with us or consider us as Israelis (Zahraa, 11th grade Arab student).

Zahraa's information above shed light on two aspects. First, her statement supports the concept of identity as constituting both of self-ascription and acknowledgment by others. Second, Zahraa abandons the Israeli part of her identity although living in Israel and possessing an Israeli ID card. Each and all of the Arab participants express aspirations towards greater inclusion in Israeli society; however, at the same time many position themselves outside an Israeli-Jewish discourse. This can be interpreted as resulting from a desire of a counter-identification as a reaction to constantly feeling discriminated against (Weedon, 2004, cited in Pinson, 2008). Moreover, based on the

conversations with Zahraa and fellow students, the desire to live in Israel is a result of aspirations to live in the land that belongs to Palestine. "Mowateneh" is the word for citizenship in Arabic. It derives from the word "watan", meaning homeland (Pinson, 2007, p. 334). The Jewish-Palestinian conflict is to a large extent founded on issues regarding land and territories. When asked whether Arabs living in Israel possibly could feel a belonging to Israel if it would come to a two-state solution, one student comments: "Actually, Israel and Palestine are our lands! It's the same, whether we live in Israel or Palestine!" (Noor, 11th grade Arab student). Although claiming entitlement to all of the territory, Noor uses both Palestine and Israel when denoting the area as if it is two different geographical areas. Originally, Israel and Palestine are two different names of the same territory and Noor's choice of words may be read as a result of secondary socialization colored by Israeli-Jewish education, or what Smooha (1999) terms 'Israelization'.

Smooha (1999) argues that 'Israelization' ultimately leads towards fewer adherences to a Palestinian narrative and that Arabs in Israel increasingly feel attached to Israel as their country. The majority of the Arab participants of this study clearly lean towards 'Palestinization', although traces of 'Israelization' are visible as well. Some Arab participants in this research do not acknowledge Israel's right to exist and a majority does not define their identity by including the term 'Israeli', in line with 'Palestinization'. These findings can be interpreted in several ways. First, while a majority of Arabs in Israel may have felt affiliation to their Israeli identity in 1999, it is not given that a majority feel so today. Identity is a process and not a static phenomenon. Moreover, the findings can be a result of intensification of the conflict, in which an empathy and affiliation towards Palestinians often increases. Yet another explanation is increased globalization, which reinforces people's need for identity (Maalouf, 1996).

One's own self-ascription may not in all cases be consistent with acknowledgement by other people (Hammack, 2010). A majority of the Jewish respondents consider Arabs living in Israel as 'Israeli Arabs'. Jewish student Maayan explains: "I personally call them Israeli Arabs, not because I think they are different than Israelis, but because I know that this is the way they want to be called" (Maayan, 12th grade Arab student). In line with her fellow students and teachers, Maayan equates Israeli with being Jewish. Moreover, her statement underlines how the current conflict is

connected to complex cases of identity. Identification, membership and belonging to particular groups become significant in times of war and conflict. Somewhat differently, Michael of the same focus group states:

> I call them Palestinians because they choose to call themselves like that and because *they believe* that they are part of the Palestinian nation. They do not see any national identity as Israelis, so I don't think I should call them Israeli Arabs. Calling them Palestinians, however, recognizes them as the nation in which they want to belong! (Michael, 12th grade Jewish student).

Although differing in their way of "labeling", both Maayan and Michael focus on what they believe Arabs in Israel want to be called. Feeling neither belonging to the West Bank/ Gaza nor Israel and at the same time being judged for living in Israel by other Arabs or Palestinians, Arabs in Israel are portrayed as someone in the middle (Hammack, 2010). According to my respondents this increases attachment to a Palestinian identity. Jawa illuminates this:

> There are some of the Arab countries around us, not all of them, but if an Arab lives in Israel he is no longer Palestinian. They don't consider him Palestinian, but an enemy (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student).

Nawar expresses a similar view:

> Whenever I say to someone from Palestine that I am Palestinian living in Israel they say, 'ok, so you are a Jew'. They compare us to Jewish people, so teenagers nowadays *feel* more Jewish. It kinds of ruins their identities and makes them want to be Jewish (Nawar, 11th grade Arab student).

When people feel that their culture or religion is threatened, they are most likely to cling to their differences. Assertion of identity becomes an act of preservation of cultural uniqueness, which is believed to be threatened by the adversary. Narratives hold a crucial function in creating a unified identity among members of a group, in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) sixth function of narratives. Israeli Arabs experience stigmatization from within Israeli society for being Arabs and from some neighboring Arab countries, from the West Bank and from Gaza for being Israeli citizens. This situation of double exclusion affects the process of negotiating identity (Pinson, 2008). Identity constitutes of allegiances to various factors, such as religion, nationality or family. It is difficult, however, to move between various affiliations one's identity constitutes of when continuously forced to take one side or another. A never-ending pressure towards choosing between various affiliations makes the

process of negotiating one's identity truly more demanding. "People often see themselves in terms of whichever one of their allegiances is most under attack" (Maalouf, 1996, p. 26). My findings support this statement, as a great majority of the respondents do not use the term 'Israeli', but rather 'Arab', 'Muslim' or 'Palestinian' when describing their identity.

Although apparently emphasizing the way Arabs themselves want to be called, Maayan expresses little understanding of Arabs in Israel who identify themselves as Palestinians:

> I know that this is their home, but if you consider yourself as 100% Palestinian and not even a little Israeli, I personally don't understand. It is your choice where to live and I know that this is their home and they should not move, but… When I lived in the United States I considered myself Israeli. But I also consider myself as part of the American nation! I can relate to a different nationality. I understand that for some Arabs our Independence Day is their Nakba, but it is hard for me to understand why they do not see themselves as even 1% Israelis (Maayan, 12th grade Jewish student).

Maayan believes that individuals are likely to vary in their attachment of a state and that identity does not have to be reduced to one single affiliation. Maayan fails to recognize that the lack of affiliation towards an Israeli civic identity may be a result of the ongoing conflict; competing historical narratives and continuously feeling discriminated against.

After conducting a couple of focus groups I noticed that Jewish identity was not brought up for discussion to the same extent as Arab identity. I found this highly remarkable, as Jewish identity is as complex as any other identity. The issue as to "who is a Jew" is a controversy that has been dealt with since the days of David Ben-Gurion and the establishment of Israel. It is "an obsolete concept and fighting over it takes us again and again down a dead-end alley" (Pfeffer, 2010). While the Arab students present their identity in multiple and broad terms, the Jewish respondents self-ascription is merely based on two aspects. Each and all of the Jewish participants identify themselves either as Jew, Israeli or both. None of the Jewish respondents identify themselves as Ashkenazi-, Mizrahi-, or Arab Jews even if s/he is of Russian, Yemen or Iraqi origin. One explanation could be the importance of unity in Jewish societies, which plays down ethnic differences, strengthen society from within and emphasize similarities and unison (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). With the danger of

generalizing, most Jews acknowledge their entitlement to the land of Israel. The differences between a Jew from Iraq or Russia, religious or secular, are of less importance when it comes to the conflict and entitlement to land. When it comes to specific policies, such as which areas the land of Israel should entail, the differences may be more clear-cut.

The same Jewish respondents, however, engage intensely when discussing ethnic identity of Arabs. Why is that? It is clear that identity, both self-declared and ascribed, has an important function in the current dispute, for instance by legitimizing the conflict and maintaining ethnical boundaries. According to Bar-Tal and Salomon's fourth function of collective memory, narratives justify goals and the continuation of allocating resources to resist the enemy. Nationalists mostly reside in a particular area, ascribing certain attitudes and attributes to it. Thus, the Jews represent a slightly unusual case of nationalism. Although dispersed throughout the world, important elements of their culture have been maintained since ancient times (Singh, 2006)[44]. People who do not live together either loose their cultural heritage over time or they need to strive for unification. Being detached from the land of one's nation leads to difficulties in maintaining traditions, language and culture. It needs a great amount of effort and patriotism to maintain one's national culture (Singh, 2006). Fearing loss of culture, assimilation and lack of a common land, knowledge and awareness of ancient times and historical events were and still are of considerable significance for Zionist adherents.

The Arab students explain the lack of attachment to an Israeli identity as resulting from deficiency on equality, emphasizing equal rights such as education, employment and entitlement to land. Jawa states that in order to feel equivalent as a citizen of a state you have to feel safe. She explains: "You must feel that your city and the country you live in protects you. And we don't feel that!" (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student). Citizenship for Jawa involves the feeling of protection. She adds that being a citizen implies contribution to the country while at the same time receiving benefits in return. Maalouf (1996) additionally stresses recognition as important for citizenship, such as in newspaper, television or magazines. According to him the feeling of

[44] The neighbourhood of Mea Shearim (Hebrew: מאה שערים) is one of the oldest in Jerusalem, inhabited by anti-Zionist orthodox Jews who strictly adhere to Jewish law and maintain ancient cultural elements (Jewish Virtual Library, 2011).

recognition in society can prevent the sense of exclusion from an imagined community.

Identity is not based on static dichotomies. This section shows how discussions of citizenship and identity are characterized by a diversity of meanings. The fact that Jews and Arabs live or work in coexistence in cities such as Jaffa and Haifa reveals that identity often are understood in broader terms than bounded categorical identities, such as 'Israeli' or 'Palestinian'. Through interactions of everyday life people build their own local categories of identity, as demonstrated by the various identities of the Arab respondents. Whether narrow or broad, definitions of identity legitimate the separation of Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs as well as the maintenance of ethnic identities in the conflict, which will be covered in the remaining part of this chapter.

5.1.3. Group identification and maintenance of ethnic identity

Barth's (1969) understanding of ethnicity implies that maintenance of boundaries is caused by the actor themselves. Ethnicity, according to him, emerges when a particular group is facing someone different from itself and is thus a result of human action (Torstrick, 2000). A nation is a social construction and a central priority among nationalizing states is creating a sense of belonging as well as a collective identity (Painter, 1998). Interrelating with others involves inclusion and exclusion of a determined membership, as well as norms and standards of behavior and ways of acting (Barth, 1969). Leah's notions on socially constructed borders and maintenance of these are worthy of note:

> It is just something that happens naturally, I think, the separation between the Jews and the Arabs. Since they don't go to school together they don't have, like, a whole lot of things in common. So, it just happens that you each find your own group (Leah, 10th grade Jewish student).

