Bridging Divides in Israel and Palestine through Fair Trade?

A case study on local peacebuilding and fair trade initiatives in Israel and the West Bank

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Cover photo: *Street art that is showing a dove of peace with a branch of olives in the mouth, wearing a bulletproof vest, and held at a gunpoint.*

The Photograph is taken by the author in Bethlehem, the West Bank in 2017.

Abstract

This research explores the potential of fair trade in local peacebuilding. It argues that from a theoretical point of view, fair trade can incorporate the positive mechanisms of economic peacebuilding, while addressing critiques resulting from its ethical philosophy and characteristics. Due to the focus of fair trade on 'the local', even though connected in a global network, it is argued that it might contribute to local peacebuilding. These theoretical findings are researched in the context of a local conflict taking place in the olive tree branch in Israel and Palestine by looking into Sindyanna of Galilee, a fair trade organization working in the olive tree branch. Fair trade adds a social aspect to 'just' trade which helps in bridging divides and at the same time invests in social and economic development. For more than 25 years, the 'fair' atmosphere in Sindyanna proves to facilitate positively changed mentalities regarding 'the enemy', and facilitates social and economic empowerment in the Arab society on a local level. The main conclusion drawn from this case study is that fair trade can contribute to local peacebuilding dynamics, and at the same time contribute to conflict transformation in the bigger conflict taking place in Israel and Palestine.

Key words: Israel, West Bank, local peacebuilding, fair trade

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Table of contents

Overview of tables

Overview of figures

List of abbreviations

FINE   = acronym of the names of the organizations FLO, IFAT, NEWS, EFTA

FLO   = Fairtrade International, Fairtrade Labelling Organizations

IFAT   = International Federation for Alternative Trade

NEWS = Network of European World Shops

EFTA = European Fair Trade Association

WFTO = World Fair Trade Organization

OECD = Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

1. Introduction

May 15th 2018 – *"At least 55 Palestinians were killed and more than 2000 wounded during clashes at the Gaza - Israel border during protests against the opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem. Palestinians are also marking the Nakba, or the day of the disaster, when Palestinians were forcefully expelled from their villages during the war that led to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948."*
(Hecimovic, 2018).

After 70 years of protracted conflict, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has reached another catastrophic period of violence. As the above quote illustrates, the 70th birthday of the Israeli state combined with the opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem has led to many Palestinian casualties and wounded. These events are highlighting, once again, the difficulty, yet importance, of finding a peaceful solution in Israel and Palestine.

Whereas the conflict between Israel and Palestine could be considered common knowledge for most people, casualties on local levels remain relatively unseen (J. Hughes, 2008). One of these local level conflicts is that of the 'lands of the olive tree', which will be used as a basis for the perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict taken in this research. The lands of the olive tree have become a local warscape after the second Intifada, and the buildup of the separation wall. This largely resulted from the fact that of olive tree lands were uprooted for the wall to be built, and that many Palestinians were separated from their olive tree land due to the wall, which prevented them from utilizing this land (J. Hughes, 2008). The revenues of olive trees historically account for a large part of Palestine's GDP, and declined when the wall was built, which has been posing tremendous problems for the Palestinians (Braverman, 2009).

The confiscation of lands, demolishment- and uprooting of olive trees have not been happening without a struggle (Braverman, 2009). Besides its economic value, the olive tree has become part of the identity and culture of Palestinians due to its holiness and historical value. Due to the characteristics of the olive tree, it has become a symbol for Palestinian nationhood and resistance against the occupation by Israel (Braverman, 2009). For the importance of the olive tree and what it symbolizes, farmers are trying to adapt, and are attempting to counter the circumstances that hinder olive production by engaging in fair trade. Palestinian farmers are using fair trade to revitalize foreign export and at the same time advocating the struggle of the Israeli occupation by selling olive oil with a 'taste of solidarity' (Meneley, 2014, 2016).

Several academics have researched how fair trade is used as a means of resistance in the West Bank (e.g. Braverman, 2009; Hughes, 2008; Meneley, 2014). However, to my knowledge, the link between fair trade and (local) peacebuilding has not been made in academic studies. I am interested to find answers to questions such as: 'could fair trade create a setting for positive experiences among people that are (formally) on the opposite sides in a conflict?' And, 'might fair trade contribute to tackling root causes of conflicts such as poverty, inequality and extortion?'

Over the years, the role of trade in building peace and reducing the likeliness of war has elaborately been researched and debated by academics (e.g. Doyle, 2005; Rohner, Thoenig, & Zilibotti, 2013). On the one hand, scholars argue that trade characteristics such as economic interdependency, economic empowerment, and regular exchange of contact and information, could facilitate peaceful relations (Dorussen & Ward, 2010; Peace, Lupu, & Traag, 2013). On the other hand, scholars debate that trade can have negative implications for peace due to its competitive, and sometimes even exploitative character (e.g. Paris, 2016; Selby, 2016). This study will contribute to existing peacebuilding theory by exploring whether fair trade, rather than 'just' trade, can be utilized as a means of peacebuilding.

Due to the raison d'etre of fair trade and its ethical foundations, the author believes it could have potential in peacebuilding. Although scholars have raised valid critiques against the idea that trade contributes to peace (e.g. Rohner et al., 2013), other academics state it could be promising when it is supported by effective and efficient institutions that are supporting sustainable development (Feldman, 2009). Fair trade is trying to incorporate such fruitful conditions for trade, for instance by paying 'fair' prices, making long-term commitments and securing the rights of workers and producers (Stenzel, 2012).

The protractedness of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the deteriorating current situation can contribute to feelings of hopelessness. On a state level, it seems to be impossible to find solutions in the conflict, but on a local level, there might be space for peaceful solutions and peacebuilding. This research will explore whether such space can be found locally, in the fair trade olive tree branch in Israel and the West Bank.

1.2. Research objectives

This research foremost aims to contribute to the search for sustainable peacebuilding. It will do so by exploring *whether* fair trade can contribute to, or function as, a 'peacebuilding island' on a local level. In addition, it aims to explore *how* local peacebuilding processes are facilitated. Moreover, it attempts to provide insight in the motivations and processes that are driving people to partake in fair trade local peacebuilding initiatives in times of protracted conflict on a macro-scale. Finally, this research aims to research if and how such fair trade 'peacebuilding islands' could influence conflict dynamics on a macro-scale.

1.3. Towards research questions

In order to explore if, and how fair trade can have potential in local peacebuilding, a case study will be performed in a fair trade organization working in the olive tree branch: Sindyanna of Galilee. The following research question will be leading in this research:

"How can fair trade in the olive tree branch shape the divide between Arabs and Jews on a local level and what does this mean for local peacebuilding?"

The researcher will answer this question by looking into the following sub questions:

1) *How are divides between Arabs and Jews perceived locally in and around the olive tree branch?*

2) *Why and how do Sindyanna, and its stakeholders aim to shape the divide through their work in the fair trade olive tree branch?*

3) *How does the work of Sindyanna shape the divide between Arabs and Jews and what can we learn about how this contributes to local level peacebuilding?*

1.4. Overview of Chapters

The outline of this thesis is as follows:

- Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides an introduction into liberal peacebuilding theory by explaining the core idea of liberal peacebuilding and highlighting important critiques. This debate serves as a point of departure in this thesis. Critical issues will be touched upon by looking into the potential of fair trade in local peacebuilding from an academic point of view. To understand the dynamics of local peacebuilding and fair trade in practice, theory regarding 'countering cynical reason' and 'war as a social process'

will be provided. Finally, contact theory will be used in order to explain how peace processes can occur.

- Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter explains the methods that are used in this research. It touches upon the scope of this research and the research design. Furthermore, ethnographic research gives a great role to the researcher which is why this chapter will discuss personal reflexivity of the researcher and dilemmas faced during the research.

- Chapter 4: Background

In this chapter, a short recap of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict will be provided. Key developments and events in the conflict, such as Zionism, Israeli Independence and the First and Second Intifada will be sketched to provide the broader context in which Sindyanna of Galilee is operating.

- Chapter 5: Narratives: how are divides experienced?

This chapter unravels the divides that are generally experienced in Israel and the West Bank. It also shows the context in which interviewees are living, and at the same time want to shape by engaging in fair trade, local peacebuilding initiatives such as Sindyanna.

- Chapter 6: Shaping divides?

This chapter explains how Sindyanna of Galilee aims to shape the divide between Arabs and Jews. It elaborates on the mission and vision of Sindyanna and explains how fair trade and their program aims to contribute to (local) peacebuilding.

- Chapter 7: Local peacebuilding: effects in practice

This chapter explores how the work of Sindyanna contributes in local peacebuilding. The first section builds on chapter 5 by discussing whether Sindyanna contributes to bridging divides and how relationships between 'the two sides' occur and evolve. The second section builds on chapter 6 by exploring if, and how the strategy of Sindyanna comes about in practice. The final section puts the results into perspective by diving into the scope of the work of Sindyanna.

- Chapter 8: Conclusion

The last chapter will provide an answer to the main research question. It will do so by going into final considerations about the research data and the theoretical framework. Thereafter, limitations of the research will be touched upon, after which the chapter will conclude with recommendations for future research.

2. Theoretical framework

The following chapter provides theoretical debates and strands that explain the line of thinking in this research and at the same time lays the foundation for the research. In order to explore the potential of fair trade as a local peacebuilding initiative, some questions need to be answered. First of all, why would fair trade have the potential of building bridges between conflicting parties from a theoretical point of view? Besides this - assuming there are theoretical reasons to believe that fair trade has potential in local peacebuilding- in the case of a long-lasting conflict like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, how can the occurrence of local fair-trade initiatives aiming for peace be explained? And how do people navigate and partake in such local peacebuilding initiatives while at a macro-level the conflict seems politically stuck? Once having answered these questions, a final question is, what kind of processes take place in fair trade settings that can explain the bridging of gaps between Israelis and Palestinians? This theoretical framework serves to answer these questions.

The first part of this theoretical framework illustrates why fair trade is researched as an alternative or contribution to other peace building approaches (section 2.1 and 2.2). By entering the debate on economic peacebuilding theories, and local peacebuilding theory, it will be argued that fair trade might have potential in local peacebuilding.

Thereafter, due to the focus on the local level in this research, theoretical explanations will be provided to explain why people join small scale peace initiatives such as Sindyanna, linked to sub-question 2 (section 2.3). The conflict between Israel and Palestine has been going on for so many years that it might be perceived as a protracted conflict (Plonski, 2017). The 'land of the olives' has specifically been a warscape for decades, so why start a fair trade initiative particularly in such a field (Meneley, 2016)? A brief overview on theories regarding 'countering cynical reason' and 'finding room for maneuver´ will provide understanding in the behavior of people to partake in small-scale peacebuilding initiatives such as Sindyanna. Another theoretical explanation is provided by Richards (2005) who writes about 'war as a social project´. This theory can explain the coexistence of mobilization of people in grassroots and local peacebuilding movements on the one hand, and governments and other actors engaging in conflicting activities on the other hand (section 2.4).

The final part of this chapter delves into the underlying processes inside peace initiatives from the perspective of the contact theory, linked to sub-question 3 (section 2.5). Intergroup contact theory will explain how contact and exchange of information can build bridges between 'in- and outgroups', or conflicting groups. This theory serves to understand local peace dynamics taking place in a fair trade organization such as Sindyanna of Galilee.

2.1. Introducing peacebuilding theories

In order to research whether fair trade might have potential for local peacebuilding, the following section takes a first step by diving into the economic peacebuilding debate. First, the mechanisms that explain a positive link between trade and peacebuilding will be touched upon. Thereafter, critiques raised against economic peacebuilding will be discussed. Finally, this section will elaborate on local peacebuilding theory and explain how it is used in this research.

2.1.1. The nexus between trade and peacebuilding

Theories about the positive relationship between trade and peace can be traced back to classical liberal thinking. To illustrate, in 1748 Montesquieu argued that peace is a natural effect of trade due to mutual interdependency, and in 1835 Cobden famously quoted: 'commerce is 'the great panacea' (cited in (Dorussen & Ward, 2010, p. 30). Centuries later, Rosecrance (1986) and Angell (in Gartzke, 2007)

stated that, (especially) since modernity, it has become even more beneficial for states to have trade rather than plunder and conquest each other. They argue that modern times have resulted in technological innovations, globalization and international trade. These developments have opened up new economic opportunities which can be more beneficial than the resources of land. Therefore, the chance of going to war in order to gain land has become smaller.

Over the years, scholars have continued to theorize about the link between trade and peace. For instance, the theory regarding the 'commercial peace' refers to the idea that *"economic cooperation between two states increases their absolute economic welfare and therefore raises the alternative costs involved in political confrontation or war"* (Feldman, 2009; Mcdonald et al., 2007, p20). Similarly, the 'capitalist peace' states that *"economic development, free markets and similar interstate interest all anticipate a lessening of militarized disputes or wars"* (Gartzke, 2007, p.166). More recent literature of Chatagnier and Castelli (2016) on the 'modern peace' builds on the ideas of Rosecrance and Angell, and complements by discussing the important role of investment and innovation needed for economic growth and prosperity for a country. According to Chatagnier and Castelli, all money spent on war, can't be spent on innovation and investments, thus reducing the incentive to engage in war practices.