Leah's notions could be read as in correlation with an instrumentalist perspective of ethnicity, acknowledging that borders in the maintenance of ethnic groups are socially constructed (Barth, 1969). However, by using the word "naturally" Leah does not question why Arabs and Jews attend separate schools, in line with most interviewees of this study. While some students express positive attitudes towards attending mixed schools, a majority are satisfied with status quo as illustrated through Zahraa:" [Mixed schools] are not ok, because the education is different. The *history* is different. If the schools are mixed we learn something that we do not believe in" (Zahraa, 11th grade

Arab student). Although being aware that different narratives exist, Zahraa does not express any aspirations towards learning about other historical accounts than her own. A strong narrative or collective memory function as a justification of the conflict, which can serve as explanations for the negative responses towards challenging one's own narrative. Narratives give answers to questions deriving from sentiments of fear, stress and uncertainty in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) first function of collective memory. Moreover, geographical issues are considered an obstacle to mixed schools, as many Jews and Arabs live in separate villages. 10th grade Jewish student Hila are of the opinion that mixed schools will promote violence. Serah from the same focus group adds that mixed schools are positive enterprises, but that the challenges in making them a success are vast. She explains:

> I don't think everyone fit for that kind of school. The religious people, for example, cannot live with someone that is completely different from them. They won't accept it (Serah, 10th grade Jewish student).

Leah supports Serah by drawing the following picture:

> I think in most cases there are not connections between Arab villages and Jewish villages, even if they are [geographically] close to each other. I think people [would] rather stay where they are, where they feel comfortable and not mix with other people (Leah, 10th grade Jewish student).

Both Serah and Leah point at difficulties with mixed schools. Social identity implies identification to specific groups and is particularly important when groups are in a state of conflict with each other. By ascribing one's group as distinct from "the other", belonging and membership to the group are justified and differentiation is sharpened (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Jewish student Tamar expresses skepticism towards mixed schools because this will imply less focus on Jewish history, which is "what sticks us together" (Tamar, 11th grade Jewish student). Maintaining Jewish history in schools weigh up against mixed schools, as Jewish history is considered important for the maintenance of Judaism. Tamar offers the following reflection:

> I think that even if I say that I am not a Jew anymore, it doesn't matter because all the time we have the people that hate us! They remind us what we are. Even if I'll say that I am not a Jew, there will be people that remind me, people that don't like me! And I know that if I will love a man I will not say 'he is an Arab, I will not love him'. I will love him, because he is just like me, *but* I want this big, big family! I want that all these sources will keep going. I don't want to loose everything, you know (Tamar, 11th grade Jewish student).

Initially, Tamar's statement supports the claim that people often adhere to those

affiliations being under attack. Moreover, Tamar does not want to fall in love with an Arab man because of her aspirations to maintain Judaism and "the big, big family". The latter statement demonstrates how groups tend to view those from the same community as family, even if they are complete strangers (Maalouf, 1996). Marrying an Arab man implies stigmatization and exclusion from either Jewish or Arab society in Israel, or most likely both, and the dream of the big family will be beyond reach. Jewish student Ronit from the same focus group make a difference from Tamar and the majority by stating that marring a Jewish man is not important to her. Tamar strongly disagrees and argues that the end of Judaism will come if all Jews have similar way of thought. Thus, one can conclude that Tamar is characterized by a fear of losing national identity. Striving for national identity can promote discrimination and negative attitudes towards minorities, where ethnic minorities are regarded as a threat to the "nation-state". These attitudes can easily develop into prejudices and negative sentiments.

In line with a Jewish narrative, Tamar focuses on a people traced from ancient times with shared origin: "Even if we feel it or not, it is about family. This is written in the books, we are Jews; we are together, through generations. We are family. If we want or if we don't want, we are the same group!" (Tamar, 11th grade Jewish student). Moreover, Tamar's utterances fit within a primordialist perspective, regarding ethnicity as given from birth. One Arab student supports this: "My father is Palestinian, my grandfather, his grandfather, and my children will be Palestinian. It is in our blood!" (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student). First, 'Palestinian' is, as we have already seen, a relatively new term. Yet, Jawa emphasizes ancient origins of her people. Second, being a Palestinian implies belonging to a certain area, Palestine. Thus, based on these utterances ethnicity for these students are believed to be set by geographical location. I found it noteworthy that a primordialist understanding of ethnicity is widespread to such an extent among participants of this research, such as Yafit, stating one is a Jew by DNA.

After conducting a few focus groups I recognized that the feeling of fear was a repeated theme and I asked one group to elaborate about these feelings. One Jewish student explains the fear as a result of existential issues and fear of losing Israel as a

home and a state: “The history shows that the world outside Israel is unsafe!” (Rachel, 11th grade Jewish student). Like Rachel a majority of the students describe Israel as a place to feel more secure than abroad, which they describe as resulting from a revival of neo-Nazi movements. The students emphasize, however, that life both abroad and in Israel is characterized by the feeling of fear, which the following quotations demonstrate:

> They [Arabs/Palestinian] learn to hate us, you know. I can’t go to their homes, because they will kill me! They will kill me and they say it, they are not scared to say it! (Tamar, 11th grade Jewish student).

> In the world you don’t understand how it is like to be in Israel, how it is like to live here and hear everyday on the news outside your home, all those terrible stuff. I am afraid! (Esther, 11th grade Jewish student).

> It seems like the whole Jewish thing [the Jewish-Palestinian conflict] is based on fear, which is quite true. If we were anywhere else we wouldn’t be at all, which is sad. Israel is the safest place for us! (Rachel, 11th grade Jewish student).

Although emphasizing the importance of having a Jewish home in order to feel safe, the respondents’ explanations are colored by the constant feeling of fear. The frequently mentioned fear can be interpreted as a result of political xenophobia (Canetti-Nisim & Pedahzur, 2003). As shown in the theoretical framework political xenophobia implies “hostility towards members of certain ethnic and national groups” (Canetti-Nisim & Pedahzur, 2003, p. 309). In the case of Israel, political explanations to xenophobia are of particular interest, implying political tensions between different groups. Although being a multi-ethnic state Israel is still per se reflecting the majority’s culture and history. Such nationalist discourses risk promotion of ethnocentrism and xenophobia. Some Jewish students express fear of a changing demography that ultimately will threaten Israel as a safe homeland for the Jews. A common believe is that Israel and its (Jewish) citizens faces serious existential threats. As demonstrated by Tamar, the fear is not merely restricted to security and existential issues, but implies additionally the fright of being killed. There will always be fundamentalists in conflicts and highlighting the acts of these becomes a part of delegitimizing the opponent and regarding “the other” as an undifferentiated entity. Palestinian resistance has been argued not to be a real threat to Israel, as Israel has one of the strongest militaries in the world (Rouhana, 2006). On the other hand, suicide bombings, rockets from Gaza and tensions with Syria, Lebanon and Iran are

considered real security threats to Israel and its citizens. Whether security issues are exaggerated or not is of less relevance, and it should suffice to say that sentiments are genuine and should be taken seriously. The fear described above can additionally be a result of collective memory (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Members of a society socially construct their world according to their needs. Such socially constructions are not necessarily restricted to give meaning to events and happenings, but entails additionally socially constructions about "the other".

When Tamar states, "I can't go to their homes, because they will kill me!" she delegitimizes "the other" by focusing on the inhumanity of the opponent. This is in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) third characteristic of collective narratives. One's own group is represented as the victim, while the adversary imposes the conflict (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Fear is a more frequent topic in the focus groups with Jewish student than among Arabs interviewees. Nevertheless, fear and stereotypes also characterize a fraction of the Arab respondents to some extent. One Arab student passionately explains:

> Every time I ride the bus and someone sits next to me, I am scared. I feel that they are going to attack me or kill me. They are calling us terrorists, but make sure your own hands are clean before you start pointing fingers! *You* are terrorizing me. Every time I ride the bus, every time I want to visit my friend I feel scared! I don't leave the house alone; there is always someone besides me (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student).

The fear that characterizes Jawa's, and other students', utterances can be read in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) characteristics of narratives and collective memory in conflict, which will be a central theory of analysis in the next chapter.

5.2. Concluding remarks

The examination of how Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs negotiate identity is my attempt to challenge conceptions of identity as dichotomies and capture the contested nature of citizenship. The responses reveal a variety of discourses concerning citizenship and provide answers to this study's first research question: "How do Arab and Jewish students in Israel understand aspects of citizenship?" The findings presented so far reveal that questions of citizenship are highly controversial. With the danger of generalizing close in mind, some general patterns are noticeable. While a majority of the Arab respondents consider citizenship merely as a judicial status, citizenship for most Jewish respondents implies additionally a feeling of belonging

and consequently the wish to contribute to the country, for instance by serving in the IDF. The students' responses can be read in line with an egalitarian discourse, stressing the notion of equality as crucial when understanding and defining citizenship. Nevertheless, while the Arab interviewees' comprehension of equality implies matters of land, employment and rights the Jewish students emphasize somewhat differently, drawing the attention to equality in form of duties. Regardless of how the Arab students understand citizenship the main issue still appear to be their feeling of being discriminated against. Legally being citizens of a state but at the same time not possessing the same possibilities as Jewish citizens can be read as an important explanation to the lack of affiliation towards the state of Israel. Individual interviewees, Jews and Arabs alike, emphasize aspects of citizenship differently. Hence, I suggest that citizenship should be looked upon as a multifaceted concept, with various aspects that all are decisive regarding civic identities.

Definitions of identity legitimate the separation between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs and the maintenance of a divided civic identity. Social identity and identification to specific groups are particularly important among Jews and Arabs in Israel. The most prominent reason emanating from this research is the fact that the conflict is ongoing. The findings of this chapter clearly reveal that identity, both self-declared and ascribed by others, has a significant function in the conflict as to maintain ethnic differences and distinct civic identities. Civic identity of Israeli Jews is apparent, narrow and clear-cut: Israeli and/or Jew. Jewish identity is not introduced to the discussions neither by Jewish interviewees nor by Arab participants. The lack of such discussions is an interesting finding, as Jewish identity at least is as complicated as any other identity. Identity of Arabs implies notions of multiple identities, which is demonstrated both by Jewish interviewee and the Arab participants themselves. Pinson (2008) suggests that multiple notions of identity are Arabs' solution to the frustration and tension in a situation of double exclusion.

Fear, stigmatization, mutual delegitimizing and xenophobia all affect understandings of citizenship. The Jewish respondents are colored by fear of the unknown and of "the other". Whether this is a result of primary socialization, secondary socialization or most likely both, is of less relevance. The important aspect is that sentiments are genuine and that immediate efforts should be done to encourage increased understanding of "the other's" narrative. By so doing, one is bound to challenge part

of one's own group's previously taken for granted historical account. Therefore, with this chapter close in mind, I will now move on by examining the role of education and history in the creation of civic identities.

Chapter 6: The role of history in developing civic identities

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of history in creating civic identities and how this affects a feeling of membership in Israeli society. Creating and/or maintaining a historical narrative are significant during conflict in order to promote group solidarity and the feeling of a shared destiny. This kind of shared interpretation of reality binds people and communities together. With the preceding chapter on citizenship close in mind, I will now investigate the role of history in the creation of civic identities in line with the second research question of this study: "What messages are transmitted through teaching the subject of history in relation to distinct narratives, peace building, and overcoming prejudices and politicized differences?" An investigation of this will hopefully answer the third and final research question: "To what extent do messages transmitted through history affect the development of civic identity?" It is important to keep in mind that education and society are not abstract notions disconnected from each other and the subject of history is one of many aspects that influence the development of civic identities.

Students and teachers are the main actors of schooling. The intent of this research is to examine the role of schooling through thick descriptions from these actors' point of view. By doing so, I hope to get an increased understanding of Israeli schools as agents of citizenship. The examination may further shed light on what students and teachers themselves wish to include or exclude in their history education. A central aim in most societies is ensuring stability and preparing students to become respectable citizens. Education plays an essential role in this process and through schooling one generation socializes another by transmitting the collective memory of the society (Rotberg, 2006).

An examination of the role of schooling will be presented initially. Jeismann advocates different perspectives when transmitting knowledge about historical happenings (Eikeland, 2004). Teaching history based on several perspectives was, however, not the case of this study's teacher participants. The teacher participants' utilization of distinct narratives through history education will be presented. The role of teachers and secondary socialization will be examined, before turning to various narratives of the 1948 war, these narratives' implications for civic identities and finally students' reactions towards a multi-narrative approach in the subject of history.

6.1. Understanding the role of schooling

Education is important in the development of individual identities; however, education can also fuel conflicts as the following quote illustrates:

> National governments and the international community have to recognize that education can reinforce the grievance that fuel armed conflict. Acknowledging this is a first step towards putting education at the centre of a credible peace-building agenda (UNESCO, 2011).

Schools can be used as important forces for peace. In conflict-affected areas messages transmitted in the classrooms occasionally reinforce prejudices, mutual distrust and ethnic divisions. Such messages are often based on heroic accounts and do not promote the usage of history as a tool for critical thinking (UNESCO, 2011). Education is important for societies in conflict, as state ideologies efficiently can be transmitted to a large part of the population. One educational aspect of influence is teacher instruction. Bar-On and Adwan (2006) refer to teachers as agents of change. However, teachers can also be agents of the national state and its ideology (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Teachers have a considerable amount of power when it comes to forming students' understandings of past, present and future life. Some teachers have the position of being role models, where students uncritically absorb and adapt his or her opinions. Teachers and secondary socialization faces great challenges, such as bringing new content to an already taken-for-granted "reality". Nevertheless, schooling takes place at a period of time in which students are relatively open to new and alternative ways of perceiving the world surrounding them.

6.1.1. Teaching controversial issues: teachers' utilization of conflicting narratives through history

Teaching merely according to a Jewish narrative is not an alternative for Jewish teacher Benjamin, as illustrated through the following statement: "Ignoring the fact that there are millions of people who see the history in a different way is not going to take us to a better place" (Benjamin, Jewish history teacher). Benjamin's belief is compatible with Jeismann and his aims of developing history consciousness through education by relating history consciousness to present self-ascription (Eikeland, 2004). Benjamin is preoccupied not only with teaching history according to the history books, but additionally with providing tools to assist the development of independent opinions and critical thinking. Although inconsistent with the Education

Ministry, neglecting a Palestinian narrative in the subject of history is not an alternative for Benjamin when teaching history.

Somewhat differently, a Jewish narrative is clearly prioritized in Jewish teacher Lilach's history classes[45]. Although using a Jewish narrative as a foundation a Palestinian narrative is occasionally mentioned, as Lilach exemplifies:

> There are some who says that we have to [teach] them [Jewish students] about the Nakba. I don't think we have to do it. I always show that they [Arabs/ Palestinians] didn't accept the decision in the United States [the partition plan, the United Nations] and I say why they didn't except it[46]. But that is enough! I am not telling them that they say it is Nakba for them. *They* see it as the Nakba; I don't see it as the Nakba. I don't teach about their narrative. I only say how they look at the situation, but no more (Lilach, Jewish history teacher).

The above interview excerpt is in opposition to teaching from a multi-narrative point of view. Lilach emphasizes that she does not identify the war of 1948 as the Nakba and consequently she does not teach about it as such. In Lilach's history classes the students learn mostly about historical events and not the relevance of these events for contemporary life. This is in disagreement with Jeismann, who stresses the importance of linking history consciousness and historical events to contemporary life (Eikeland, 2004). Lilach adds that learning only one narrative is not the way to make peace, which only can be realized with the establishment of two states and an end of the conflict. Lilach articulates that she mentions the Nakba in her history classes, "but no more". Being aware that a Palestinian narrative exists but at the same time disregarding it, Lilach's formulations demonstrate the crucial functions that narratives possess in conflicts, such as justifying group existence, attitudes and conducts. Only with a potential end of the conflict will transition of narratives and collective memory no longer be necessary to the same extent, and consequently learning other narratives will be less demanding. The interview excerpt additionally reveals that Lilach's narrative is presented as the one and only "true" historical account as if no other narratives exist. This can be placed within Metz' (1972) first category of memory:

[45] Jewish history connected to world history is of chief attention in Lilach's classes, in line with the new core curriculum of 1995 (Naveh, 2006).

[46] Several of the respondents, Jews and Arabs alike, confused the partition plan and decisions of the United Nations with the United States. Whether this is coincidence or lack of knowledge cannot be known with certainty. The United States is a central player in the Middle East and based on informal conversations with Jews the United States appear as more powerful and influential than the United Nations.

memory as selective recollection of the past that represents one's own narrative as the superior. Transmittance of (selective and biased) narratives to younger generations becomes vital in order to maintain these constructed narratives and consequently, Lilach does not open for differing opinions in class:

> There are a lot of opinions here in Israel about what happened in the war as well as opinions about the Palestinians and a future solution. But in the high school we don't open for a lot of opinions. We say how the situation *really* was, but I think it is more in our eyes. We always say why the Arabs didn't accept the solution, why they behaved as they behaved and why they started the 1948 war. We say all the historical reasons, but I think most of the time we show it from our perspective. I think it is ok! (Lilach, Jewish history teacher).

Open debates and contradicting views are, according to Jeismann, important preconditions in the development of a critical consciousness. In contrast to Jeismann's aims of developing history consciousness based on several perspectives, Lilach does not encourage open debates and contradicting views in her classes, which is reserved to after school time and outside the school fences. Lilach claims that her way of teaching is based on a "true" historical account. In the same statement, however, she acknowledges that the account is based on a Jewish narrative. This is not surprising, as adherents of a narrative assign their account to be superior. What is more, Lilach does not problematize the commencement of the 1948 war, which in line with a Jewish narrative results from the decision-making of Arab countries. New historians have contested the Jewish dominant account, claiming that war was far from Arab collective minds (Jawad, 2006). The conversation with Lilach demonstrates that the current state of conflict makes it challenging as a teacher not to reveal her/his political point of view when teaching history.

Standing up to the official narrative is challenging, particularly in conflict-ridden societies where narratives ensure a form of stability in an unpredictable world. Both Benjamin and Lilach believe that a majority of teachers in Israel follow their teaching plan in harmony with requirements from the Israeli Education Ministry. In order to assist students to succeed teachers are obligated to use specific history books, which are adjusted to the matriculation examination. As the final exams defined by the Education Ministry are based on a Jewish narrative, messages transmitted through history in Arab classes are predominantly based on a Jewish historical account. Consequently, an adequate Palestinian narrative is lacking in the current history

curriculum. While some teachers solely teach from the history books, other teachers include their personal points of view according to a Palestinian narrative. One Arab student confirms this: "Sometimes they teach from a Palestinian narrative, because they want us to understand that there *was* a Palestinian narrative" (Aminah, 12th grade Arab student). Jawa from the same focus group adds that different narratives are not adequately discussed in class, as some teachers merely give students the material for the exams and it is the sole responsibility of the students to memorize it. Hence, one can draw the conclusion that if the history teacher does not include a Palestinian narrative in class, learning about historical events such as the Nakba chiefly takes place through media, community and primary socialization.

This is not the case in the history classes of Arab teacher Jabbar, where both Jewish history and history of Islam are encompassed. However, teaching from a Palestinian narrative is, according to Jabbar, only possible if there is time left after learning about a Jewish narrative. During additional time Jabbar explicitly explains his students that the history books are not compatible with a Palestinian narrative. Jabbar makes a clear distinction between opinions presented in the textbooks and his personal opinions, as indicated by the following reflection:

> As a teacher, I teach my students from a Jewish perspective, but I explain to them; this is what they [the Israeli Education Ministry] want you to know. *I* want my students to learn about the history of Palestine. *They* want to teach the students how to love the land. The Jews came here, stole our land and [this] is a problem for us (Jabbar, Arab history teacher).

The Israeli state may try to impose a particular identity through education policies, but it is employees, municipal officials and local teachers that are in direct relationship with the community (Torstrick, 2000). Jabbar serve as such an example by moving beyond the requirements of the Education Ministry and teaching history in accordance with a Palestinian narrative. Pressure to promote specific national identities often causes resistance, as demonstrated with Jabbar and his way of teaching history. Although he is a citizen of Israel, Jabbar does not possess affiliations towards a Jewish narrative about Israel. Jabbar states that his personal opinions and resistance towards the Israeli Education Ministry are reflected in his history classes. He explains: "I want that people will know about their history! About their land and identity. About their future! This is *my* narrative!" (Jabbar, Arab history teacher). Jabbar considers it his duty as a teacher to provide knowledge about a Palestinian

narrative to his students. Most people are affected by the conflict in some way or another, also teachers. Many have lost someone as a result of the war and through media one is constantly reminded about the situation. Conflict affected areas may not be good environments for change and it is often believed that it is "the other" side that need to adjust. It is a demanding task to stay rational during war and conflict, also for teachers. Lilach does not problematize the beginning of the 1948 war in line with a Jewish narrative. Jabbar does not problematize Jewish presence in the area and the fact that Palestine never was an independent state, in accordance with his narrative. Based on the conversations with Lilach and Jabbar, the suggestion can be made that both teachers present selective and biased narratives when teaching history.

History teacher Benjamin is of the opinion that the Israeli Education Ministry purposively enforces a clear, monolithic and national identity on the students. Nation building has been an important endeavor in Jewish society since the 1920s due to waves of immigration and a heterogeneous population (Naveh, 2006). The fear of losing national identity, culture and land resulted in a reinforced strive for unity. This mentality is visible in current Israeli-Jewish society and, as demonstrated by Lilach, also through history education. If one asks critical questions one break the unified identity and as a consequence, learning about each other's historical narratives is not sufficiently covered in today's history curriculum. Benjamin believes that if you want to shape students' identities in a better way, asking critical questions is a crucial undertaking. Ignoring narratives does not make them disappear; the questions and challenges regarding them will still persist. According to Benjamin, many students in Israel are acquainted with education where one is supposed to think in one specific way, which is in concurrence with a Jewish discourse. Benjamin explains that a great part of his students have problems with independent and critical thinking, as illustrated by the following statement:

> Some of them, especially the teenagers, need me as a teacher to tell them what to think! This is not only a question of age; it is a question of how their minds were corrupted by the Israeli education system! If I only teach them the materials they should go to the books or Internet, they do not need me. They need me to help them *think* about the questions and to develop a critical point of view (Benjamin, Jewish history teacher).