Although theory on peace and trade has evolved over time, and differ in their approaches, one can identify certain common mechanisms that underlie the logic of a positive effect of trade on peace, namely 1) economic interdependency, 2) economic development and 3) regular interactions and social ties (Lupu & Traag, 2012), which will be further discussed next.

Liberal scholars identified economic interdependency as a key mechanism explaining the positive potential of trade in peacebuilding (Dorussen & Ward, 2010; Maoz, 2009). As briefly explained above, the logic behind this is that economic relations, and particularly trade, are an incentive to avoid going to war with trading partners (Peace et al., 2013). When being interdependent, maintaining peace is more beneficial than going to war, because the costs of war would be too high. To illustrate, going to war with another state would jeopardize the import and export of a state which could endanger economic stability (Maoz, 2009).

In line with this, liberal scholars have highlighted economic development and economic growth as a characteristic of trade that can contribute to peace (e.g. Gartzke, 2007; Doyle, 2005; Fridell, 2006)). Researchers in the body of literature on international relations and conflict, have been in an ongoing search for the identification of root causes for conflict. In order for a peace to be 'positive' and sustainable, Galtung (Gawerc, 2006) argues that root causes of conflict need to be tackled. Root causes that have been discussed broadly, and can be linked to trade, are for example economic underdevelopment and poverty (Guru in Agbiboa, 2013). Assuming that trade can indeed bring economic growth and prosperity, as some scholars argue (e.g. Fridell, 2009; Doyle, 2005), it might prevent war and contribute to peacebuilding.

Besides the financial aspect of trade, the social aspect is important in order to understand the link between trade and peace. Rohner, et al (2013) argue that trust, or the lack of trust, is an important determinant in the occurrence of civil wars. Therefore, Rohner et al (2013) state that inter-ethnic trade is a key channel in facilitating trust and thus contributing to peace. This resonates with the view of Dorussen and Ward (2010) and McDonald (2004), who argue that the likeliness of conflict is reduced by trade because trade comes with regular interaction, exchange of information and exchange of culture. It is argued that commerce can help creating a common identity between trading partners, that goes beyond national identities and competitive relations between governments (McDonald, 2004).

Interpersonal and intergroup contact, coming along with trade, can enhance peaceful relationships and mutual understanding (Whitley & Kite, 2010), as will be more elaborately explained in section 2.5.

2.1.2. Debating the positive effects of trade on peace

The above explained how trade can enhance peace, however the relationship between trade and peace is more complex (Rohner et al., 2013). In fact, two of the three mechanisms explained above have been under debate, critics have argued that economic interdependency and economic development are not necessarily a recipe for peace.

According to Doyle (2005) economic interdependency does not simply refer to peace resulting from a liberal market in which goods or services can be exchanged. In fact, he states that commercial trade alone is not likely to suffice as a means for harmonious cooperation between people. In order to reach a relationship that goes beyond merely being a financial transaction, a relationship should be based on trust and respect. Only then, characteristics of trade, such as economic interdependency, economic development and regular interaction, can contribute to peacebuilding (Lupu & Traag, 2012). When relationships are beneficial in terms of economic means ánd personal gains, they could reinforce each other and contribute to peace.

Critics state that in practice, economic peacebuilding practices are typically accompanied with capitalism, liberalization and *free* trade (Gartzke et al., 2007), and argue that this does not necessarily contribute to economic development. According to Pugh (2011), implementing peace measures based on this liberal economic philosophy, founded in capitalism, liberalization and *free* trade, can have counterproductive effects. Although many liberal thinkers argue that it will create a stable economy in conflicted areas, others have heavily debated this (Gartzke et al., 2007; Pugh, 2011). Firstly, because capitalism and (free) trade are inherent to competition. As Paris (2016) states, instead of being a vehicle for peace, creating a market economy can result in problematic situations due to its competitive character. Secondly, recipients of these economic peacebuilding attempts are often not the ones that benefit. One can imagine that people living in a war-shattered society do not have a good position in the global trading system compared to wealthy and experienced investors across the globe, therefore the people in a war-shattered economy are disadvantaged in a market economy (Pugh, 2011). In fact, implementing liberal practices has shown that it can lead to aggravated poverty, growth of (horizontal) inequality, and criminalization (Pugh in Selby, 2013; Cramer, 2003) which in turn can become new breeding grounds for conflict (Džuverović, 2016).

2.1.3. Explaining the local in peacebuilding

In this thesis, it will be explored if and how fair trade can have potential in local peacebuilding. Since a local perspective is taken on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the olive tree branch warscape, the body of literature on local peacebuilding can provide a solid theoretical foundation for this research. This section will elaborate on the increase of attention for the local perspective on peacebuilding, shed more light on what local peacebuilding entails, and identify key success factors for peacebuilding on a local level for the case at hand.

The emergence of the local turn

Over the years, the liberal peace philosophy has been used as input to implement liberal interventions in conflict areas all over the world (C. Hughes, Öjendal, & Schierenbeck, 2016). Briefly explained, liberal peace refers to the idea that a market-oriented economy, combined with democratic and liberal politics, enhances peace (Selby, 2013; Paris, 1997). In reaction to liberal peacebuilding practices, and especially its problematic results in different regions in the world - ranging from Cambodia, to Afghanistan and Bosnia, the 'local turn' was triggered in the mid-2000s (Randazzo, 2016). The local

turn thus refers to the point in time where concerns were raised against liberal peacebuilding practices, and attention was given to include a local perspective in peacebuilding. To further explain the emergence of the local turn, it is important to first understand the major critiques of liberal peacebuilding, which the 'local turn' claims to have overcome.

One of the major critiques raised against liberal peacebuilding is similar to those raised against economic peacebuilding, as discussed above. It is argued that liberal peacebuilding interventions do not create a sustainable peace, because liberal interventions do not necessarily apply to non-western settings and might in fact aggravate a conflict due to increased inequality or economic instability. Some even say that liberal peacebuilding is in fact mostly serving the West instead of recipient countries and call it a 'vanguard of Western bio politics' (Selby, 2013; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke & Roberts, 2013). Such critiques highlight the lack of ethics in liberal peacebuilding and show that peacebuilding interventions cannot be justified when its primary goal is not to serve the recipients.

In line with this, the question that has been raised by scholars that the 'local' is missing in liberal peacebuilding (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). Or as Pugh (2011) puts it, '*whose* peace' is being built? Where is the voice of recipients in the peacebuilding process? As was just mentioned, liberal peacebuilding interventions are argued by various scholars to be serving the West. Although the truth of this can be debated, Randazzo (2016) show that peace interventions are being developed in Western bubbles and from top-down. As Ojendal and Ou (2015) state, '*universal values are used to remedy local problems*'. According to Richmond and Mac Ginty (2013), interventions are in line with a western rationale that has evolved through their experiences in history. However, they argue that the world is not a blank slate, nor is it homogeneous, which makes 'a peace from Ikea' that is constructed in the West unsuitable. As a consequence, peace is not likely to be sustainable because it doesn't find legitimacy 'on the ground' (Ojendal & Ou, 2015). In line with this, Dzuverovic (2016) and Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) argue that for a conflict to be transformed, antagonists need to be brought together and relationships need to be built on an individual and community level. Moreover, it is stated that by including local actors, one can make use of the capabilities, experiences and strengths of people on the ground (O. Richmond, 2006).

These critiques on liberal peacebuilding have one overarching theme: peacebuilding should be for, and (at least partly) facilitated or shaped by 'the local'. Whereas the core conception about including 'the local' has been widely supported, the precise meaning that is given to 'the local' is still contested. In this regard, Leonardsson and Rudd (C. Hughes et al., 2016, p. 822), provide a useful contribution by explaining the local turn from two perspectives which they refer to as 'efficiency oriented' and 'emancipatory oriented'. The first is identified as a (neo) liberal strategy in which the local is included in order for peacebuilding attempts to be more efficient. While the second is identified as a perspective that counters the (neo) liberal philosophy, and argues for local agency and space given to people on the ground. The second approach will be used in this research, and has been subject in a vast array of literature, ranging from the role of citizens, local initiatives, bottom-up movements, grassroots activities and people-to-people projects in peacebuilding (Gawerc, 2006).

One question however still remains, what is peacebuilding? Although many scholars use the term, few seem to clearly define what it means. To make a first step in clarifying the concept, a typology of Galting (in Gawerc, 2006) will be used, which distinguishes peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Peacemaking refers to '*a negotiation process that takes place between decision makers directed towards reaching an official settlement or resolution*', peacekeeping refers to '*third-party intervention to keep apart warring groups and maintain absence of direct violence*' and peacebuilding, the approach used in this research, is described by Gawerc as follows: '*the intention of peacebuilding is to create a structure of peace that is based on justice, equity and cooperation (i.e., positive peace)*

thereby addressing the underlying causes of violent conflict so that they become less likely in the future' (p.439).

Despite the definition just provided, the exact meaning of local peacebuilding is still broad and leaves room for interpretation. Due to the broad and complex variety of activities and actors in local peacebuilding, it is also challenging to operationalize. In order to provide some clarity in local peacebuilding and to build a more concrete framework that is suitable for this study, I will apply the work of Maoz (2004). Below, I will dive into this by discussing 'successful' local peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian context.

Local and grassroots people-to-people activities in Israel and Palestine

As argued in the introduction chapter, the Israeli -Palestinian conflict seems to have arrived at a deadlock. But even though it seems impossible to find solutions to the conflict on a state level, on a local level one might find space for peace. As Mac Ginty (2014, p. 551) argues, 'a conflict is rarely total: many societies, even in ostensibly 'war-torn' contexts, have zones of collaboration and negotiation'. A village called Neve Shalom (in Hebrew), or Wahat-al-Salam (in Arabic) - referring to 'Oasis of Peace' - proves that within the Israeli -Palestinian war, peace can indeed be found on the local level (Andrews, 2003). This village is located between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and has been at peace for over 30 years despite the 'bigger' conflict in which they are living. Neve Shalom is not the only peaceful island in the Israeli -Palestinian conflict. In fact, numerous local peacebuilding activities have been initiated over the course of the years of this long-lasting conflict in many places (Maoz, 2004).

Success factor in local peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

According to Adwan & Bar-On (2000), numerous local peacebuilding initiatives were undertaken in the post-Oslo agreement era, some with great success. Evaluation of such programs has shown that peacebuilding activities were effective in terms of creating dialogue and mutual understanding on a people-to-people or micro-level. To determine the success of such local peacebuilding initiatives, it was researched what characterized the programs who 'survived' the second Intifada (Maoz, 2004). A key determinant turned out to be symmetry and equality, which is identified in several forms mentioned below:

1) There is an equal representation of Israelis and Palestinians in the hierarchy of the organization
2) Initiatives are either located in both the West Bank and Israel, or only in the West Bank
3) The language spoken in these initiatives is either English, or both Hebrew and Arabic

Moreover, the aims of successful initiatives involve the following aspects:

1) "These activities maintain an infrastructure of constructive relationships between the sides, not letting the ties between sides be completely broken but keeping what can be preserved.

2) These activities provide a support system for those of both sides that still believe in peace, creating a safe place where these people—who are often marginalized and feel isolated in their own societies—can meet, share ideas, and support each other in their quest for peace.

3) These activities do not let the extremists win, but still do things for peace despite the general atmosphere of violence.

4) These activities prevent further escalation of violence, mutual dehumanization, and delegitimization" (Maoz, 2004)

Since this research aims to research whether, and how fair trade can contribute to local peacebuilding in the local warscape of the olive tree branch, these characteristics, researched in the specific context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, will be used to analyze the effects of the case study on local peacebuilding in later chapters.

2.2. Building a 'positive peace' through fair trade?

2.2.1. Fair trade

Due to the raison d'etre of fair trade and its ethical foundations, the author argues that it could have potential in contributing to the practice of local peacebuilding. Fair trade started as a movement of activists opposing conventional trade by building an alternative type of trade that aimed to empower marginalized producers and reduce poverty (Valiente- Riedl, 2016). Fair trade came into existence as a way to counter exploitation and build a more 'fair' world in which the rich are not the only ones benefitting. Although it is a global movement and fair trade is an international label, it aims to bring prosperity on local scale and make a change for poor individuals in the global South (Fridell, 2006). Fair trade labels often work together with people rather than implementing businesses and often supports existing organizations which are already locally embedded.

Fair trade does not have a universally acknowledged definition but the principles and practices it promotes are offering good guidelines and insights to understand the concept. A major player in the fair trade field today, is FINE, which embodies a cooperation and representation of the four biggest fair trade organizations, namely FLO, WFTO, EFTA and the network of World Shops (Stenzel, 2012). The definition proposed by FINE will therefore serve as a point of departure in discussing fair trade throughout this research. FINE states that: 'fair trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade'. Besides this, FINE uses five guidelines to describe fair trade:

1. ""Fair Trade organizations: Fair Trade organizations are committed to Fair Trade as their core mission. This includes providing financial and technical support to producers and campaigning for changes in conventional international trade"
2. Trading partnership: Fair Trade is based on the premise that trade is a partnership based on "dialogue, transparency and respect."
3. Fair Trade's better trading conditions: Fair Trade means paying a fair price, helping with pre-harvest and pre-production financing, and making long-term commitments.
4. Securing producers' and workers' rights.
5. Process of sustainable development: Fair Trade organizations make a commitment "to promote long term improvements in the economic and social opportunities of small producers and wage workers and in the environmental practices of their organizations."" (Stenzel, 2012, p. 569)

Briefly stated, fair trade fights for ethical trade in which the rights and livelihoods of the people are secured. In order to get access to the fair trade label, and thus have the right to use it, organizations and people need to abide by these guidelines.