Benjamin makes a difference from Lilach and Jabbar. He teaches history both from a Jewish and a Palestinian narrative and underlines that his political opinions are not

important when teaching history. Benjamin considers it his responsibility as a teacher to provide students with necessary skills in order to draw independent and critical inferences. Benjamin's thoughts are in line with Jeismann's aims of affecting history consciousness through history education in an environment that is open for contradicting narratives and opinions (Eikeland, 2004). According to Benjamin, preparing students for the exam and teaching history is not the same matter, considering that the Education Ministry forbids differing narratives.

The development of sensitive attitudes towards the suffering of others is in most cases not possessed merely by reading textbooks, but is a result of teachers such as Benjamin. Acknowledging the existence of narratives other than one's own affects both self-ascription and understanding of "others", as one has to challenge previous taken-for-granted "realities". Benjamin believes that students have the abilities needed to understand and acknowledge various narratives. He states that although some of his students object the majority, whether politically right or left wing oriented, accept the legitimacy of learning both a Jewish and Palestinian narrative in the subject of history. In most cases it does not alter the Jewish students' desire to have a Jewish country or their affiliations towards a Jewish narrative, which Benjamin believes to be a great fear of the Education Ministry. Benjamin's experiences reveal on the contrary increased understanding both of "the other" and the narrative of which the students already adhere to. Regarding a two-narrative approach as a potential grassroots solution to the conflict in a long-term perspective, Benjamin is determined to continue exposing his students to competing narratives. He considers it important to create linkages between history and moral questions, as illustrated through the following quote:

> During war soldiers have to ask questions and make decisions. During war some people do terrible things; they kill innocent people [and] they steal from Palestinian homes. Others do not do it. What is the difference? (Benjamin, Jewish history teacher).

Benjamin explains that it is his duty as a teacher to continue teaching from a two-narrative approach and possibly facilitate the students to make better decisions and to be better people: "Under conflict, during war and in their daily lives" (Benjamin, Jewish history teacher).

6.1.2. Examples of teachers' roles in secondary socialization

Because I did not use the method of observation I cannot know with certainty if happenings in class are compatible with teacher conveyances throughout the interviews. However, I obtained some experiences while conducting a focus group interview in an Arab Muslim high school (focus group three). It is described in the method chapter that Arab teacher Ziad, who recently was granted Israeli citizenship, wanted to partake in the interview. None of the students mentioned affiliations towards a Palestinian identity in a discussion concerning citizenship. The lack of affiliation clearly astonished teacher Ziad. The teacher broke in with strong and forceful articulations, conveying his personal opinions of what Israeli citizenship implies. Ziad passionately uttered:

> Deep inside, how do you believe? I am an Israeli citizen, but I am Palestinian at heart! I identify with the Palestinian people [and] I am basically a Palestinian. I have an Israeli passport [but] it is like a sheet, it doesn't mean anything to me! It may give me the chance to travel without going to the consulates or to the embassies [and] it makes life a bit easier for me. But in the eyes of the Israelis, even the Ministry of Interior, I am a Palestinian! I am an Arab! I am not a Jew! I will never be a Jew! Even if I become like Netanyahu, I am still an Arab! They would call me an Arab. I hear this all the time, even if I have an Israeli citizenship. So, it is just a document for me. I am a Palestinian! If they want to take it back, I will throw it in their faces [demonstrates by throwing his papers across the table]. Why not? I will not go to hell, you know… (Ziad, Arab English teacher).

To begin with, Ziad's input reveals a view of citizenship explicitly as a judicial status (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Moreover, Jabbar's utterances support the claim that aspects of identity in opposition to the adversary become significant in times of conflict (Maalouf, 1996). Ziad's historical account is in accordance with 'Palestinization' (Smooha, 1999), which implies a concentration on Palestinian identity and affiliation towards the Palestinian nation. Ziad additionally uses the term 'Israeli' equated with being a Jew. Once again, this usage demonstrates that both Jews and Arabs of this research (although not everyone) equate Israeli with being a Jew. In the discussion of identity, a lack of acknowledgement of Arabs as Israelis is a repeated topic. However, acknowledgement by "the others" falls short if Arab self-ascription contributes to maintaining the distinction. Identity constitutes of both self-ascription and acknowledgement by others (Emberling, 1997). Jabbar accuses Jewish elite, here represented by the Ministry of Interior, of considering him an Arab or Palestinian, as

if this is a negative matter. The latter may be read as a result of constantly feeling discriminated against as an Arab living in Israel. Ziad neglects the complexities of identity and the possibility of being Palestinian, Arab, Muslim and an Israeli citizen at the very same time, which is the case for the majority of the Arab students of this study.

Truly astounded by a lack of affiliation towards a Palestinian identity, the teacher broke in with a second input:

> You know, you have to explain yourself more clearly. The occupation that was imposed on you in 1948 was not your own making; it was imposed by the Arab governments, by the United States, by Russia, by Britain. All the countries were against the innocent Palestinians, the civilians. And this is how Israel came about. We have been victimized by the creation of the state of Israel [and] we didn't invite Israel to come, occupy and conquer us. The entire world came to help Israel and the Israeli Zionist establishment. Other people of the world have to understand that we had no choice! This is their creation of history, not our own! We are victims, ok? We are not the victimizers! (Ziad, Arab English teacher).

The sequence aroused my interest as it points at two major aspects. To begin with, it reveals the importance of teachers. Although most of the students' (focus group three) immediate identification is 'Arab Muslim' the students start to emphasize affiliation to Palestine in the wake of Ziad's remarks. The input by Ziad may have affected their answers, causing the students to respond in a way they believe to be in accordance with the teacher's perception. Although I cannot draw casual conclusions, the episode reveals the importance of teachers and the extent to which an environment open for debate and various opinions is encouraged. Furthermore, Ziad's contribution to the discussion sheds light on the functions of narratives in conflict. By exploiting words such as 'occupation', 'imposing' and 'innocent Palestine', Ziad deliberately underlines his own group's victimization, in line with Bar-Tal and Salomon's (2006) fourth theme that characterizes narratives of conflict. With the feeling of victimization follows the notion of one's own group as moral and human, while the adversary is given sole responsibility for the continuation of the conflict. Emphasis on one's own suffering, losses and the belief that the opponent imposes the conflict are common results of long periods of violence (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006).

History is not limited to what we learn through formal education, but is part of learning and experiences throughout life. Primary socialization is often regarded as

the most important form of socialization, as this is the period of time where individuals' first perceptions of the world are constructed. Individuals cannot choose their "significant others" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967) and thus attitudes, beliefs and conducts are adapted from those surrounding the child from early ages. Lilach illuminates that students' own experiences shape their way of thinking and their willingness to learn other narratives than their own. Extremism, terrorism, rockets from Hamas and Hezbollah and the fear that follows shape people's opinions. Consequently, influence from history education may not in all cases be of notable significance. I agree with Zembylas and Bekerman (2008) who state that education is not a universal remedy, but classrooms are rather potential places where political transformation can take place. Such changes are, of course, not a straightforward task as education faces the challenge of transmitting knowledge that may be in opposition to an already constructed and taken-for-grated "reality". Benjamin explains:

> Basically I think that for most students their political and moral opinions are *not* influenced by what happens in class. They come with their opinions from home and these opinions stay. After twelve years many of them have the same opinions. I think our influence is very minor. Maybe it makes one or two students think about these ideas [learning about each other's narrative], but when it comes to decisions; should I go to the West Bank as a soldier or should I refuse? Most of them, I would say almost all of them do what their parents tell them to do, how they are brought up. So I think our influence is very minor and there is a good reason for that; *the conflict is ongoing*! (Benjamin, Jewish history teacher).

Once again the fact that the conflict is ongoing demonstrates that identity, collective memory and narratives are significant in justifying group existence and give meaning and stability in a world colored by conflict and unpredictability. Benjamin recognizes the challenges by teaching the narrative of the adversary whilst the conflict is ongoing, but this does not choke Benjamin's faith in continuing his work. Although history education might only have a minor influence, bringing multi-narrative teaching to an end is, for him, no alternative. The possibility that his way of teaching history will affect a fraction of the student's understanding of the conflict towards more inclusive terms is worth the risk of teaching against the Israeli Education Ministry's requirements.

The students support Benjamin's claims with regards to the significance of primary and secondary socialization. A majority of both Jewish and Arab students of this

research consider history education a necessary subject among several others in order to complete high school. 45 minutes of history education a few times a week is regarded as of minor influence compared to the amount of knowledge received from home. When discussing the magnitude of primary and secondary socialization the students of focus group five agree upon primary socialization as having most of an impact. Yet, education is considered important as some student regard their teachers as role models to a greater extent than their parents. Yarden supports this, claiming: "You can't do anything about what you get from home; the only thing you can do something about is education (Yarden, 11th grade Jewish student). Education and teachers are considered substantial in terms of providing tools for critical thinking and abilities needed to deal with conflicts. As a result, Yarden, and fellow students, believe that Israeli education and teachers can be important agents of citizenship.

Creating a better dialogue between the two narratives requires skills to deconstruct narratives, both that of the adversary's and one's own. The development of such skills is a process in which teachers play a crucial role (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). When asked about the role of history education, Ruth responds with the following remarks:

> It is important to learn to criticize what you see, because no matter what you read or what you see in the news, other people with other opinions brought it to you. You kind of see things through their eyes. You need to understand that they are not facts! It is really hard to find facts anywhere. There are many facts and some of them don't go together (Ruth, 11th grade Jewish student).

Ruth highlights the importance of questioning historical statements, its sources and the validity of those sources, which are all important aims of history education according to Jeismann (Eikeland, 2004). Primary socialization is given higher significance and the impact of history education is considered as depending on each individual teacher. Ruth explains; "some teachers just throw the material on you and don't really make you think, while others make you think more" (Ruth, 11th grade Jewish student). According to Ruth, open-minded teachers are a necessity in preventing biased understanding and negative attitudes towards "the other". Ruth, and fellow students, believes that open-minded teachers are the exception rather than the rule in Israel. Other students of the same focus group emphasize respect for teachers and each student's willingness or personal interest in the subject of history as important for the degree of influence. The assumption that an acknowledgement of "the other's" narrative implies the end of one's own is a challenge that teachers have

to overcome. Thus, teachers' abilities to resist prospective negative reactions and classroom pressure are decisive for a successful incorporation of a two-narrative approach (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). The participants regard newspapers, television, magazines, neighborhood and Internet as decisive factors in the development of civic identities in addition to education. The various aspects will not be elaborated further as this would be beyond the scope of this research. Yet, it is important mentioning as it pays attention to the influence of other aspects in the creation of civic identities.

6.2. Collective memory and narratives of conflict

Comprehending the world as predictable and organized is a basic need for most human beings (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Such feelings often derive from people's membership in a particular group. Members of a group or community construct their world according to their needs. For societies in conflict historical narratives become particularly important, as narratives justify attitudes or actions by depicting selective parts of history. Both Palestinian and Jewish historical accounts present partial versions of history that justify each groups' existence since ancient times. Narratives give meaning to the past, present life and future aspirations. Jewish student Ruth introduces this exact matter to the discussion of focus group five. Ruth differs from her fellow students in that she strongly emphasizes the need to look forward. Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006) argue that the stronger side in a conflict is more likely to aspire for a brighter future, while the weaker side often turns to the past and its mischief. For some Israeli Arabs the past is not distant but close, as part of their people live in refugee camps while others live as unequal Israeli citizens (Sa'di & Lughod, 2007). Ruth expresses a willingness to confront the collective memory that she belongs to, by emphasizing suffering of "the other" in regards to history education. Ruth considers history as a cause of the conflict and thus she believes in showing caution when using history in self-reflection and understanding of "others":

> I think history is very important, but I also think that it should not be the only important thing. If you want to go forward you [should] turn your face in the direction [you] want to go. I think history created many of the problems we deal with now! You should know what's behind you, but you should also be able to look forwards and not only backwards (Ruth, 11th grade Jewish student).

Ruth's understanding of history and collective memory can be placed within Metz's (1972) second category of memory. While his first category implies selective

recollection of the past, the second type of memory disrupts and challenges taken-for-granted historical narratives. The latter requires the ability to focus on common human suffering, rather than delegitimizing "the other's" narrative or representing one's own group as victims, which are characteristics of collective narratives (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006).

The term 'history' brings about different associations depending on through which lenses individuals see the world. The following quotations represent how many interviewees, Arabs and Jews alike, respond concerning the role of history:

> You don't know where you are going unless you know where you are coming from (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student).
>
> If you don't know the history, you don't know where you are going in the future. You have to know what happened to continue (Serah, 10th grade Jewish student).
>
> A person can't define himself without knowing the history (Ayelet, 11th grade Jewish student).
>
> Learning about the Nakba helps me to identify myself as a Palestinian (Aminah, 12th grade Arab student).

Jawa and Serah stress the importance of linking history consciousness to present-day and future times. Narratives are constructs used to justify acts or attitudes by different parties of the conflict, and the assumptions are made that failing to achieve these goals will threaten the existence of the particular group (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Ayelet and Aminah highlight the aspect of identity in regard to the role of history. Reinforcing a strong sense of identity is particularly significant in a state of war or conflict. Historical narratives construct and influence the development of individual and collective identity as well as the identity of the adversary. How history consciousness is dealt with through the subject of history and the interpretive perspectives conveyed depends to a large extent on each individual teacher's abilities with regards to teaching controversial issues.

6.2.1. Nakba or War of Independence?

The greatest gaps in narratives are to be found in representations of the 1948 war. As there would be no independence or state of Israel if the Jews lost the war, 1948 is a significant year for most Jews. The Palestinians, however, paid the price and the same episode is looked upon as a tragedy. The 1948 war affects the relationship between

the two "peoples" even today and thus too understandings of both the adversary and oneself, as will be elaborated in this section. Because of the unsolved issues in its aftermath, the 1948 war has been referred to as "the mother of the many wars that followed" and a "battlefield for two opposing narratives" (Jawad, 2006, p. 72). Although most of the interviewees accept the existence of different narratives, specific or in-depth knowledge about those narratives varies. Each Jewish respondent of this study associates the year 1948 with the War of Independence, or as one student explains; "A turning point in history" (Avital, 12th grade Jewish student). The Arab students on the other hand connect this particular year with a disaster, al-Nakba, where "Israel was founded on the ashes of the Palestinian people" (Lateefah, 11th grade Arab student). Denoting the same war differently illustrates two competing narratives that represent history in a selective manner that each serves its respective group's needs. Arab student Zahraa offers the following historical account of the conflict:

> The Jews learn from their side what they think about the war and the Arab what they think. There are different directions! I can explain from the beginning: After World War II the Jews came from Europe and started building houses on Arab houses. So here the conflict began between the two sides. In 1948 the United States decided the two countries [the partition plan, United Nations[47]], Palestine and Israel. The Arabs refused to have on their land two countries. They refused, but the Jews accepted this idea. And then the 1948 war began! (Zahraa, 11th grade Arab student)

As can be read from the illustration above, Zahraa acknowledges the existence of different narratives. Which of them she adheres to, however, is less comprehensible. Zahraa sets the beginning of the conflict to after World War II. Her account represents an example of how adherents of different narratives construct inconsistent accounts of the same event. In her short historical account Zahraa avoids any mentioning of Jewish presence in the area or ancient origins of the conflict. While constructing the past in a way that legitimizes her own group, Zahraa's account additionally presents constructed views of the adversary (Polkinghorne, 2005). The Jews came from Europe to settle and occupy the land of Palestine and, in line with a Palestinian narrative; the Jews are presented as occupiers. Choosing words such as "their land" leads to the notion that the area is entitled to the Palestinian people and omits the fact that Palestine never was an independent country. Zahraa states conclusively that the

[47] See footnote 46.

Jews accepted the partition plan while the Arabs rejected it. This is a common perception in a Jewish narrative, which has been challenged in recent years by new historians as demonstrated in chapter two. Zahraa's declaration can be interpreted as an example of an Arab in Israel exposed both to an Israeli-Jewish discourse taught at school and 'Palestinization' (Smooha, 1999). An additional explanation may be the lack of a strong and unified Palestinian narrative.

Arab student Malik's utterances represents in many ways a more clear-cut example of a Palestinian narrative than Zahraa's. Malik acknowledges that what is now the State of Israel is regarded as the 'Promised Land' for Jews, but he shows great mistrust in a Jewish narrative. The belief that God promised Jews the land is a result of brainwashing, according to Malik. He regards, in contrast to the fellow-student Zahraa, historical events prior to 1948 as of greater significance:

> The Jews say that the original people of this land were Jewish. It is not true! The Jews came, wiped out everybody, lived here and said it is their land. Canaan people were here and they defended this land! It is the land of Arab people from the beginning of time! Why are you coming here, spreading such lies that this is your land? We haven't seen any proofs of that. But in the Qur'an, the Holy Book, there are proofs that this is our land. We have been living here since ancient times. They are trying to spin the facts (Malik, 11th grade Arab student).

Malik's utterances highlight the importance of ancestors and common heritage in the Jewish-Palestinian conflict (Singh, 2006). Again, the connections between Canaanites and Arabs as well as proofs in the Qur'an are controversies beyond the scope of this study. What is of interest is how ties and relationship to the area justify the existence of a group and its entitlement to establish a country in a particular area, in Malik's case Palestine. Malik expresses disbelief towards the Torah and its content of God's pledge to the Jews of the 'Promised Land', describing it as "myths from a book" (Malik, 11th grade Arab student). Nevertheless, Malik bases his counter-arguments on the Qur'an, the holy book of the Muslims, arguing that it entails proofs that the land belongs to Arabs. There are several similarities to be found between Jewish and Arab ancient history, as demonstrated in chapter two with the accounts of Abraham/Ibrahim. Narratives of conflict play down similarities and sharpen intergroup differences by delegitimizing the adversary and glorifying one's own group (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). This function of narratives focuses on the cruelty

of the opponent, as Malik's description of Jewish immigration above, while presenting one's own group in a positive light.

Somewhat different from Malik's perspective, Jewish student Tamar delivers a historical account that resembles a Jewish narrative:

> We need to know about our past to know who we are, where we came from. I think the government wants us to learn specifically about the Holocaust and all the Jewish subjects because they want us to stay in the country and understand why we are here, fight for our country and unite us (Tamar, 11th grade Jewish student).

Tamar explains the importance of learning Jewish history with the same arguments used by Lilach, Jabbar, Ziad and other participants of this research, whether Jews or Arabs. Narratives are justifications of attitudes ("understanding why we are here"), acts ("fight for our country") and facilitators in the creation of an imagined community ("unite us"). The Jews are not one homogeneous nation. For that precise reason, ensuring the image of unity has become vital in Israeli-Jewish society. Zahraa, Malik and Tamar's narratives and their particular style of expression all demonstrate distinct historical prominence. The different way of constructing and emphasizing the past is part of their "psychological repertoire" (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006, p. 6), which implies loyalty to their group, shared beliefs and unity. Freeing oneself from the psychological repertoire of collective memory requires an acknowledgement that other narratives may represent legitimate accounts of the past as well, which is a demanding undertaking for societies where conflict is persistent. Student's reactions to multi-narrative teaching through history will be presented in the next and final part of this chapter.

6.2.2. Israeli students' attitudes towards multi-narrative teaching focus

> Every student should know the narrative of "the other"! Know what they think, what they want. When you know what "the other" want and when you know their history, you can solve all the problems between you and "the other". There should be both narratives in all schools! (Malik, 11th grade Arab student).

In line with the above quote, most Arab students of this research are positive to incorporating different narratives in the subject of history. The reactions do not come as a surprise, as many Arabs obviously wish to include their narrative in the history curriculum to a greater extent. A two-narrative approach is a greater challenge for

some Jewish respondents, as this implies questioning and contesting a previously taken-for-granted and superior narrative[48]. Some students are convinced that their school and their history books do present both narratives simultaneously. Maayan, as other fellow students, explains:

> In this school, and in most schools in Israel they try to teach us both points of view. They don't only focus on Jewish history, but rather other sides of the conflict. So we know exactly how the situation was (Maayan, 12th grade Jewish student).

Maayan's information does not correlate with her teacher Lilach, who teaches predominantly based on a Jewish narrative. I suggest that Maayan's belief of knowing "exactly how the situation was" reveals a central aspect of this study. The credence of one's own historical account as representing the "truth" or "reality" prevents a deeper understanding of "the other's" narrative from taking place. Michael expresses a similar, but not identical view: "I love history very much and I read many books outside of school. But I think that in this framework, in the school, it is more than enough" (Michael, 12th grade Jewish student). In-depth knowledge about a Palestinian narrative should, according to Michael, be acquired on own initiatives. What does this statement indicates? In answering this question I once more turn to the essential point deriving from this study, the conflict is ongoing: "Acknowledging the other's nationhood is seen as acceptance of the other's right to establish a national state in that land, which each side perceives as relinquishing or at least jeopardizing its own claims to the land" (Kelman, 1999, p. 588). Recognition of "the other" is perceived as a threat to the legitimacy of one's own group. As a result, mutual denial of the opponent is maintained, which ultimately prevents willingness to learn from other perspectives. By being exposed to a unilateral presentation of history students remain trapped in a "zero-sum mentality" (Kelman, 1999, p. 588), where the loss of one side is the gain of the other.