2.2.2. The potential of fair trade in creating a sustainable, positive peace

Using the philosophy and guidelines of fair trade, next, it will be argued that fair trade might have a positive influence on local peacebuilding in theory. To do this, several dots will be connected between what is lacking, or contested in economic peacebuilding theory on the one hand, and what fair trade has to offer on the other hand. Moreover, it will be argued that characteristics of fair trade have similarities with local peacebuilding, and has something to offer, namely an economic aspect.

Linking fair trade and economic peacebuilding

Economic peacebuilding theory has a lot to offer. If trade can indeed bring economic prosperity and development, it might be able to address root causes of conflict such as poverty and inequality. Moreover, relationships occurring through trade can build an identity between people that goes beyond state-boundaries or group- boundaries (Mcdonald, 2004). However, practice has shown that liberal economic peacebuilding interventions have counterproductive effects in conflict situations (i.e. Paris, 2016; Pugh, 2011). Here, it will be argued that fair trade might be able to address such problems by changing the philosophy and terms of trade, and introducing 'a touch of ethics' into trade.

As explained in section 2.1, one of the major critiques in the economic peacebuilding debate is how in practice, a *liberal* economic approach is used. Proponents of the economic peace argue that this can lead to counterproductive effects such as aggravated poverty, economic instability and competition in an already conflicted area. Moreover, it is argued that liberal economic interventions lead to a situation in which recipients of peacebuilding are getting the short end of the stick, because they can't compete in the global trading system (Paris, 2016). Even though fair trade does not eliminate liberal trade, when looking at its philosophy and guidelines, it might be able to deal with problematic aspects of a liberal market economy. In fact, one of the core reasons for the existence of fair trade is opposing the neoliberal paradigm by including poorer people, mostly producers, in the benefits of international trade (Fridell, 2006). The terms and nature of fair trade distinguish fair trade from 'mainstream' trade existing today. Fair trade *only* promotes trade when it is not at the expense of the well-being of producers (https://wfto.com/fair-trade/10-principles-fair-trade). Looking at principle 3 and 5 of Fair Trade, one can see that fair trade aims to support producers by making long-term commitments, paying fair wages and making investments to help producers in reducing risks and stimulate growth (Stenzel, 2012). Generally speaking, fair trade specifically aims to improve social and economic opportunities for producers and stimulate local development. Due to such characteristics, fair trade could offer an alternative path in which trade doesn't encounter negative consequences such as growth of inequality and poverty (Selby, 2013, Pugh, 2011).Taking these notions into account, one could argue that fair trade can be a stepping stone towards a 'positive peace'.

A second critique in the economic peacebuilding debate, is how one of the underlying peace mechanisms, economic interdependency, will not occur if there is no basis of trust in a trading relationship (Doyle, 2005). Fair trade might be able to create this basis of trust in a trading relationship, since principle 2 states, '*trading relations are based on transparency, dialogue, and respect*' (Stenzel, 2012). When looking at principles 3, 4 and 5, one can also find a factor that can contribute to qualitative relationships. One can imagine that long-term relationships, involvement in social- and economic development, and a focus on securing and upholding human rights can positively influence the human aspect of trade. Thus, if fair trade can indeed facilitate qualitative relationships, personal ties and economic interdependency can strengthen each other. Positive personal relationships combined with economic interdependency can create an environment or give incentives to be a peace with each other.

Linking local peacebuilding and fair trade

Might fair trade contribute to local peacebuilding? Or could it be a way to give shape to local peacebuilding? When looking into the philosophy and principles of fair trade, one can find various cases of common ground with local peacebuilding. There is a wide variety of local peacebuilding methods and I will argue that fair trade might contribute by bringing in a vital element, an economic aspect. First, I will discuss how fair trade and local peacebuilding might fit together, and second I will explain why it can contribute by bringing an economic aspect to local peacebuilding.

As explained before, the local turn emerged as a reaction to liberal intervention practices, that seemed to serve 'the West' rather than recipient countries (Selby, 2013). Local peacebuilding theorists state that the 'local' should be the ones benefitting, not western interventionists. When looking at fair trade, one can see that it emerged from a similar perspective, namely opposing a capitalistic, trading system in which the rich were getting richer at the expense of the poor, referring to the 'West' and the global 'South' (Valiente- Riedl, 2016). The fair trade movement signaled that the ones in the global South were being exploited, but were not in a position to bring about a change, because the people on the other side of the value chain, 'the West', had a dominant position. Therefore, the fair trade movement aimed to bring about a change, by starting an alternative way of doing business, a fair way.

Moreover, in the local turn it was argued that peacebuilding should be for, and shaped by, people on the ground, thereby asking for more local inclusion in peacebuilding (e.g. Mac Ginty, 2013; Pugh, 2011). Fair trade also incorporates this idea of inclusion, as can be seen in principle 2: fair trade is based on the premise that trade is a partnership based on 'dialogue, transparency and respect'. Fair trade aims to generate qualitative relationships, based on equality, in which producers, members and employees participate in decision-making processes, which in turn should lead to inclusion (https://wfto.com/fair-trade/10-principles-fair-trade). Fair trade aims to create an environment of dialogue in which the people on the ground, the producers or workers engaged in trade, have a voice and a chance to act. Hereby, the fair trade movement also aims to overcome unequal power relations and western imposition in the global trading system, as discussed in the paragraph above.

Finally, local peacebuilding theorists such as Richmond (2006) argue that local agency should not be overlooked. Fair trade very much relies on local capacities, since they have a business relationship with producers and wageworkers (Stenzel, 2012). At the same time, they try to strengthen local capabilities by supporting producers financially and technically, as prescribed in principle 1 and make long-term commitments that allow producers and workers to develop socially and economically, as prescribed by principle 5.

In terms of the economic aspect, one could argue that fair trade might have something extra to offer in local peacebuilding, as elaboratively discussed above. Whereas local peacebuilding does not incorporate an economic aspect, and thereby does not target any peacebuilding dynamics identified in economic peacebuilding, fair trade has economic development and empowerment at its core. If the positive economic aspects of fair trade are combined with local peacebuilding, could it contribute to a positive peace?

Concluding

Concluding, the pursuit of sustainable peace requires an interplay of different factors (Doyle, 2005). An attempt has been made to unravel a piece of the peacebuilding puzzle by linking theories on economic peacebuilding, local peacebuilding and fair trade. I have argued that from a theoretical point of view, fair trade seems to be promising in local peacebuilding. This argument relies on two theoretical strands in peacebuilding theory, namely economic peacebuilding and local peacebuilding. Rather than fully abandoning the logic behind the positive link between trade and peace that is highlighted in economic peacebuilding theory, fair trade could offer an alternative that incorporates the positive aspects on the one hand, and deals with negative aspects on the other. Moreover, I argue that local peacebuilding can be a good approach to build a sustainable peace, in which fair trade can play a complementary role because it offers an economic component to peace building. Since the origins and principles of fair trade also give a central role to local development and inclusion, it is argued that fair trade and local peacebuilding can go together like a glove to a hand. To note, the author does not want to imply that fair trade is a substitute for peacebuilding. Alternately, it aims to

show that fair trade can create an environment for peaceful relationships and thereby contribute to local peacebuilding.

FIGURE 1: SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK SECTION 2.1 AND 2.2
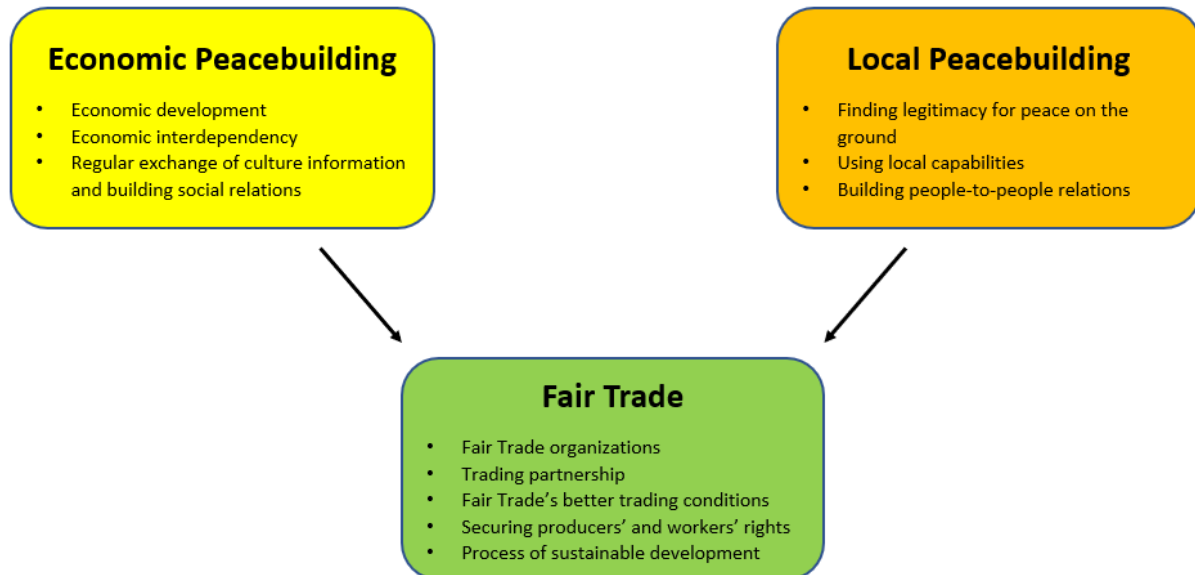
2.3. Countering 'cynical reason'

The following section aims to explain the occurrence of bottom-up local fair trade peacebuilding initiatives from a theoretical point of view. The conflict between Israel and Palestine exemplifies an intractable and protracted conflict in which several peace attempts have failed. Generations of people are suffering, mistrusting each other and living amongst hatred (Plonski, 2005). Despite this, there are people partaking in what Plonski calls 'peacebuilding islands' by keeping hope for a peaceful future and being active agents in transforming the status quo. In times of protracted conflict, what motivates people to act the way they do? Why would people engage in fair trade initiatives aiming for peace while political change does not seem to happen any time soon?

Scholars have attempted to answer such questions by theorizing about the occurrence of social projects and movements in situations that seem hopeless (Rethmann, 2013). Explanations are ranging from the idea of 'routes to possibilities', 'going beyond politics of the anti's', 'finding room for maneuver' to 'countering cynical reason'. Although scholars have different interpretations regarding the precise meaning of the concepts just mentioned, they have one important thing in common that is useful in understanding the occurrence of fair trade olive tree businesses in Israel and Palestine.

All theories are grounded in the idea that macrostructures can be stuck while at the same time space for change can be found by people 'on the ground'. For instance, theory on countering 'cynical reason' stems from explaining grassroots activism and social movements in times of neoliberal political domination (Boyer & Yurchak, 2010). Although the political landscape in the 1990s was fueled by neoliberal philosophy - which was mostly perceived as impossible to change due to the dominance of great powers - movements such as the Zapatistas emerged to fight for an alternative. Another theory that explains the occurrence of grassroots movements is the theory on 'finding room to maneuver'. It refers to the practice of hope, a way in which people endure to fight for alternatives and seek for possibilities despite 'a given order of things' (Rethmann, 2013, p. 229).

A similar situation can be found in Israel and Palestine, because the conflict seems stuck on a political level but in the meantime grassroots peacebuilding initiatives can be found. Peace agreements have failed numerous times and on top of that, some would say the conflict is a playing ground for geopolitics (Selby, 2013). However, at the same time, grassroots initiatives exist and aim for a peaceful society in which people from both 'sides' can live in harmony (Pfeil, 2013). People-to-people programs initiated by grassroots movements create a space for peaceful relations in times of war. Mac Ginty (2014) argues that in times of war, one can always find zones of collaboration and negotiation. Pfeil (2013) and Plonksi (2005) state that arenas of people-to-people projects can transform a conflict and contribute to peacebuilding on a systemic level. This research will explore whether fair trade can function as such a 'peacebuilding island', and attempts to expose the motives of people to partake in such initiatives in times of intractable conflict. Moreover, it will be researched whether and how fair trade 'peacebuilding islands' can influence conflict dynamics on a macro-scale.

2.4. War as a social process

The former section explains the occurrence of grassroots movements from a macro perspective. The question on why and how people actually engage in such movements, the micro perspective, still remains. From the above, it can be concluded that people seek for alternatives to a harmful way of living (Rethmann, 2013). People have the capacity to fight against undesired circumstances such as political oppression, economic exploitation and violation of human rights. This points to the idea that people are not virtuous victims but rather active agents (Kaufman, Joyce, 2016).