A majority of the Jewish respondents acknowledge that changes in the curriculum possibly can lead to greater awareness of other narratives and points of view. Michael states: "It is important because we are currently in a conflict with the Palestinian

[48] Benjamin's students of focus groups one and two are all using the textbook "Learning each other's historical narrative: Palestinians and Israelis" (read: Jewish) and are thus not included in the analysis of this section regarding Israeli students attitudes towards multi-narrative teaching focus. Although reactions to the various historical accounts vary, these students accept the legitimacy of learning "the other's" narrative.

people who have claims and demands based on historical facts *they* believe in and *we* believe in other historical facts" (Michael, 12th grade Jewish student). Although being of the opinion that learning different narratives are to be reserved to own initiatives, Michael acknowledges that possible solutions to the conflict depend on greater understanding of each other's narratives. Shira supports Michael by presenting the following reflection: "You can't really judge something if you only look at it from one point of view, ignoring the entire history" (Shira, 12th grade Jewish student). Shira expresses an aspiration towards learning history from several perspectives, as she considers such learning a requirement for a deeper understanding of history. Learning both in accordance with a Jewish and Palestinian narrative is crucial in order to promote attitudes of recognition and respect of the opponent side in the conflict (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). Yafit adds that there is a difference between understanding and agreeing with "the other" side's narrative, which additionally is an important point Benjamin highlights when arguing for a two-narrative approach through the subject of history. Critical thinking and open-mindedness are highly valued by a majority of the Jewish students, as well as not taking historical "facts" for final "truths":

> We don't want to know just one side, we want to know the truth, to make peace, and we want to figure out all these things [the Jewish-Palestinian conflict]. It is very important to know their side. If we don't know their side, we can't talk! (Ronit, 11th grade Jewish student).

Ronit's statement can be interpreted as a willingness to challenge the narrative of one's own group by incorporating a more inclusive curriculum. Her argument is in agreement with Bar-On and Adwan (2006) who argue that cooperation is only possible after the agonizing process of sharing narratives and personal stories.

The students of focus group four and five agree that the curriculum to a greater extent should cover different narratives, but the challenges to do so are considered vast. Encompassing different narratives in the subject of history such as through tests and exams are described as problematic. Jewish student Yafit expresses such concerns; "How can you judge, evaluate or give points to answers that are all different? (Yafit, 11th grade Jewish student). Yafit is uncomfortable with the idea of challenging her group's narrative and collective memory. Another student adds: "What exactly do you teach? Which point of view? Which subjects? The Bible? It is *very* problematic" (Ayelet, 11th grade Jewish student). The students' responses reveal skepticism

towards incorporating a Palestinian narrative in the subject of history. Challenging one's previously taken-for-granted narrative will ultimately lead to a change of perspectives and an altered history consciousness. As long as the narratives provide stability and hold important functions in the conflict, challenging them is a demanding task[49]. Feeling confident about one's own narrative and acknowledging other historical accounts as valid are important requirements in order to ultimately respond positively to narratives of the adversary (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006).

Drawing a line between Jewish and Palestinian narratives will, according to some Jewish respondents, only contribute to greater differences between the two groups, and a two-narrative approach is consequently considered an inadequate alternative. The difficulties presented by the students can be interpreted in several ways. Initially, it can be interpreted as the students not being ready to challenge their own narrative by learning about a Palestinian narrative in class. Moreover, it can be read as of the students being satisfied with the status quo. Further, it can indicate aspirations of assimilating Israeli Arabs into a Jewish mainstream discourse. The skepticism underlines the importance of a secure and open teacher if a two-narrative approach successfully will be implemented in Israeli schools. The students utter aspirations towards learning different narratives as one common history and a combination of the two sides. Bar-On and Adwan (2006) argue against attempts of bridging the narratives. Although the narratives are intertwined they are separate and should be treated accordingly. An important argument against bridging the narratives has repeatedly been demonstrated throughout the two last chapters of this thesis: the conflict is ongoing.

Willingness to dispute one's own narrative depends on various factors, such as the intensity of the conflict, personal experiences and locality. Unlike inhabitants close to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem or other places in which the fieldwork of this research was conducted, learning about "the other" side may be more emotionally challenging for other parts of the population, such as those from southern or northern Israel who continuously experience threats and rocket attacks respectively by Hamas and Hezbollah. Jewish student Maayan sheds light on factors that affect willingness to learn narratives of "the other" side:

[49] Other countries illuminate this, such as Germany where the Holocaust was not introduced in education until almost two decades after the World War Π (UNESCO, 2011).

> […] It makes it very difficult for some citizens of Israel to listen to "the other" side. As a citizen of Tel Aviv, which is less involved in conflict, it is easier for me because I don't come from a background where I have had personal accidents happen to me. So I am willing to hear! But I fully understand those who have been hit by rockets or have other personal experiences that make them unable to listen. When you grow up as a child [and] you have to go to the shelters to save your life and not be in danger, it is very hard for you. If I come to a person [whose] house was hit by a rocket and I tell him 'come, let's listen to the other side', [which] may [have] killed his family or ruined his house. [These] are traumatized people. It [multi-narrative teaching focus] is very hard, even with the best educational system (Maayan, 12th grade Jewish student).

Maayan tries to explain fellow students' negative attitudes towards learning "the other's" narrative. She argues that many students who strongly have been affected by the conflict do not want to understand and are not willing to hear narratives of the adversary. When you grow up as a child in a war or a conflict you learn that your narrative is the true and superior narrative. These narratives are embedded in everyday life, such as culture, festivals, memorial days, holidays, media or textbooks (Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). Challenging them can therefore not be expected to happen overnight, even if a multi-narrative teaching focus were to be implemented in Israeli schools.

Most Arab interviewees express great dissatisfaction towards their history education, where 'the land of Israel' is used instead of 'Palestine' and 'The war of Independence' is a replacement for 'Nakba' in the history books. Jawa words her frustrations: "They don't talk about us, they just say that it [the War of Independence] is their happy thing and they got their land back. They don't talk about our misery. Our suffering. They just don't care" (Jawa, 12th grade Arab student). Jawa supports Benjamin's claim that ignoring other people's historical accounts does not erase these particular narratives. Jawa and other fellow students' feelings of being ignored is not a good foundation for learning about "the other's" suffering, and imposing a Jewish narrative in school does not encourage greater understandings of these particular narratives. Teaching based on an ethno-national Jewish narrative creates frustration, disallowance of the students' Israeli civic identity and an unwillingness to understand a Jewish narrative. Learning about a Jewish narrative as the "superior" version, while potential spare time is spent on a Palestinian narrative, does not encourage open-mindedness for learning history through various perspectives. Noor explains:

> I don't agree with this book we have. They tell us about Hitler and about what he did to the Jewish people. They want us, like, to love the Jewish people, to sympathize with them, to feel we don't have to hurt them. The history books are not connected to our beliefs (Noor, 11th grade Arab student).

Noor's attitudes towards the history books can be interpreted in light of being an Arab citizen of Israel exposed to competing master narratives. On one hand her Israeli citizenship requires her to learn about Zionism, the Diaspora and the Holocaust, while on the other hand being Arab in a Jewish state implies that her narrative and place in society are subordinate (Hammack, 2010). In line with cosmopolitan citizenship, being both Palestinian and Israeli is not necessarily contradictory and an acknowledgement of this may ease learning from a multi-narrative teaching focus. As demonstrated previously, I suggest that the current way of teaching history is a major cause of the zero-sum nature of the conflict. Encompassing various narratives in the subject of history can challenge the status quo and ultimately alter Israeli students civic identities towards more inclusive terms.

6.3. Concluding remarks

Based on experiences from the interviews the claim that collective narratives and its transmission are important aspects of socialization is supported. It can be concluded that in this study only students with teachers taking the risk of teaching beyond the Israeli Education Ministry's requirements are exposed to a two-narrative approach through the subject of history. Only one teacher, Benjamin, is preoccupied with not revealing his personal opinions in order for the students to develop their own critical history consciousness. These findings strengthen the assertion of Israeli schools as agents of citizenship in maintaining status quo, which is a divided civic identity among Israeli students. It is not Israeli education, but individual teachers such as Benjamin who challenge the situation by introducing a two-narrative approach in the subject of history, without approval from the Education Ministry. It is the responsibility of each individual teacher to create environments where students can discuss, critically examine and develop a greater awareness of both one's own and the opponent's suffering. Teachers have to be secure and open in order to convey narratives of "the other" in a neutral and critical way. With the exception of Benjamin, I found a mutual insecurity among the teacher interviewees. One explanation deriving from this study has been demonstrated repeatedly throughout the last two chapters: the conflict is ongoing. The fear of losing cultural identity and the

assumption that recognition of "the other" implies destruction of one's existence color several of the focus group discussions.

The willingness to learn narratives of the adversary varies from individual to individual. Many Jewish students acknowledge the existence of various narratives, but objections for incorporating them in the subject of history are many. The ongoing character of the conflict demonstrates that identity; collective memory and narratives hold vital functions, as described in this chapter. Ethno-centric narratives are therefore taught in schools with no considerable attention paid to peace building, overcoming prejudices and politicized differences, in line with the second research question of this study. Investigating the third research question reveals that primary socialization is given higher significance than secondary socialization and education. Yet, education is still mentioned as crucial as schools reflect wider society and its transmitters are in some cases role models. Ethnocentric education reinforces distinct identities; as it is in schools students develop skills to see themselves as part of the wider community (UNESCO, 2011). Thus, whether education and its transmitters promote narrow or broad identity labels can be crucial for the students' abilities to partake and feel included in a wider society.

Chapter 7: Bringing it to a close

Historical narratives create and maintain coherence and are particularly important in conflict-ridden societies. Narratives are conveyed through the subject of history, which makes history a central aspect in the development of civic identities. Various studies have sought to identify questions of citizenship among Arabs and Jews living in Israel. A main purpose of this qualitative study is to extend research about the conflict by giving a voice to Jewish and Arab adolescents simultaneously and to challenge conceptions of identity as dichotomies. The study is located within a qualitative research paradigm and aims at understanding the world from the individual's point of view. Accordingly, the study is based on the subjective reality of 17 Jewish students, 19 Arab students, two Jewish and two Arab teachers. Investigating the role of history in the creation of civic identities may shed light on how education can be used to better challenge violence, negative stereotypes and mutual delegitimization. This was done through the following problem statement: To what extent are various narratives dealt with through education in Israel and how is history used as a tool in development of citizenship? A great extent of previous research is biased towards one side or another of the conflict. Hence, this study offers a more contextualized understanding of the conflict and necessary future research of the Jewish-Palestinian dispute.

Three major conclusions can be made from this study. The first conclusion is that citizenship among Arabs and Jews in Israel is a complex matter, which cannot be reduced to fixed labels or concepts. The findings reveal examples of a divided civic identity among Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews, maintained by both "sides". Whether being Jews or Arabs, the students eagerly challenge each other's opinions during the focus group discussions, which demonstrate the fruitfulness of the focus group research method. The second major conclusion emanating from this research is that the promotion of shared civic identities and critical history consciousness depend on each teacher's willingness to include various narratives and perspectives when teaching history. The respondents explain this as resulting from the persistent state of the conflict and thus the importance of creating and maintaining solidarity, shared beliefs, loyalty and unity. Finally, a great majority of the respondents allocate primary socialization as of higher significance than messages transmitted through history

education. Yet, education is still regarded crucial, as schools reflect wider society and its transmitters are in many cases role models. The three research questions that were developed in the attempt of investigating the problem statement will in this chapter be used as headings in order to clarify the three central conclusions emanating from this research.

7.1. How do Arab and Jewish students in Israel understand aspects of citizenship?

One attempt of this study is to challenge conceptions of identity as fixed dichotomies and demonstrate the complexity of identity among Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel. Judicial status, a sense of belonging, identity and ethnicity are all aspects of citizenship. Individuals differ in their way of negotiating civic identity and, therefore, by using various aspects of citizenship the complex subjective realities of Jews and Arabs in Israel are acknowledged. Through qualitative interviews a variety of discourses are revealed, supporting citizenship as a complex matter. Most Arab respondents, although not all, consider their Israeli citizenship merely as a judicial status (Osler & Starkey 2005), even if imagining a future scenario implying equality with the Jews. No matter how the Arab interviewees define identity and citizenship, they all agree on the feeling of being discriminated against. Accordingly, and in line with the findings of this study, the Arab interviewees do not feel belonging to the State of Israel and omit this aspect when negotiating identity. A great majority of the Jewish students additionally emphasize the importance of a feeling of belonging to the state, in line with Osler and Starkey's (2005) second dimension of citizenship. It is acknowledged by some Jewish respondents, however, that individuals may feel belonging towards more than one state and that identity includes both an aspect of self-ascription as well as acknowledgement by others, which leads to the third aspect of citizenship included in this study.

The respondents, with a few exceptions, equate Israelis with Jews and Palestinians with Arabs. These dichotomies disregard the complexity of identities among Jews and Arabs. The identity aspect of citizenship emphasizes the feeling of belonging and inclusion to an imagined community (Anderson, 2006). Groups or individuals in lack of attachment to a state are less likely to contribute to and partake in society. Accordingly, so too is the sense of citizenship (Osler & Starkey, 2005). Although varying from individual to individual, a majority of the Arab respondents report little

or no identification beyond their judicial Israeli identity. A great majority encompasses 'Arab', 'Muslim' and 'Palestinian' as jointly covering their identity the best. The multiple affiliations support the claim that identity does not necessarily have to be reduced to one single attachment (Maalouf, 1996). The findings of this study demonstrate that particular ways of identification have crucial functions, such as maintaining (constructed) differences and justifying acts and attitudes in times of dispute. Questions of Jewish identity are not introduced to the discussions, neither by Jews nor by Arabs interviewees. The lack of such discussions is a remarkable finding, as Jewish identity is as complex as any other identity. Ethnic differences in Israeli-Jewish society are immense, which can be explained by the endeavor for unity being more significant than ethnic or cultural differences among Jews. Maintenance of ethnicity and identification to specific groups is particularly important when groups are in a state of conflict with each other. By ascribing one's own group as distinct from another, adherence to a particular group is justified and ethnic boundaries maintained.

Smooha (1999) claims that 'Israelization' both in education and society at large contributes to decreasing adherences to a Palestinian narrative. The Arab participants of this particular research tipped the weight of their identity towards 'Palestinization'. Adherence to a Palestinian narrative is not to suggest that 'Israelization' does not take place. However, the findings of the qualitative interviews suggest that there is a divided civic identity among Israelis, which is maintained by Arabs and Jews alike. How the subject of history affects development of identity has been a major concern of this study. Before this will be elaborated further, it is necessary to present messages transmitted through history and the findings of the second research question.

7.2. What messages are transmitted through teaching the subject of history?

Defining a clear link between schooling, the subject of history and conflict is highly challenging and has not been an ambition of this study. Although civic identities are influenced by various factors, it is possible to scrutinize the importance of education and the subject of history as one of many influential factors. The findings of this study support the claim that education both can be part of the problem and part of the solution to disputes (Smith, 2010). Education is a means of socialization and knowledge, values and attitudes transmitted through schooling can have an influence on identity development.

Encompassing different perspectives when teaching history is not the case of the teacher participants of this study. The teachers, with one exception, are teaching history in accordance with their specific (selective and biased) narrative. The Arab history teacher Jabbar is, according to requirements from the Education Ministry, teaching mainly a Jewish narrative in classes. However, he uses additional time to teach about a Palestinian narrative and make sure to explain his students the difference between opinions presented in textbooks and his personal opinions. The Jewish history teacher Lilach teaches merely from a Jewish narrative, omitting and neglecting the existence of a Palestinian historical account. Similarly, English teacher Ziad's forceful remarks are clearly colored by a Palestinian account of history. Creating, maintaining and transmitting historical narratives are significant during conflicts as they promote group solidarity, loyalty, shared beliefs and unity (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Only one teacher, Jewish teacher Benjamin, is preoccupied with teaching history based on a two-narrative approach. Although inconsistent with the Israeli Education Ministry, Benjamin opposes the official narrative and is determined to continue exposing his students to different narratives. Thus, he makes a difference from the other teacher participants as he emphasizes critical thinking, contradicting views and the development of history consciousness based on independent opinions, even in times of conflict.

The findings of the research support the claim that teachers can be agents of change and agents of the national state, its ideology and preservation of the status quo. Based on the findings of this study it can be concluded that the development of a critical history consciousness and increased understandings of "the other" depend on each teachers' willingness to teach about the conflict in a relatively neutral manner. Teachers are required by the Israeli Education Ministry to promote Jewish narratives and values in their classes. I suggest that these requirements are obstacles to an environment open for contradicting views and critical thinking, as a two-narrative approach in the subject of history is not yet approved. Interpretations of the findings suggest that only students with teachers teaching beyond the requirements set by the Education Ministry are exposed to various narratives through history education.

7.3. To what extent do messages transmitted through history affect the development of civic identities?

The influence of messages transmitted through history is, as with questions of citizenship, colored by a diversity of discourses. Slightly unexpected, a great majority of the respondents, Jews and Arabs alike, assign history education as of secondary importance. Primary socialization is granted higher significance by the interviewees, however, education is considered influential such as through open-minded teachers. Findings from this study reveal the importance of education and messages transmitted through history in development of civic identities. This study reveals that the students who use the PRIME's history book accept the legitimacy of learning other narratives, which supports teacher Benjamin's claim that students are capable of learning history from various perspectives with help from teachers and adjusted learning conditions.

The degree of adherence to the various narratives differs from individual to individual. Varieties in affiliation support the assumption that realities of Arab and Jewish students in Israel are complex and that more contextualized writings about the Jewish-Palestinian conflict is needed. The un-readiness among the Jewish participants that do not use PRIME's dual history textbook can be explained with the important functions narratives possess in conflict, which has been demonstrated throughout this study. Both Jewish and Arab students use their respective narratives in legitimizing their own group, delegitimizing the adversary and highlighting the importance of ancestors and common heritage, which serve as justifications for entitlement to the land.

To what extent individuals get affected by secondary socialization varies, depending both on the individual, the teacher and the methods used when presenting new contents. Moreover, knowledge of "the other's" narrative is limited and introduced at a late stage of the socialization process. This research findings reveals that both students and teachers consider primary socialization as of greatest significance, implying that students at this stage are already socialized into a reality that represents their group's believes. In relation to the third research question I suggest, in line with teacher Benjamin, that messages transmitted through history is of minor influence in relation to questions of citizenship. Yet, schools reflect wider society and its transmitters are in many cases role models. Moreover, it is possible to change education towards more inclusive terms and prevent schooling from stimulating

conflict. In order for this to happen, however, alterations are required and challenges need to be overcome.

7.4. Challenges and possibilities

Challenging one's own historical account is a demanding task, as the interviewees of this study confirm. Learning history based on a two-narrative approach requires a paradigmatic shift (Bar-On & Salomon, 2006). Changes in the curriculum through projects such as PRIME's history book have to be supported and approved by the Israeli Education Ministry. A two-narrative historical approach requires changes in teacher colleges, willingness to confront one's own narrative and an acknowledgement that narratives of the adversary may represent valid accounts of history. It requires in-depth knowledge as well as discussions and problematization of one's own historical account. However, it has been demonstrated throughout this study that letting go of a deeply embedded collective memory and acknowledgement of other narratives are challenging tasks.

Why is knowledge about distinct narratives important? Historical knowledge based on several perspectives is a requirement for the development of critical and reflected students. Learning history based on several perspectives acknowledges the relation between majority and minority in Israeli society, similarities and differences between each group's narratives as well as losses and suffering on both sides as a result of the conflict. Additionally, it prepares students for the world waiting for them; a world colored by highly distinct opinions about the Jewish-Palestinian dispute. As Benjamin explains, even if introducing a two-narrative approach through history only affects a fraction of the students, teachers and educators do not have the right not to try in lack of better alternatives. Yet another important aspect is the students' own aspirations of how history should be taught, as they should be able to affect their own schooling. An overwhelming majority of the respondents consider it important to have knowledge of the historical account of the adversary in order for reconciliation to take place.

The teacher participants of this study, with the exception of Benjamin, cannot be entitled agents of change. They are rather preservative agents of the existing state of affair. Thus, it can be concluded that the Israeli schools in this study, Arab as well as Jewish, are agents of keeping citizenship as status quo, which is a divided civic identity between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs. The students learn predominantly in

harmony with their ethno-national group's historical account, which create different groups of future citizens (Smith, 2010). At the time this thesis was written, it is the responsibility of each individual teacher to create environments where students can discuss, challenge each other and develop a more critical history consciousness. Planning, financing, allocation of resources, policies and decision-making, provision of an inclusive curriculum and teacher education have to be a collective responsibility of teachers, educators, the Israeli Education Ministry and the students themselves. In that way diverse groups or individuals can contribute towards peace building and environments open for debate (Smith, 2010). This might ease the altering of beliefs and convictions, which is the most essential but also the most difficult requirement for change (UNESCO, 2011).

I suggest that the way history currently is taught promotes greater cultural gaps and conceptions of the conflict as of a zero-sum nature: the loss of one side is the victory of the other's (Kelman, 1999). Teaching based on ethno-national narratives reinforces distinct identities and prevents perceptions of cosmopolitan citizenship to develop; as it is in schools students foster skills to see themselves as part of the wider community (UNESCO, 2011). Introducing a two-narrative approach could possibly, although difficult to measure the outcomes, lift the role of schooling and secondary socialization to a higher level. Bar-On (2010) emphasizes that by learning history through distinct perspectives students do not only have to learn about "the other"; they additionally have to learn about themselves. Learning history based on multiple perspectives does not imply that students have to give up their own identity or diminish their own group's right to exist. Rather, "you have to create some new equilibrium in yourself, that means giving up certain aspects of what you build in your imagination about who you are as a people, and to give up certain aspects that delegitimize the other" (Bar-On, 2010). This is not to say that one cannot maintain identity, collective memory, narratives or the imagination of a shared community. It means rather that one has to focus on similarities and joint expectations for the future. Only after dialogue and increased understanding of the other can reconciliation take place.