In order to fully understand the link between the micro- and macro perspective and the co-existence of war and peace attempts, it is useful to look at Richards theory on warfare. Richards (2005) argues that conflict takes place between people and can be seen as 'a social project'. By acknowledging that a conflict is shaped by people, it only seems natural to analyze the behavior of people. By looking at the level of social processes, agency, identity and sense-making, Richards offers a way to grasp the complexity of war as will be illustrated below (Leeuwen & Van Der Haar, 2016).

People use their moral standards, capabilities and experiences to navigate through a war and organize themselves in ways they consider fit (Richards, 2005). Kaufman (2016) adds to this by saying that people use their agency within the political economy of a conflict. Whereas some might benefit from warfare, others might be victims due to the same practices. Imagine one person being a weapon merchant and the other being a farmer whose land has been confiscated for the purpose of military training. As you can imagine, the merchant and the farmer have different interests in terms of the continuation of war. However, five years later the tables have turned. The merchant no longer benefits from the war because the endurance of war has created so much competition that he has lost his market- position. The farmer on the other hand has gained a better position. Due to the endurance of the conflict scarcity of food has become an issue for the military and resulted in new business opportunities for the farmer. This illustration serves to explain that war is a process that changes over time and can result in unpredictable behavior of agents living in conflict situations.

Furthermore, Richards (2005) moves beyond the dichotomy of war and peace and therefore invites to theorize about war and peace processes happening at the same time. In a situation of war, daily lives of people can still be characterized by normality's such as going to work, doing groceries and preparing dinner. On the contrary, people living in countries that are in 'peace' can still face violence, for example in bar fights, robberies or whatsoever. The point Richard is making is that there is a grey area between peace and war and that understanding conflict requires to overcome the black and white. If the Israeli and Palestinian governments would reach an official peace agreement, would that mean that the people are at peace with each other all of a sudden too?

Richards provides a lens to overthink such questions and draws upon the complex reality of a conflict such as the one taking place in Israel and Palestine. Daily life for some involves the (resistance against) building settlements and the separation wall, while others partake in peacebuilding initiatives such as the fair trade olive business in this case study.

2.5. The olive tree as a gluing factor rather than a breeding ground for conflict?

In section 2.1 and 2.2, I identified positive macro-level consequences of fair trade initiatives. In the current section, I focus on the underlying mechanisms: *How* do fair trade practices influence peacebuilding on a local level? In fact, one of the most important consequences of such initiatives occurs on the micro-level: in daily life, fair trade initiatives bring people together, whether in business, formal or informal settings. Seemingly simple and uncomplicated, such interpersonal interaction can be one of the strongest driving forces behind peacebuilding dynamics (Whitley & Kite, 2010). Exemplary is the following citation by Fissuh, Skarlato, Byrne, Karari and Kawser (2012, p. 249): 'The process of building peace at the local, cross-community level can be conceptualized as an *interpersonal* [emphasis added] intervention aimed at promoting mutual recognition, building relationships and encouraging integration and cooperation in cultural, political and socioeconomic spheres.' As such, to answer the question of *how* fair trade practices can stimulate peacebuilding, this section employs one of the most influential theories concerning relations between groups and individuals: contact theory.

We know now that peacebuilding can be challenging in cross-cultural conflicts, because differences between cultures can cause misunderstandings. In turn, such misunderstanding can significantly hinder peace processes. In 1954, with the ambitious aim to tackle such issues, Gordon Allport (1954) developed contact theory. In contact theory, the 'ingroup' refers to people within certain (psychological) boundaries, whereas the 'outgroup' refers to people outside such boundaries. In fact, these boundaries can change depending on the context: whereas a neighbor can belong to one's outgroup in daily life, the same person can consider part of the ingroup when both support the national football team. Part of this theory is the concept of 'othering', which claims that people often define their own identity based on what they are not, i.e. based on a description of 'the other' or outgroup (Dervin, 2012). Famously, Allport introduced the contact hypothesis, which states that intergroup contact can help reduce negative feelings, prejudices and stereotypes of the 'outgroup'. Allport put forward four premises for contact to be effective (see also Forsyth, 2009): (1) groups ought to be of equal status; (2) groups should engage in ongoing personal interaction; (3) groups should work together towards a common goal and be mutually dependent; and (4) groups should receive support from authorities that endorse egalitarian attitudes.

Contact theory has been widely cited in social psychology and has sprouted countless interventions (Beelmann & Heinemann, 2014). Through decades of research, the theory has undergone a number of refinements; this paragraph lists three that are relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First, recent studies show that not all of Allport's conditions have to be fulfilled for intergroup contact to successfully reduce prejudice and stereotypes (Berger, Benatov, Abu-Raiya, & Tadmor, 2016). With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it can easily be seen that not all of Allport's conditions are met. For instance, the context is not only characterized by asymmetric power relations, but also by a zero-sum game in terms of scarce resources and land. Regardless, various contact programs have been initiated among Palestinians and Israelis, and many report positive effects (Maoz, 2004, 2011). Second, another adaptation to Allport's original theory is the medium through which intergroup contact takes place. Initially, Allport described face-to-face contact between individuals. Recently, research has also focused on other methods of contact. For instance, it has been shown that reconciliation and peacebuilding can also be stimulated through online virtual contact, para-social

contact (i.e. positive media attention of intergroup contact) and extended contact, namely positive intergroup experiences from someone else in the ingroup (Berger et al., 2016). Third, not only the contact itself has been found to be important in order to successfully reduce prejudice and stereotypes, but also knowledge and information (Bandura, 1986). In fact, attitudes towards outgroups can be shaped by knowledge and information derived from social agents, mass media and educational programs. Therefore, to build bridges between groups, one should take into account the knowledge and information that form the background for interpersonal contact (Stephan & Stephan, 1984; Berger, 2016).

In conclusion, moving from the macro- to the micro-level, this section attempted to shed light on the *mechanisms* that make fair trade initiatives likely to foster reconciliation and peacebuilding. It was argued that one of the most important mechanism was intergroup contact: social interaction between Palestinians and Israelis. In order to study these interaction, this section introduced a canonical theory: contact theory. As a result, in order to understand peace processes on a local level, the author will study the dynamics taking place between people by using contact theory.

2.6. Concluding

Economic peacebuilding theory, its critiques and local peacebuilding theory are discussed in the first section of this chapter (2.1). The second section (2.2) elaborated upon fair trade principles, and discussed how fair trade can contribute to peacebuilding. Together, these sections served as a theoretical background for the main research question: *"How can fair trade in the olive tree branch shape the divide between Arabs and Jews on a local level and what does this mean for local peacebuilding?"*.

Thereafter, in section 2.3, theory regarding cynical reason is discussed, in order to explain the occurrence of local peace initiatives in times of protracted conflict like the Israeli – Palestinian conflict. Section 2.4 served to illustrate the concept of local agency, and follows the line of thinking in section 2.3 by explaining how peace and war processes can happen at the same time. The last section of this chapter (2.5) elaborated on contact theory, in order to explain the dynamics that can take place in local peacebuilding. It was argued that if contact between conflicting parties occurs, it might overcome 'othering' and thereby contribute to local peacebuilding.

3. Research Approach, Methods and Reflexivity

The following chapter serves to provide transparency and insight in the process of conducting this research. To explore the potential of fair trade in local peacebuilding, I have chosen a qualitative approach. I agree with Richard (2005) that in order to understand dynamics taking place on a local level, it is essential to understand how people move in, shape and perceive their context. It is key to learn about the feelings, perspectives and experiences of people in their local reality, rather than merely look into factual truths and formalities. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), qualitative research enables a researcher to understand "the beliefs, assumptions, values and practices" of research participants, which makes it a suitable research approach.

This chapter provides a more detailed description on the design and methods used during this research. Furthermore it will discuss the role of the researcher in terms of reflexivity, positioning, dilemmas and challenges in the field. Finally, ethical considerations will be discussed.

3.1. Scope and sampling

This thesis focuses on people engaged in local peacebuilding activities, through a fair trade organization and setting. I decided to undertake this study in Israel and the West Bank because this region has been in conflict for a very long time. Due to the protractedness of the conflict, Israel and Palestine lend themselves well to explore whether there is space for local peacebuilding in a context of failed international peacebuilding attempts. Moreover, taking the perspective of Richards (2005), I argue that war is a social process in which violent outbreaks and local peacebuilding attempts can exist at the same time. As discussed in the introduction, one of the local contexts in which one can find both violent outbreaks and peacebuilding activities is the olive tree branch in Israel and the West Bank. I conducted my research in this specific field, because fair trade is an important factor in this region, either as a means of resistance or as a means of local peacebuilding.

Defining 'the local'

'The local' is a term that can be interpreted in many ways (Hughes et al., 2016). In order to determine the scope of this research and to get insight in the dynamics of *local* peacebuilding, I rely on an explanation of 'the local' by Massey and Appadurai (Richmond, 2013). In this research, 'the local' refers to: '*fluid activities of peacebuilding, operating across different scales and sites: it represents fragmented, often disguised, and localized agencies and capacities*'. This definition leaves room to explore how local agency is mobilizing peace in different ways and locations. It enables me to research peacebuilding activities on a regional, transnational and international level, as is needed to understand the dynamics taking place in both Israel and the West Bank. To be more precise, the research was conducted in a dispersed area, ranging from Tel Aviv and Kafar Kanna in Israel to Nablus and Bethlehem in the West Bank.

Defining peacebuilding

Before diving into local peacebuilding theory, I will explain my interpretation of the concept *peace building.* Conflict resolution theorists have broadly discussed types of conflicts, the range of interventions to enhance peace and in line with that, strategies to *keep*, *make* or *build* a peace in conflict areas (Gawerc, 2006). First one should know what I mean with peace. Although the term peace is highly contested, I choose to follow the view of Galtung, and thus refer to a 'positive' peace,

referring to 'the absence of structural violence and cultural violence' (cited on p. 438). Moreover, I refer to Galtungs definition of peace*building*, rather than peacemaking and peacekeeping, because it focusses on 'a wide range of activities on the social, psychological, and economic environment at the grassroots level' and intends to 'create a structure of peace that is based on justice, equity, and cooperation (i.e., positive peace), thereby addressing the underlying causes of violent conflict so that they become less likely in the future' (cited on p. 439).

Defining the research group

As Joris Luyenduik (2006) once touched upon in this book 'Het zijn net mensen', it is incredibly difficult to find the right words to describe a group in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because people might not identify themselves with a particular word, and the words are not necessarily neutral. Calling Arab people in Israel Palestinians could be perceived as strange, since they have Israeli citizenship. However, calling them Arabs might also be seen as problematic, since the entire Arab world can be called Arab. Using the word Muslim, would not cover the group identity either, since some are atheist, Christian, Jewish or whatsoever. The same goes for 'Jews', when I arrived in Israel, I assumed Jew would refer to the religion of people. I soon found out that in Israel, people refer to Jews as people who have parents that are Jewish, but this does not mean they are practicing the religion. In this research, I decided to use words Arab, Jews and Palestinians because interviewees used these words, and I want to address *their* perceptions.

Case study: Sindyanna of Galilee

In my search for a fair trade peacebuilding organization in the olive tree branch, I found Sindyanna of Galilee - from here on called Sindyanna - as one of the most suitable options in Israel and Palestine. This organization turned out to be the perfect case to explore the link between fair trade and local peacebuilding. Due to the explorative nature of this study, I chose to dive into the topic by thoroughly focusing on this fair trade organization.

FIGURE 2: LOGO OF SINDYANNA OF GALILEE
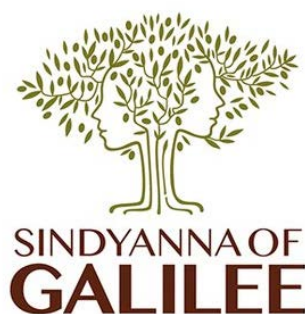
Sindyanna is a non-profit Fair Trade organization in Israel, established in 1996. The organization actively promotes 'business for peace' by selling fair trade products in the international market. Sindyanna initially started with the production of olive oil from Arab farmers and has been expanding their product range with other organic products such as olive oil soap, za'atar spice mixes and honey.

With their practices, Sindyanna 'aims to bridge cultural divides, encourage sustainable agriculture and support organic farming'. Their mission and goals are formulated as follows:

- *Reclamation*: they reclaim neglected lands and transform them into flourishing Jewish- Arab olive groves

- *Development and modernization of traditional Arab farming and agriculture:* traditional Arab famers work with techniques that are commercially insufficient. Sindyanna helps to bring advanced techniques in order to make olive groves profitable for Arab famers
- *Women's empowerment:* Sindyanna believes that empowering Arab women is key to empowering Arab society
- *Jewish and Arab coexistence:* Sindyanna aims to bridge divides between Arabs and Jews through storytelling about the cooperation between Arabs and Jews within Sindyanna and by selling their products which represents Arab and Jew cooperation
- *Fair Trade:* Sindyanna believes in Fair Trade, they build strong partnerships with producers and highly value trust, respect and a social conscience

Since 2003, Sindyanna is part of the fair trade community. They are WFTO certified, meaning that they uphold the 10 principles set by WFTO (https://wfto.com/fair-trade/10-principles-fair-trade). Furthermore, Sindyanna received the highest 'Fair for Life' rating from the Institute of Market ecology and is 'Fair for Life –Social and Fair Trade' certified.

Sindyanna's office is located in Tel Aviv where they mainly perform 'office related work'. Besides this office, they have a location called 'the visitors center' in, Kfar Kanna, an Arab village near Nazareth. The visitors center serves as a place where everyone can be part of the mission of Sindyanna by engaging in activities such as shopping, basket weaving workshops, and group tours with tasting sessions and storytelling about the Jewish and Arab cooperation.

Getting access and positionality

In order to conduct this research, it was essential to get access to Sindyanna. When emailing them to ask for their cooperation by explaining my research topic and my own affiliation with fair trade, I received an enthusiastic 'yes'. However, getting access turned out to be more difficult once arrived in Israel, because the timing of my field work was not very convenient. Luckily, after a while, I was welcomed with open arms. Two families working at Sindyanna (of whom one person is cofounder and CEO) even welcomed me into their homes. I was staying with them for two weeks, which enabled me to build trust, to have endless informal conversations and to get a solid idea of their lifestyle. We cooked meals together, I played with their children, they invited me to family dinners, and to the 'Kibbutzim' of their origins.

I believe these two intensive weeks enabled me to get good access to different levels of the organization and gather sufficient data. Sindyanna consists of an environment in which people have close relationships. Due to my entry with the CEO and the other family, different people working at Sindyanna seemed to open up to me quite easily as well. Furthermore, I experienced that the respondents of Sindyanna are generally used to expressing their opinion, which allowed me to easily gather data with most respondents. As most of the interviewees pointed out, working in Sindyanna is a statement in itself, and on top of that, sharing their story is part of their strategy to reach their mission.

Besides interviewing the 'regular staff' of Sindyanna, I also wanted to get access to the women who were participating in their contact- and empowerment programs. This was more challenging, because most of the women could merely speak Arabic which made communication difficult. We coped with a little help of other English speaking colleagues and a lot of non-verbal communication. Besides this, I think my role as a female researcher has enabled me to create an open atmosphere nevertheless. I became aware of this advantage when I introduced a male friend at Sindyanna. Although all the women were utterly friendly to him, I immediately noticed that they held him at a distance. My own

experience was really different, I could feel a strong bond between 'us' women, a sort of sisterhood. I will dive into this issue more later in this chapter.

Sampling and research population

In order to understand how fair trade can have potential for peacebuilding from different perspectives, I made a stakeholder analysis of Sindyanna. I interviewed people with different roles, ranging from cofounders, the CEO, volunteers, 'regular staff', participants in projects of Sindyanna, to external partners in the West Bank (for an overview of the interviewees see appendix 10.1). In order to understand the full context in which Sindyanna is operating, I informally spoke with many people all over Israel and the West Bank. Moreover, to get an idea of the effects and the scope of fair trade and Sindyanna within the bigger conflict, I have attended several public events organized by Sindyanna and I have interviewed the CEO of Achoti, which is to my, and my respondents, knowledge the only fair trade organization in Israel besides Sindyanna. Finally, I have interviewed an expert on fair trade, Ruerd Ruben from the Wageningen University, to get a deeper understanding of the major academic debates on fair trade and to provide context to my results. Besides this, the interview served to unravel aspects of fair trade that could be contributing to local peacebuilding from an expert point of view.

The research population consists of a diverse group of people in terms of gender, nationality, culture, language and socio- economic background. I have spoken to Jews, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians Arabs. I have spoken to men and women; atheists, Muslims and Jews. Their socio- economic background varied from urban high-educated to illiterate rural people aged between approximately 30 and 55. Finally, an important characteristic that the majority of interviewees have in common is believing in leftist ideals and them being politically active.

3.2. Research methods

To be able to answer the main- and sub research question, this study follows an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is chosen because one can gather first hand data by talking informally as well as formally and engaging with informants in their own context (Hulst, Koster, & Vermeulen, 2015). Moreover, spending an extended period of time with interviewees in different settings helps to understand the daily context in which they are living, and the meaning that is given to this context by interviewees themselves (Richards, 2005). Furthermore, it gives room for topics that are highlighted by respondents (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Over the course the research, several methods were used. In the starting phase of the research, desk research was conducted. During fieldwork in Israel and the West Bank I used several ethnographic methods, such as small talk, semi-structured interview, observation and participation. These methods will be further discussed below.

Desk research

As Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2012) state, desk research is useful to dive into the topic and to get first insights of the context of my research. Reading news items, attending an event organized by Oxfam Novib about the current state of affairs in Gaza and the West Bank, and reading popular and academic articles served to get a broad understanding of the conflict. Furthermore, an informal chat with an employee at 'Plant een Olijfboom' introduced me to the topic of 'the land of the olives' as a playground for conflict. This became the starting point of this research, combined with my online search for fair trade, olives and peacebuilding. I stumbled upon a project called 'fair trade fair peace' which led me to Sindyanna. This organization turned out to be the perfect case to explore the link between fair trade and local peacebuilding, and became the subject of my case study.

Desk research was also used in other stages of the research. For instance, to prepare myself for the field study -as far as this is possible- I have watched several documentaries about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and life in Gaza and the West Bank. Furthermore, throughout the whole research, literature study formed the basis to explore how theories come about in practice in the case study of Sindyanna. As more elaborately discussed in chapter 2, theories regarding economic peacebuilding, local peacebuilding and fair trade formed the foundation of the main research question of this research, namely: *"How can fair trade in the olive tree branch shape the divide between Arabs and Jews on a local level and what does this mean for local peacebuilding?"*

Moreover, concepts found in academic literature provided a lens for the researcher during fieldwork and was used as input for the interviews. Richards theory on 'war as a social project' and 'countering cynical reason' mostly served to understand local peacebuilding dynamics taking place in the broader context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, core mechanisms in fair trade and economic peacebuilding set out in the theoretical framework, for instance interdependency, economic growth and social ties, are integrated in the topic list of the interview guide in order to see whether such theories are applicable in this case study. Moreover, the main idea of contact theory has been included in the topic list in order to get an understanding of the nature of 'bridging divides' through the work of Sindyanna.

Finally, I have used online news items to understand the influence of the media in racism in Israel and the conflict in general. Interviewees often identified recent events and (mis) use of media, and in order to make sense of their context, I researched such primary data.

Small talk, informal conversations and 'hanging around'

As an explanation of the research method ethnography, van Hulst, Koster and Vermeulen (2015, p. 1) state: '*from the start, ethnographic research requires that the researcher interacts with the people whose actions she seeks to understand. Moreover, she needs to engage in those actions*'. There are several ways to do so, for instance small talk, (in)formal conversations and observing in a participatory manner. These methods have been used simultaneously throughout the study, because they often complement each other.

Small talk is used in this research because it "*provides access to information that is difficult to get otherwise and could be central to understanding the local culture*" (Driessen & Jansen, 2013, p. 250). Another advantage of small talk is that it enables to build a relationship of trust with respondents by talking about all sorts of topics, that might be totally unrelated to the research (Bernard, 2017). In turn, this should contribute to more in-depth data gathering. Informal talks and observing were other methods to build trust and uncover relevant topics. Talking while doing the dishes, driving in a car together, or watching the news turned out to be good moment to receive more context-based information and verifying my thoughts. Furthermore, such moments contributed in getting a deeper understanding of the conflict and how it exactly relates to the issues that Sindyanna is trying to address.

'Hanging around', or observing in a participatory manner, as some might say, enables a researcher *to see how the social world under study is constantly produced* (van Hulst, Koster & Vermeulen, 2015, p.2). I prefer to use the word hanging around, because although I participated in activities, I always continued to have the role of the researcher. As one of the respondents rightfully mentioned, as a foreigner, I would never fully experience the feelings, meanings and perceptions of people living in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But by hanging around and observing verbal and non-verbal behavior, I attempted to understand it in the best way possible. Observing and participating enabled me to study

inter-group behavior in Sindyanna over a longer period of time, which was key in understanding peacebuilding dynamics.

Semi structured interviews

One of the most important ways of collecting data in this research was by conducting in-depth, face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The interviews were mainly guided by a topic list based on the research questions and theories discussed in chapter 2 in order to strengthen the validity of the research (Braun & Clark, 2013). Semi-structured interviews were used because it gave me flexibility during the research process, which I perceived to be crucial in a complex conflict such as the one researched (Bernard, 2017). For instance, I adjusted my topic list for the different stakeholder to get the most useful data from the relevant actors. Also, a combination of small talk, observations and semi- structured interviews, uncovered new insights and themes. This information was used in later interviews so I could verify my observations, cross-check data with other respondents and unravel 'new' topics.

The interview settings varied considerably, depending on the context and possibilities of the respondents. In terms of length, the interviews varied from 25 minutes to one and a half hour. Although most interviews took over one hour, two interviews were quite short. I believe this was the result of a combination of character of the respondents and the limited knowledge about questions regarding fair trade.

In tried to facilitate an open and entrusted atmosphere for the respondent by drinking tea together, starting with informal talk and only after that start the interview. I tried to plan the interviews in relatively private settings, such as the homes of respondents or in an abandoned café near Sindyanna. However, in some cases respondents preferred to plan the interview during worktime, which is why some interviews were taken at the Sindyanna's office with more people present than just the respondent. On the one hand, this provided interesting settings in which people learned more about each other and sometimes even engaged in the interview. On the other hand, although I believe people feel very safe in Sindyanna and amongst each other, one can never be sure if people are as open as they would be if I would have conducted the interview privately.

Transcription, coding and analysis

The analysis of this research has been a continuous process of making sense of the data, looking for patterns, linking theory to practice and drawing conclusions. In order to structure and make sense of my data, I have transcribed all my interviews and coded them in MAXCDA. The coding-scheme was based on both induction and deduction, because they complement each other (Appendix 10.4 & 10.5). On the one hand, I wanted to contribute to economic peacebuilding theory by researching the potential of fair trade, which is why I started with codes derived from theory. On the other hand, I used open coding and axial coding to let the data speak and see if there were surprising results.

Besides using coding, I used my field notes to conduct my analysis. During field research, I kept a diary to keep track of important themes and conclusions that could be derived from informal and formal talks. Besides this, I made notes about observations that I made. In the analysis I have looked for patterns between my fieldnotes and semi-structured interviews.

The role of meta-data

During fieldwork, I encountered several situations in which information was revealed in subtle manners. As Lee Ann Fujii states (2010, p. 231), important data can arise through meta-data, referring to: '*informants' spoken and unspoken thoughts and feelings, which they do not always articulate in*

their stories or interview responses, but which emerge in other ways'. In conflict and (politically) sensitive situations, one can derive valuable information by analyzing such data. To understand the context of the conflict, the divides that are experienced between Arabs and Jews and peacebuilding dynamic I looked into meta-data. Evasions and silences are forms of metadata identified by Lee Ann Fuji, that I used in the process of sense-making in this research.

In terms of evasion, one interviewee did not want to be interviewed because she felt too insecure to communicate with me due to her lack of ability to speak English. I considered this in itself as interesting data, because one of the issues in the conflict that were raised by interviewees is the language barrier between Arabs and Jews. This instance made me experience, first-hand, how language can create a distance. I identified another type of evasion during one of the interviews. When asking: 'how does your family and your community respond to you working in Sindyanna?' one of the interviewees tried to avoid answering the question. In a later conversation with this interviewee and other befriended colleagues, she explained that her family in law was not supportive in her decision to work for Sindyanna and that this made her feel ashamed. This evasion was interpreted as key to understanding how the local peacebuilding initiatives can have positive effects in terms of inter group contact, but might also raise challenging intra group situations.

In terms of silences, I noticed that the respondents who were engaged with Sindyanna, and didn't work on a management level, gave little response to my question regarding fair trade. Not being aware of the know-hows of fair trade can in itself be interesting data. In fact, this made me aware of the fact that I needed to analyze fair trade from two angles, namely fair trade as a worldwide label and fair trade as a philosophy, a way of working on a daily basis.

3.3. Reflexivity

A characteristic of ethnographic research is the central role of the researcher during the research process. As van der Haar, Heijmans and Hilhorst (2013) state, it is important to realize that the process of sense-making of data is not neutral because a researcher has its own background and departs from a certain perspective. Therefore, it is of great importance to reflect on the 'self' of the ethnographer (Hulst et al., 2015). As I was aware of my subjectivity in interpreting and making sense of data, I continuously reflected upon myself in several ways. First of all, I tried to check my thoughts and interpretations by explicitly double checking them with interviewees and third persons. Secondly, I kept a diary in order to trace my own tracks, be aware of my position and reflect on myself. In the following, a reflection will be given on key events and the role and positionality of the researcher in order to put the analysis into perspective.