The subject of history is a window of hope and peace, if used in a way that promotes conflict-resolution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed" (UNESCO, 2011, p. 14). Based on this

study's findings there is a need of more projects in line with PRIME's dual history project in order to challenge the current situation of Israeli education as an agent of the status quo. This study can be extended with more contextualized research, for instance by examining the role of civic education. Although citizenship education has been investigated in this study exclusively within the subject of history, this is not to suggest that citizenship education cannot take place through other subjects. In addition to encourage further research I also plead for a challenging of simplified terms, as a change in rhetoric may move the field forwards through alterations of how students negotiate identity. This may ultimately fill the gaps in much of the current literature about this topic. Education has a unique opportunity to affect people's mind and behavior. Education is, however, not a universal remedy that can solve the current dispute, and is interlinked with the broader society. Conflict-resolution depends additionally on educational and other societal measures taken in Gaza, the West Bank and other neighboring Arab countries. Finally, reconciliation requires changes in Hassidic state-religious Israeli schools towards more inclusive and open terms, which is yet another interesting site for further research. Education and peace projects through history can promote attitudes of shared respect, open-mindedness and challenge citizenship inequalities based on divisions in religion, ethnicity or language. Only then can distinct narratives become part of students' history consciousness and the divided civic identity between Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews be challenged.

Fred السلام **Peace** **שלום**

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During the Six Day War, the area was divided into three separate political entities: Gaza, the West Bank and the State of Israel (Altinok, 2010).

Source: CIA (2011). Middle East, Israel. Retrieved March 23, 2011 from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/maps/maptemplate_is.html □

Appendix 2: Contextualization of schools and participants

40 interviewees participated in this study. The following table shows the numbers of participants, distributed on gender and in total:

	STUDENTS			TEACHERS		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
School A	1	8	9	1		1
School B	6	3	9	1		1
School C	2	6	8		1	1
School D	4	6	10	1		1
Total			**36**			**4**

School A, Southern District[50]

School A is a Jewish private high school located in the center of the Negev desert in a small kibbutz. The school is acknowledged as a top-quality high school. The students live at the school and develop close relations with fellow students, teachers and the community in general. Former students of this school explain how the community is like a desert bubble far from malevolence, war and conflict. Out of the four schools I visited, this is the only school that used the textbook "Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative: Palestinians and Israelis" developed by Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME).

Focus group 1: Leah, Serah, Hila and Daniel (10th grade).

Focus group 2: Rachel, Esther, Naomi, Tamar and Ronit (11th grade).

Teacher interview 1: Benjamin, early-40's, Jewish history teacher. Particularly preoccupied with teaching history based on a two-narrative approach, although in opposition with the requirements from the Israeli Education Ministry.

School B, Jerusalem District

School B is an Arab Muslim high school situated in a village between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The village is known for its far better relations and interaction with Jewish communities than many other Arab villages in Israel. This is revealed during the focus group, as the students are preoccupied with issues and challenges of coexistence and communication with Jews. Both the village in general and the school area is of relatively high standard.

Focus group 3: Hassan, Issam, Zahraa, Jawad, Masrur, Zaid, Hanin, Noor and Bushra (11th grade) and English teacher Ziad, late 50s, a Palestinian who recently received his Israeli ID-card.

[50] Israel is divided into six districts: Southern District, Central District, Northern District, Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (CityPopulation, 2010).

School C, city in the Tel Aviv district

The third school is the largest school in this study, located east of Tel Aviv city. Acceptance to the school requires application and high school fees. The teachers explicitly told me that the students chosen for the focus groups are the best out of several thousand students. One student is part of Seeds of Peace, which aims to "help young people from regions of conflict develop the leadership skills necessary to advance reconciliation and coexistence" (Seeds of Peace, 2011). Other students are members of National Model United Nations (NMUN), who aims at preparing their members to be better global citizens by emphasizing collaboration and resolution of conflicts (National Model United Nations, 2011).

Focus group 4: Avital, Maayan, Michael and Shira (12th grade).

Focus group 5: Yarden, Yafit, Ruth and Ayelet (11th grade).

Teacher interview 2: Lilach, early 50s, Jewish history teacher.

School D, town in Central District.

School D is situated in an Arab village close to the West Bank. The village is of low socio-economic rank, which is visible through inadequate infrastructure, low numbers of graduates and low wages.

Focus group 6: Aminah, Jawa, Asad and Rashad (12th grade).

Focus group 7: Saalima, Tayyibah, Malik, Hamid, Lateefah and Nawar (11th grade).

Teacher interview 3: Jabbar, mid 50s. Arab history teacher.

Appendix 3: Interview guide – focus groups with students

School:	Date:	Number of respondents:
Sex:	Age/Grade:	

History

- Could you describe in detail what you learn in the subject of history?
  - Different perspectives?
  - How is history important to you?
  - How is awareness of history connected to identity?
- Explain with own words what happened in 1948?
- What do Arab and Jewish student learn in history?
- What is taught in history about "the other's" history?

Identity

- Describe your identity!

Citizenship:

- What does it mean to be an Israeli citizen? Who is an Israeli?
- How do you define Israel?
- In which way do you feel belonging to the State of Israel?
- What is equality?
- If there will be a two-state solution, where would you/ where do you think most Arabs living in Israel would prefer to reside?
- If there would be equality, would you then manage to feel connected to the state of Israel? Why/ why not?
- How do neighboring Arab states' opinions on Arabs living in Israel affect identity?

Representations of "the other":

- Stereotypes – dealt with through history? In which way?
- Where do they come from? (Parents, home, school?)
- Explain what you think about mixed schools.
- Are you satisfied with your history books? Why/ why not?

Appendix 4: Interview guide – individual teacher interview

- Could you describe in detail what you teach in the subject of history?
  - Aims of the history subject?
  - Which perspectives?
  - What is taught in history about "the other's" history?
  - Are you satisfied with your current history book?
  - How is history important to the students?
  - How is awareness of history connected to identity?
- Do you learn about different narratives at teacher training colleges?
- The Israeli Education Ministry currently bans history books such as PRIME's "Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative". What do you think about such books?
- Why do you think the Education Ministry is banning them?
- To what extent do you think students' opinions are influenced by what they learn in class?
- What does it mean to be an Israeli citizen?
- How are issues of citizenship dealt with in history classes?
- During previous interviews, I got the impression that there is a lot of fear (particularly among Jewish students) from "the other". Where do you think this comes from?
- Are such matters dealt with in class?

Appendix 5: Consent form

I am a student at Oslo University College in Norway at Master Programme in Multicultural and International Education. In the end of the two-year program I need to deliver an about 100-120 page master thesis. Currently I am in Israel to do field work and gather data for my thesis. My master thesis working title is "Israeli schools as agents of citizenship: The role of history in creating civic identities". In relation to this I want to do interviews with students and teacher at high schools in Israel. I will investigate how education is used as a tool in order to create a feeling of identity and citizenship in Israel, and how diversity is dealt with in the educational system, more specific on the history subject.

I would like to conduct interviews with students and history teachers at two Israeli Arab schools and two Israeli Jewish high schools. In order to get an understanding of the role of history in Israeli high schools I wish to interview students and their teachers. I have prepared topics to be covered before the interviews. The topics include personal experiences on the subject of history, reflections on different narratives, as well as questions about national identity and citizenship. The same interview guides will be used when interviewing Jewish and Arab students and history teachers.

I wish to do focus group interviews with students, with approximately four or five students on each group. If possible I wish to have two different focus groups at each school. With the focus group I hope to get access to a wide variety of opinions on the topics of my study. The interviews will hopefully be conducted during the school day and will last approximately one hour. Interviews with history teachers will last approximately 45 minutes – one hour, and may be done outside school time if preferable.

A tape recorder will be used if approved by all participants All the information from the respondents will be confidential and will not be accessible to other than my supervisor Research fellow Heidi Biseth at Oslo University College and me. All measures will be taken to prevent that information given from the students can be traced back to the school or the particular respondent. The recorded information will be deleted at the end of the project (May 2011 or no later than December 2011).

It is voluntary to participate in the project and the participants can at any time withdraw from the interviews without presenting any reason. Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD) has approved the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further questions.

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✂----------

I have read the information above and want to participate in the inquiry

_____ _____

Place, Date Signature

Appendix 6: Interview extract

The following is an extract from a discussion between the students of focus group two. The interviewees are all students of teacher Benjamin and use the history book "Learning Each Other's Narrative: Israelis and Palestinian". Nevertheless, a variety of views exist regarding citizenship, which the following extract demonstrates:

Tamar: They don't want to be Israeli, but they want to live here!

Esther: They don't have to be here, but they can if they want. It is their choice!

Tamar: Almost all the Arabs that live in Israel do not believe in this country, they don't want us here! All the Jews go to the army when we finish high school, because we need to!

Esther: All the *Israelis*, not only Jewish!

Tamar: All the Israelis have to do army or community service. We say we will go to the army, but they say no, they go to study instead! Like, they live here, they have all the benefits, we are the same age and I need to do things for the country and they do not! And they are still here!

Naomi: I feel like they always just want and want and want more benefits, and they don't really give anything for Israel.

Esther: But how can people fight for Israel when they are Arabs, fighting against their brothers?

Tamar: We don't want them to go to the army; we want them to do something for this country! If they want to be here, together, we need to do things together! They can't just take and not give. They want to be like everybody, but they don't give from themselves.

Interviewer: What does it mean to be an Israeli citizen, who is an Israeli?

Tamar: You have to love the country, to be born here.

Interviewer: So what about Arab citizens of Israel?

Ronit: They lived here before we came.

Tamar: I don't agree! This is our country. In the book that everybody believes in, the Bible, it is written that we were here! This is in the history! 2000 years we waited, all the prayers, we just wanted to come to Jerusalem. We never forgot our country!

Rachel: An Israeli citizen is someone who *feel connected* to the country or the land. Some would say that you are Israeli because you live on the land of Israel, and others would say that they are Israeli because they have an Israeli ID. I think both of them are right reasons to be Israeli.

Naomi: But you need to contribute to the country. If you don't do it, how can you call yourself an Israeli?

Interviewer: What about an Arab or Palestinian *with* the Israeli ID card, who does not go to the army or do community service? Is he still a citizen to you?

[Hesitations]

Tamar: They do not do things for this country. They don't even want us here, so how can they be Israelis? They don't want Israel as a country! They don't want it!

Rachel: It *is* a problematic thing to be Israeli if you don't want Israel to exist…

Esther: But it is not all the Arabs… I think Israel is my home, but I still think that it should be a place for Arabs too. I think we should find a balance to be here together…