My background was important to keep in mind during this research in order to ensure independency. I was motivated to research the potential of fair trade in local peacebuilding due to my own experience in a social startup. I personally believe that social business can be a good means to empower people, and at the same time can create an atmosphere of equality, because both parties can benefit from cooperation. Due to this belief and background, I realized that it was very important for me to be independent, and be open-minded to all views and experiences. During the field work, quite some criticism was raised about fair trade by participants. To understand their perceptions and experiences, I made sure to ask open questions and find the underlying reasons and arguments for their views. Due to such stories, views and first hand experiences of participants, critical remarks on fair trade are also presented in this research. In fact, in hindsight, I noticed that I changed my own view regarding fair trade due to all the new insights gained throughout the research.

In terms of reflexivity, I would like to pinpoint one key moment that shaped my research. My initial plan was to research two fair trade organizations, namely Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA)

which is located in the West Bank and Sindyannawhich is located in Israel. However, this plan changed because my initial stay in the West Bank scared me off a bit. Once I arrived in the West Bank, I was immediately approached by a group of men in quite an aggressive (verbal) manner. These men wanted to take me to places in the West Bank that showed me the hardship of their lives. One the one hand, I could fully understand that they wanted to make me aware of their situation, and make me an advocate for their struggle. On the other hand, I felt cornered and not at ease to be there by myself. On top of that, the CEO of BFTA forgot our appointment and was abroad for a week, which gave this trip (crossing the border and checkpoints) an even more sour taste. At that moment, I decided I would focus on Sindyanna, and only include BFTA as one of the stakeholders in this research. This event has thus shaped my research in terms of the subject under study, and at the same time made me feel a participative researcher for the first time. Whereas I could not understand the feelings of despair, fear, and (cultural) divides from my literature study, one day in the West Bank enabled me to experience a glimpse of what people in the region might feel.

As briefly touched upon in section 3.2, being a female, white and Dutch speaking researcher has influenced my research as well. During fieldwork, I continuously asked myself how I should position myself towards others and how people positioned themselves towards me. Most prevailing was my role as female, and I believe this relates to the cultural context of Israel and Palestine. In my experience, and as is also often mentioned by interviewees, the division of roles between men and women is still quite traditional in Arab culture. On the one hand, being a women has enabled me to gain access to the Arab women who are engaged in Sindyanna. On the other hand, being a female influenced how I was perceived in the West Bank. When I went back to the West Bank with a male friend, I noticed that we were approached differently on the streets. The interaction was mainly targeted at my male friend and we were only approached in positive ways. Although it is difficult to know if it is coincidental, it seemed to me as if I was perceived very differently when accompanied by a men. My own experience and positionality made me aware of the cultural differences between Israel and the West Bank, and thus gave me a better understanding in the context and challenges that Sindyanna faces. Furthermore, being 'white and Dutch' gave me a relatively neutral stand in this conflict. Since people did not associated me with one of the two 'sides' in the conflict, I believe people felt free to share their opinions and views regarding the conflict.

3.4. Challenges and dilemmas in the field

During research, and field study in particular, I have faced several challenging situations. These challenges have different meaning in regard to the research. Whereas some challenges are considered data in itself (crossing borders), others are elaborated upon because it is considered a limitation the research (language barrier and taking too much time). The most relevant challenges will be discussed below.

Crossing borders

The first challenge in terms of getting access, in the most literal way of the word, was passing security in Israel. Being informed by another student from Wageningen University - who was sent back at the Israeli airport to the Netherlands - I realized going to Israel for a research was not just a matter of buying a ticket. Several stories made me aware about the extreme security measures in Israel, and about how you can face difficulties in entering the country. I was advised to pretend to be a tourist and 'cover all my research topic tracks'. In order to limit the risks, I cleared my whole computer and email account from traces of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and contact with Palestinians. Furthermore, because I had stamps of Iran and Turkey in my passport, I applied for a new passport in order to avoid questions at the border. Finally, to appear as touristy as possible, I started the journey with a friend.

Once arrived in Israel, my nerves heightened when a girl in the security queue was taken for questioning. But luckily, me and my friend could simply pass, and thus, my fieldwork could begin. A first lesson learned was feeling the effects of extreme securitization, which unconsciously made me think about a potential enemy.

Language

Luckily, the main language spoken in Sindyanna was English which enabled me to follow a lot of conversations and communicate with people. Despite this, one of the major challenges during field research was my inability to speak Arabic. Although I do not speak Hebrew either, this did not pose great problems because most Israelis can express themselves perfectly in English as well. Not being able to speak Arabic was more problematic because a lot of the people who engaged in programs of Sindyanna were not able to speak English, this was limiting because it made me more dependent to arrange interviews. I made limited use of a translator because of the practical reason of lack of financial resources and because a translator can contribute to miscommunication. However, Arabs were naturally an important stakeholder, thus in three interviews I made use of the kind offer of people in Sindyanna to translate for me. Due to the fact that Sindyanna is offering language courses, switching in languages comes very natural to most interviewees. However, using the translator from Sindyanna can be seen as a limitation because the interview setting was not fully confidential and might have influenced the interviews. At the same time, the use of a translator from Sindyanna might have contributed to local peacebuilding since the translator had a very broad understanding of the context herself. In one interview, this resulted in an interesting conversation -and thus data- where the interviewee and the translator starting talking to each other about the difficulties for working Arab women.

In order to improve the validity of the data gained from conversations with these Arab women, I developed a questionnaire with 10 questions in Arabic. By doing so, they could answer my question in their own language and in their own time. An independent and Arab speaking friend in the Netherlands translated the questionnaires, which enabled me to cross-check that my findings from the fieldwork corresponded with the answers provided in the questionnaire (see appendix 10.2 for one of the questionnaires).

Not taking too much time

As briefly touched upon before, once I arrived in Israel, it became clear that the timing of my research wasn't very convenient. I arrived shortly after harvesting time, which meant that Sindyanna was very busy with packaging and transporting olive oil for export. Due to this, it was quite challenging to arrange interviews and make appointments. I didn't feel comfortable to push for interviews too much and at the same time decided that is was more important to be patient, build good relationships and gather in-depth data, rather than push for unwanted interviews.

Quite ironically, my feeling of 'not taking too much time' was not mutual. I remember very well how many times I have travelled - sometimes over 4 hours, and crossing several checkpoints in the West Bank - for nothing. People from both the West Bank and Israel were not very strict with appointments, as one of my Israeli friends would say: 'welcome to the Middle East'. After he told me this with a big smile, I realized I had to get rid of my Dutch mentality and just hang around rather than trying to make appointments. Luckily, this worked very well. By being present, people were happy to talk to me whenever they had some spare time, and besides this I could learn a lot from informal chats and observations.

3.5. Ethical considerations

One of the greatest lessons I kept in mind during my master program is: 'do no harm'. Because I was conducting a research in a conflict setting, I felt very responsible to put this principle first. In the context of my research subject, people engaged in Sindyanna, I didn't face significant challenges. Asking sensitive questions about the conflict, or about problems between Arabs and Jews was very accepted in this group, because one of Sindyanna's activities is to actively work on creating dialogue. In terms of people outside of Sindyanna, this was different. I felt it was of utter importance to speak to 'outsiders' in order to get a better understanding of the context in which Sindyanna is operating and to explore the views of people outside the 'bubble' of Sindyanna. In the first week of my stay, I was talking to a friendly bartender and at a certain point we started talking about my research. I briefly mentioned my research topic, and this wasn't received well. I thus realized that my topic was not a light topic that I could discuss anywhere, since most Israeli people have been trained to protect their country from Palestinians. This made me very aware of not feeding negative feelings during talks with 'outsiders', especially since Sindyanna is trying to build bridges between Arabs and Jews. Furthermore, I realized that I needed to be confidential about all my knowledge about Sindyanna because they are aware of the way they position themselves. Most of the workers at Sindyanna are quite activist in their beliefs, but Sindyanna positions itself as a moderate organization because they want to prevent exclusion from 'mainstream' Israelis. In talks with outsiders, I was very aware to not do any damage to their cause.

Besides this, I used the principles of informed consent as much as possible. During interviews, and most informal small talks, I have been transparent about my research topic and objectives (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I believe I have provided a setting in which people could ask me questions during the interviews, which occasionally happened, someone for instance asked me: 'why Israel, conflict is everywhere!'. Next to that, I have seen most of the interviewees on a regular basis, which I hope, gave people enough opportunity to reach out to me if they felt the need to express any struggles with my research. Finally, I have tried to secure anonymity and confidentiality as much as possible. I only deviated from these principles when relevant to distinguish groups within Sindyanna, or to discuss someone's professional position in the organization, with the consent of the interviewees. I chose to use the real name, Sindyanna, because the organization consented with this. In fact, creating awareness about their work can help them in obtaining their mission.

4. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in a Nutshell

In the following chapter, a brief summary on the Israel-Palestine conflict will be provided. Although the focus of this research is the local warscape around the olive tree branch, it is important to understand the broader context in which it takes place and interacts. Due to the vast complexity of the conflict and the great number of key historical facts, this chapter will focus on the events identified as crucial by the interviewees and the researcher. Hence, the aim of this chapter is not to provide an objective take on the historical events, but rather to illustrate the context in which the current research takes place. Moreover, it is important to note that the author acknowledges the influence of international politics and developments in neighboring countries but due to the focus of this thesis limits the discussion to the events taking place in Israel and Palestine.

FIGURE 3: OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 4 IN THE FORM OF A TIMELINE OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Zionism & British Mandate — 1897-1947
- 1897 - First Zionist congress is held in Switzerland.
- 1916 - Agreement is signed dividing the middle east between the French and the British.
- 1917 - Britain seizes Palestine from Ottomans
- 1940 - Nazi Holocaust of the Jews in Europe prompts efforts at mass migration to Palestine

Independence — 1948-1966
- 1948 - Israel declares independence.
- 1948 - First Arab-Israeli war
- until 1960 - Up to a million Jewish refugees and 250,000 Holocaust survivors settle in Israel.
- 1962 - Improving relations and concerns about the Middle Eastern balance of power prompt the United States to sell Israel missiles.

Six day war & Occupation — 1967-1986
- 1967 - Six day war leaves Israel in control of east Jerusalem, all of West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights and Sinai. Jewish settlements are set up in all of these areas in coming years, with government approval.
- 1975 - UN General Assembly adopts a resolution describing Zionism as a form of racism (which is rescinded in 1991).
- 1978 - Camp David Accords pledge Israel to expand Palestinian self-government in the West Bank and Gaza.

1st Intifada — 1987-1992
- 1987 - First Intifada uprising begins in Occupied Territories and Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza forms Hamas movement.
- 1991 - Iraq fires 39 Scud missiles at Israel in failed attempt to regionalize conflict.

Oslo Accords — 1993-2005
- 1993 - Prime Minister Rabin and PLO leader Arafat sign Oslo Declaration to plot Palestinian self-government and formally end First Intifada.
- 1994 - Israel withdraws from most of Gaza and the West Bank city of Jericho.
- 1995 - Rabin and Arafat sign Interim Agreement for transfer of further power and territory to Palestinian National Authority.
- 1995 - Jewish extremist shoots Rabin in Tel Aviv.
- 1996 - Likud returns to power under Netanyahu.

2nd Intifada & Separation wall — 2000-2005
- 2000 - Talks between Prime Minister Barak and Yasser Arafat break down
- 2000 - Visit of Ariel Sharon of a key Jerusalem religious site escalated in second Intifada.
- 2002 - Israel begins building the separation wall in
- 2002 - Israel begins building the separation wall in and around West Bank
- 2003 - Quartet of United, States, European Union, Russia and United Nations propose road map to resolve Israeli-Palestinian conflict, proposing independent Palestinian state.
- 2004 - International Court of Justice issues advisory opinion that separation wall is illegal.

Gaza withdrawal & invasion — 2005-2014
- 2005 - Israel withdraws all Jewish settlers and military personnel from Gaza.
- 2006 - Hamas wins Palestinian parliamentary elections.
- 2007 - First time the "two-state solution" is proposed.
- 2008 - Israel launches full-scale invasion of Gaza.
- 2013 - Mr Netanyahu replaces most religious Jewish groups with centrist and secular parties in government.

Netanyahu's 4th government — 2015-2018
- 2015 - Prime Minister Netanyahu forms a new right-wing coalition.
- 2015 - Wave of shootings, stabbings and car-ramming by Palestinians or Israeli Arabs.
- 2016 - US agrees military aid package worth $38bn.
- 2017 - Parliament passes a law which retroactively legalizes dozens of Jewish settlements built on private Palestinian land in the West Bank.
- 2017 - Work begins on the first new Jewish settlement in the West Bank for 25 years.
- 2017 - US President Donald Trump recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
- 2018 - Protests by Palestinian factions in Gaza where 100 Palestinians die and thousands are injured.
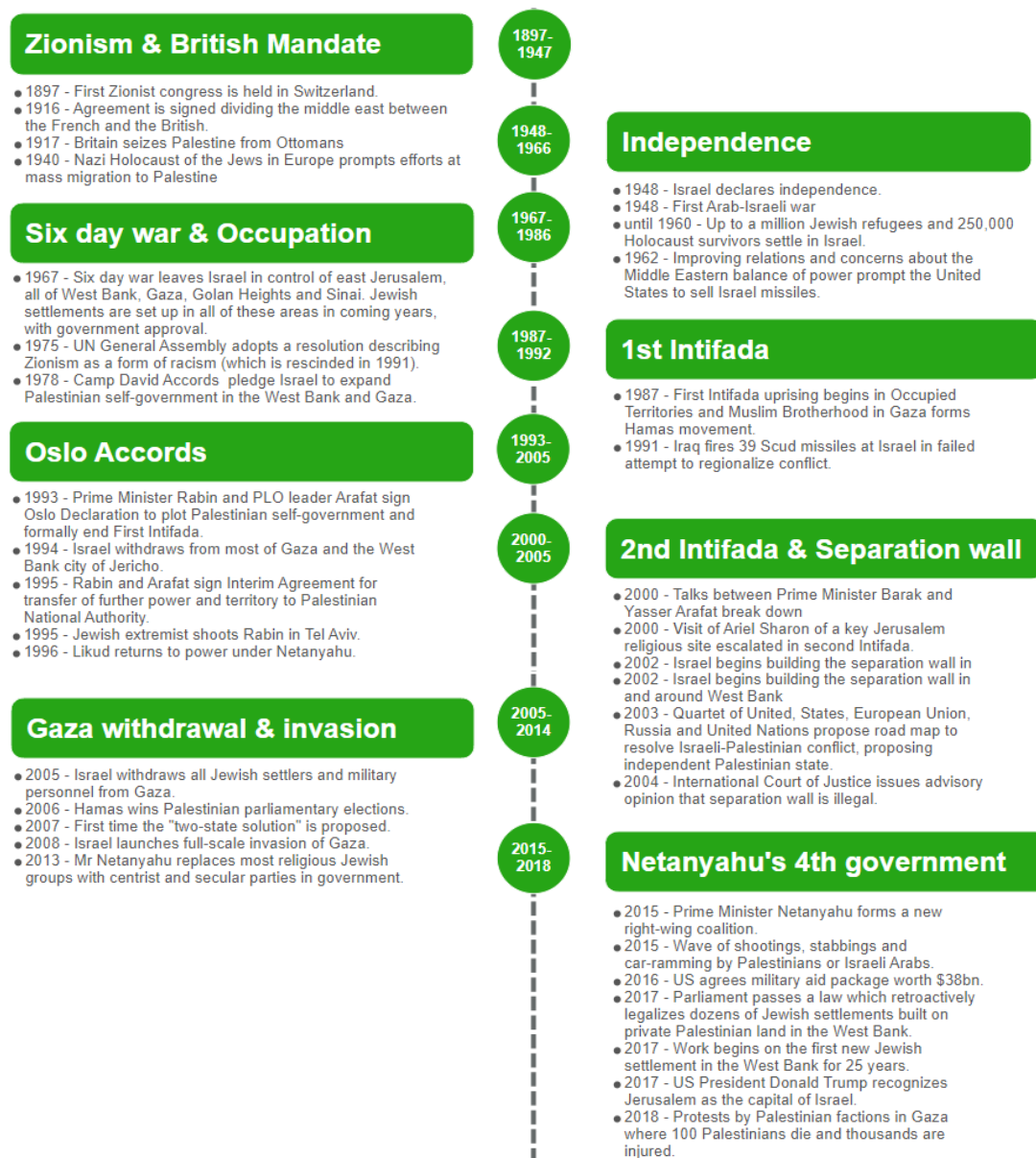
Figure 2, presented above, depicts the key events of the Israel-Palestine conflict that constitutes the basis of the discussion in the current chapter in a chronological order. The year 1897 is taken as the start of this timeline since this is the year that Zionism is first formally used and the time most scholars identify as the start of the conflict (Shafir, 1996).

Zionism explained

Zionism is much debated, controversial and, therefore nearly impossible to pin down in a brief background chapter. Not only because it is a worldwide movement that is influenced by diverse cultures, but more so because it is made up from different political ideas and organizations (Laqueur, 2003). Directed by the research question, the author attempts to capture key elements of Zionism that enhance the understanding of the research results and discussion in the following chapters.

The core ideal of Zionism is the re-establishment of the homeland of the Jewish people. The concept was first formally used in 1882 and got a foothold in political thinking four years later as a result of the book 'Der Judenstaat' (Sachar, 2013). This book, together with antisemitism in early 1900 Europe and inspiration from other European nationalistic movements let many Jews to dream about and fight for their own state.

Looking closer at Zionism one can identify two separate streams, 'general' and the socialist Zionist (Laqueur, 2003). Before the second World War, the 'general' Zionists (i.e. less fundamentalist in their believes) wanted to build a Jewish state in Europe, whereas the socialist Zionists (i.e. more fundamentalist in their thinking) wanted to set up a Jewish state in the Middle East. The second World War had destructed most of Jewish life in Europe, socialist Zionism gained the upper hand and led numerous Jews to the Middle East and to the independence of an Israeli state (Shapiro, 1966). Although general, as well as socialist Zionists moved to the Middle East, socialist Zionists generally did so in organized groups and general Zionists individually (Shapiro, 1966). Hence, the fundamental Zionists rose to power and influenced the course of history to a larger extend than the general Zionists did.

Until 1948, all Zionists were unified by their core ideal, to re-establish their own land. However, after Israel became an independent state, the role of Zionism changed (Sachar, 2013). Instead of wanting to re-establish the homeland of the Jews, Israeli government now uses the same Zionistic thinking to argue for threats against its existence and to defend their land.

Independence of Israel

In recent history, one of the first key moments in the Israel-Palestine conflict is when the British and the French divided the Middle East among themselves (Sachar, 2013). Britain captured the region from the Ottomans and granted the Arabs living here their own land, Palestine. Although Jewish settlers moved to the area in early 1900s, Britain took measures to limit this and thus prevented Arabs from losing their land. Nevertheless, the holocaust of the Jews in Europe in the 1940s lead to mass migration of Jews to Palestine and increased efforts of Jewish people to fight for their own independent state.

After years of Jewish holocaust in Europe and conflict in the Middle East between Jews and the British authorities, the United Nations finally then recommend to separate Palestine in a Jewish and an Arab part (Gelvin, 2014). Based on this recommendation and international support, the British mandate for Palestine ends and under the Partition Plan Jewish people declare an independent state in 1948, called Israel. This lead to the first Israeli-Arab war, in which Israeli got the upper hand and ended up with more land than anticipated by the United Nations in the Partition Plan. This directly led

to a refugee wave, since 80 percent of the Palestinian population was expelled or fled (i.e. 750.000 people). In the years following this war, over a million Jewish refugees from all over the world and holocaust survivors from Europe settled in the new state Israel.

Occupation of Palestine

The separation of Palestine under the British Mandate into Israel and Palestine and the first Israeli-Arab war led to years of conflict between Arabs and Jews in the region (Gelvin, 2014). This conflict escalated in 1967, with what is now called the 'six day war'. This second Israeli-Arab war leaves Israel with an increase of controlled land, which was previously under Palestinian authority. Moreover, this constitutes the start of Jewish settlements in Palestinian areas. Many more Palestinian fled to Jordan and Lebanon over the years following the six day war and conflict between Israel and Palestine persists.

First Intifada

Years of negotiating peace between Israel and Palestine followed the six day war, with the Camp David Accords in 1978 as a result (Sachar, 2013). In this accord Israel promised an increase in self-governance of Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza. However, Israel maintained their occupation, with escalating attacks as a result. Nine years later Palestinians group in the first organized uprising to Israeli rule in December 1987, what is now called the first Intifada (Qumsiyeh, 2011).

The first Intifada created a fruitful base for radical Arab movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza that formed the Hamas movement and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who quickly turned to violence against Israel (Gelvin, 2014). It was not until 1993 that the first Intifada was formally ended with the Oslo Accords. Similarly as the Camp David Accords, the essence was to enhance Palestinian self-government. This time Israel followed through and withdrew to a large extend from Gaza and the West Bank area.

Second Intifada & building the separation wall

In the years following 1993, it became clear that the Oslo Accord was not widely accepted by both sides of the conflict. On top of this, Palestinian pro-peace leader Rabat, who had been in extensive negotiations over the expansion of power by Palestinian government, was shot by Jewish extremists in 1995. As a result, peace negotiations broke down again in 2000, which gave rise to the second Intifada.

Just as the first Intifada, the dissatisfaction of Palestinians about the status quo led them to violently revolt against Israeli rule (Qumsiyeh, 2011). However, other than the first Intifada, which ended with a peace accord and relatively little bloodshed, the second Intifada was more violent, expanded Palestinian oppression by the Israeli, and led to an increase in Palestinian radicalization and revolts from the Arab society in Israel (Hammami & Tamari, 2001). During this time, Israel started to build the separation wall around the West Bank in 2002. Although Israel claims they started building the wall to stop attacks from Palestine, Palestinians perceive this as an attempt to take more land (J. Hughes, 2008). Together with the Separation Barrier Wall, article 78 of the ancient 1858 Ottoman Land Code was reintroduced, which justified the confiscation of lands that are not maintained and cultivated. Thus giving Israel a base to confiscate land of Palestinians which they were unable to reach due to the wall. The separation wall was deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004, but continues to exist until this day.

Gaza versus the West Bank

After years of violence in Gaza, Israel decided to withdraw Israeli military and settlers from the area in 2005. One year later, Hamas wins the parliamentary elections and has not lost power until today. However, the bloodshed does not stop. One could argue the situation only worsened for the Palestinians living there, since Gaza has been isolated from the rest of the world and in constant military conflict with Israel (Qumsiyeh, 2011).

In the West Bank, Hamas has never been the ruling political party and Israeli did not pull back their military and the settlers. Palestinian ruling has consisted of Fatah-dominated political parties since its foundation in 1959 and Israel has enacted a policy of forced separation between Gaza and the West Bank, with the difficulty to travel between the two areas as an indicative example (Brynen, 2000). As a result, the two Palestinian areas have grown to differ politically, as well as economically and socially over the years.

In Israel, the political landscape is dominated by right-wing leader Netanyahu for over two decades, starting with his first premiership in 1996. In 2015 Netanyahu formed the present government, which consists of a right-wing coalition. The same year holds a stream of violence all over the West Bank, during which some are afraid it would become a third Intifada (Korochkina, 2017).

FIGURE 4: MAP OF PALESTINIAN LAND FROM 1946 TO 2000

* Source: https://www.economist.com/democracy-in-america/2010/03/14/this-map-is-not-the-territories

Concluding

This chapter served to provide a broad sketch of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to understand the context in which this research is conducted. Although the conflict has developed over time, the essence of the conflict appears to remain similar. Jews and Arabs remain to be on two sides of the conflict, fighting over their 'rightful' land and rights and the conflict seems to have arrived an

impasse. However, at the same time, local peacebuilding efforts can be found in both Israel and Palestine. Citizens are trying to take matters into their own hands by initiating and engaging in all sorts of bottom-up initiatives. This research will dive into this aspect by looking into the case study of Sindyanna, a fair trade organization aiming for peace.

5. Living in a divided society

Today, 70 years have passed since the Israeli-Palestinian conflict started. This means that most of the population living in this region has been born and raised in this conflict. But within this conflict, one can find 'peacebuilding Islands' like the fair trade organization Sindyanna. To get a better understanding in their peacebuilding efforts, it is important to know their context. One should understand how divides are experienced, both, in the broad context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the local context of 'the land of the olives' in order to understand why and how Sindyanna addresses divides. Therefore, the following questions will be leading in this chapter: How does an intractable conflict shape the lives of Arabs and Jews? (How) do they experience divides amongst each other? And who are *they*? Answering these questions all contribute to answering the first research sub question: *How are divides between Arabs and Jews perceived locally in and around the olive tree branch?* Besides this, the following chapter will explain how these perceived divides are a driving force for people to partake in local peacebuilding activities in the fair trade organization Sindyanna.

There are many ways to categorize 'divides', for instance between Israel and Palestine, Arabs and Jews and Muslims or Jews (in terms of religion). One could also look at divides in political affiliation, culture, educational systems and demographic dispersion. In fact, there are numerous ways to explain the conflict and the existence of divides between people. In this chapter a voice will be given to people living in this conflict, and particularly to people involved in Sindyanna, thereby touching upon sub question 1 of this research: *How are divides between Arabs and Jews perceived locally in and around the olive tree branch?*

The first three sections of this chapter are mostly descriptive. Section 5.1 will delve into the different levels in which divides are taking place, namely *within* (§ 5.1.1) and *across* borders (§ 5.1.2). The second section will look into deeply rooted causes of experienced divides from a securitization point of view (§ 5.2). In the third section, it will be illustrated how divides between Arabs and Jewish people are present within Israel on a daily basis(§ 5.3). The fourth section uses the descriptive data and theory on the idea of 'countering cynical reason' to explain how the experienced divides can be fuel for change for the people working in a fair trade initiative such as Sindyanna (§ 5.4).

5.1. Divides within and across borders

In order to answer the question 'who are *they*?', one should look at divides experienced by the people in Israel and Palestine. During field study in Israel and the West Bank, it became clear that divides related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are not merely experienced *across* borders, but also *within* borders. Section 5.1.1 will explain how divides are experienced *across* Israeli borders, and section 5.1.2 will elaborate on divides *within* borders.

5.1.1. Divides across Israeli borders

"How I feel about Israeli? How any Palestinian feels. Of course it feels like an enemy. They are the ones who take my land, who take my home, kill my people, rape my women, the ones who, the settlers"
(Interview 8).

This quote stems from one of the interviewees that was born and raised in the West Bank. It reveals a very short but intense insight in the divides that are experienced in the West Bank. Through interviews, informal chats, observations and being in the West Bank it became clear that divides *across* borders are from a whole different nature than those experienced within Israel. Three interrelated topics that dominate the divide between Israel and the West Bank are the separation wall, settlements and unequal power relations, these will be discussed in this section.

First, it is important to note that implications of the occupation have been changing over the years. At the start of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, "*they were controlling everything, we didn't have our own money, we didn't have anything… until the 90s, politically, economically, the Palestinians were depending on Israeli economy*" (Interview 12). Another interviewee highlights that despite the obligation to pay taxes, the Israeli government neglected to use this money for the provision of services such as schooling systems and building infrastructure (Interview 6). However, during this period, there were lots of linkages between Israelis and Palestinians. People from the West Bank would go to Israel for leisure, family visits, trade and work (Interview 6, 8, 12). To illustrate: "*My father used to go to Israel every Sunday and spend the whole day there, I used to go with him. We would go to Israeli companies, they offered us coffee, lunch. They would also come to my dad's house… it means, ok we were under occupation, but it was a time, even though we were living under occupation there was mutual cooperation*" (Interview 6). Several interviewees explain that relationships between Israeli and Palestinians were not exceptional. In fact on a people-to-people level, people could have friendly relationships and they visited each other. This changed after the Second Intifada, the relationship between Israel and Palestine worsened and resulted in a change in the nature of the occupation. Next, key factors in today's occupation, and at the same time drivers for divides among Israelis and Palestinians, will be discussed.

'Security wall' or 'Apartheid wall'?

As mentioned in section 5.1, the Second Intifada was an important turning point in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because it led to extreme securitization. The Israeli government started to build the separation wall in 2000, or as Palestinians call it 'Apartheid wall', and as Israelis call it 'security wall'. This difference in names for the separation wall exposes a significant contrast in perceptions about the wall. The left picture below shows a family walking next to the separation wall, it reveals the daily reality of people living in the West Bank, a reality in which Palestinians are imprisoned by walls and dealing with checkpoints, Jewish settlements and the Israeli army. The picture on the right side is an activist peace of art made by Banksy, it is one among many artworks that symbolizes the cry for a free Palestine and breaking down the separation wall.

A complication of the separation wall is that it was not built at the Green Line, instead 85 percent was built on Palestinian soil, sometimes 18 km exceeding the Green Line. As a result, people can no longer access their own lands on the other side of the wall, even though it is officially Palestinian territory. In the context of this research it is important to note that olive farmers are affected highly because they can no longer take care of their own olive yards, while this is one of the biggest sources of income in the West bank (Meneley, 2014).

FIGURE 5: PICTURES TAKEN IN THE WEST BANK OF THE

For many Israelis, the separation wall has a different meaning, namely providing security from terrorist attacks. Several events during field study illustrate the fear 'of the other side'. For instance, on the subway in Jerusalem, I asked someone where I should transfer to go to Ramallah in the West Bank. Another women came up to me and started shouting that it is not safe for me to go there. In fact, she said: '*if you go there you can be stabbed or killed, why would you go there?*'. In multiple other settings, for instance with chats on the train or in bars, Israelis showed their concern for me crossing the separation wall when I explained why I was staying in Israel. Such reactions show that people wanted to protect me from harm and that they feel very threatened by Palestinians. At the same time, there are people who do not feel this strongly about a Palestinian threat. In fact, very coincidentally, weeks after the subway event, someone came up to me during an arts exposition, because she recognized me from the fuzz in the subway. She was curious about my experiences and told me that the way this woman was acting was not representative for all of Israeli population. People in Sindyanna are validating this. They share the idea of the separation wall as a violence of the human rights of Palestinians, rather than a security measure (Interview 4, 11). What can be derived from this, is that despite differences in perceptions regarding the wall, it literally functions as a divide between Palestinians and Israelis.

Checkpoints and settlements

When looking at the map in Figure 6 one can get a first glimpse of today's complexity of living in the West Bank. Besides the separation wall between Israel and the West Bank, the West Bank itself is divided into Area A, B and C. Area A refers to land that is under Palestinian civil and security control. Area B refers to Palestinian civil control and joint security control with the Israelis, and Area C refers to land that is under full control of Israel. These areas are unevenly located over the West Bank. One can see in the map that settlements, connecting highways between settlements and strategic areas near the Israeli border are all located in Area C. Due to this dispersion of Areas, it is difficult to move within the West Bank, and divides are very prevalent in daily life. Next, it will be discussed how these physical divides are causing difficulties in the West Bank, and how it is a reinforcing mechanism for the creation of gaps between Israelis and Palestinians.

Restriction of movement comes with uncertainties and insecurities for Palestinians because of three reasons. Firstly checkpoints are not always open, secondly they change place from time to time and thirdly they do not uphold clear policies. As a result travelling can be utterly time consuming and limited. To illustrate, when I was travelling from Tel Aviv to Nablus, a 141 km journey, a one-way journey took me almost seven hours and six transfers. Whereas Israelis settlers can travel fast by using the Israeli highway, Palestinians are not allowed to use this highway. Instead, they need to travel on less developed roads and get around settlements and checkpoints. Furthermore, checkpoints make trading challenging because security can decide to forbid the transportation of goods through their checkpoint (Interview 8). In ample cases, cargo needs to be transferred to different vehicles across a checkpoint. Such instances result in delays and in turn result in spoiled goods, higher costs and unstable trading relations. Due to all these difficulties stemming from restriction of movement, one can imagine that Palestinians in the West Bank are feeling negative emotions towards Israel on a daily basis.

A related topic that came up frequently during fieldwork in the West Bank are the settlements. Interviews and informal chats with Palestinians show that it is hard to bare that even within the West Bank the Jewish are taking their land (Interview 6, 8, 12). Not just land, but strategically and qualitatively good land. "*Look at the hills, the nice hills, you say this is the West Bank, so why are you taking the best part of the West Bank for yourselves, why are you taking this land? You say you want to make peace, then don't come and demolish my home any time you want, don't come and throw me*

42

out, and say you want to make a bypass road. My house is illegal, we demolish it in a second because… it is very complicated situation" (Interview 6).

As explained before, olive cultivation is an important aspect in the economy and culture of Palestine. One of the examples in which settlements are taking good lands is in the olive tree groves (Interview 6, 12*)*. Since the olive tree has such an important historical value, Palestinians feel very strongly about the confiscation of these lands by settlers. One of the interviewees put to the fore that it seems as if the Israeli are never satisfied, '*they have been given a finger, but they want the whole hand*' (Interview 6). Several interviewees state that over the course of the years, Palestinians have already lost a lot of their land when Israel was declared (Interview 6, 8, 12). They do not understand why the settlers are taking the little land that is left for them and perceive them as a great thorn in the side.

FIGURE 6: DIVISION OF THE WEST BANK IN

Puppets of the Israelis?

The Israeli occupation can result in playgrounds for unpleasant power plays which in turn contributes to a divided society. People from the Israeli army and authorities are in a position in which they can determine certain aspects of the lives of Palestinian civilians. This lack of freedom can cause frustration, for instance when Palestinians want to go abroad and they need to ask Israeli authorities for permission to travel. "*I should process some documents, some letters, of course the checkpoints, because of rules. Sometimes, we face big problems. Sometimes we need some paper or some permit and we have to wait for 2, 3, 4 weeks, or a month or more. Sometimes it is just 3, 4, 5, days*" (Interview 8). One can imagine that it is hard to make any future plans when depending on such unpredictable behavior. This use of power is causing a lot of frustration among Palestinians (Interview 8).

I would like to point out another situation in which power relations were quite apparent. When taking a bus from the West Bank to Jerusalem, the bus stops near the separation wall. Palestinians with a working permit or another permit need to step out of the bus and queue up for their passport check while citizens with a different ID, like me, stay in the bus. The Israeli army walks into the bus with big guns, machine guns, and checks all the IDs of the rest of the passengers. This routine itself already points out that Palestinians have a different status and shows that the ones with the guns are in power, rather than those without a gun. At a certain day, due to commotion in the bus, it was clear that it was not 'business as usual', even for the people who are dealing with this situation on a daily basis. A woman was taken from the queue into a security office and did not come out for at least twenty minutes. The bus driver and many passengers were talking loudly in Arabic, which is why I asked for an explanation of the event. It turned out that the Israeli army officer forced a woman to take off her hijab, which is considered very insulting by Muslims, especially when men are present. The army officers claimed that they saw a different hair color under her hijab than the picture on her identity card was showing and therefore wanted to check whether or not she had a fake proof of identity. The people in the bus seemed furious, according to them it was just a way of bullying and showing who is in charge. Such events create a clear divide between Palestinians and Israelis.

Concluding

In conclusion, the occupation and foremost 'security measures' from Israel lead to many difficulties for Palestinian people living in the West Bank. Political decisions, Jewish settlements and physical barriers are feeding the divides between Israelis and Palestinians and are shaping the lives of Palestinians on a daily basis. The circumstances in Palestine are very different from those in Israel, in line with this, the perceived divides are also very different from the divides that are experienced within Israeli borders.

5.1.2. Divides within Israeli borders

One could think that divides are mostly experienced *between* people in the Israeli and Palestinian territories due to the physical borders between Israel and the West Bank and Israel and Gaza. However, the interviews show that divides are not limited to Israelis and Palestinians living in Palestine, instead divides *within* Israel are also highly prevalent: "p*eople who don't like Arabs, don't like Arabs, either from Israel or the West Bank*" (Interview 7). A combination of demographic data and historical events can explain this trend in perceptions. Demographic data shows that the population of Israel is mixed, it consists of approximately 6.484.000 Jewish people (74,7 %), 1.808.000 Arab people (20,8 %) and 388.000 (4,5%) 'others' (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2017). This means that despite the borders with Palestine, a minority of Arabs is still living within Israeli territory.

History explains these demographics, its evolvement over the years, and how this links to a divided society. As was mentioned in chapter 4, one day after the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, the Israeli-Palestinian war broke out. A year later, the Green Line was established and many Palestinians were forced to move or flee to neighboring countries. As a result, only a minority of Palestinians (whom will be referred to as Arab Israelis from here onwards) stayed in Israel and they have been facing discrimination and hardship ever since (Olesker, 2014). During all these years of protracted conflict between Israel and Palestine, violent events are a daily reality. In fact, while writing this, violent events are happening in the build up to the 70th birthday of the Israeli state and the opening of the American Embassy in Jerusalem (Hecimovic, 2018). Over the years, failed peace processes, Intifadas and violent attacks have contributed to more alienation between Arab Israelis and Jewish Israelis. Due to the roots of Arab Israelis, it is not unlikely that they feel solidarity with their brethren Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. As a result, tensions taking place *across* borders also feed tensions *within* borders.

There is another complexity in the categorization of the population living in Israel that needs further elaboration because it explains experienced divides in Israel. A part of the group of Jews consists of Zionist Arabs. Two interviewees from Sindyanna belong to this group, their parents are Moroccan Jews and moved to Israel after the establishment of the Israeli State. One of the interviewees explains a change in the position of this group within Israeli society: ''*When they came here, they were excluded because they were Arabs, so they were second rate citizens. Until the eighties. At that time, the government changed to the right wing and they embraced them as their fellow Jews... they were on the right track 'come with us, join the Zionist project, we have a common enemy'. And everyone joined, almost everyone joined*'' (Interview 5). After the first Intifada, the government seemed to change their attitude towards Arab Zionists in order to strengthen the position of the Jewish population. It is brought to the fore in interviews that this moment in history might have influenced the experiences of divides for this group of people over the years. On the one hand Arab Zionists are currently discriminating Muslim Arabs, and on the other hand they have been victims of discrimination themselves (Interview 14). The interviewees explain this paradox as follows: many Zionist Arabs are discriminating Muslim Arabs because they look similar to them and have faced a lot of discrimination due to this resemblance. Naturally, they want to distinguish themselves from this group because they do not want to be in a discriminated position (Interview 5, 14). However, these dynamics are contributing to a divided society.

The above illustrates that divides within Israel are clearly present in several groups. When asking interviewees for their experiences, all the Israeli citizens put an emphasis on the separated lives and discrimination of Arabs *within* Israel. One of the interviewees pointed out the following:

 "*Between Arabs and Jews there is no war in Israel... there is no war, but there is very, very bad exploitation, discrimination and a lot of bad things. There is racism in culture and in language, so it is not a war of bullets, but what is it? It is not a pleasant place to live in. So it is important enough for change. Even if there is no war, it is important to change relationships*" (Interview 4).

This quote is exemplifying for the thoughts of most of the interviewees. Although all of them highly sympathize with the Palestinians and want to change the conflict situation, their daily reality takes place within the borders of Israel. In the theory *No Peace, No War* Richards (2005) argues that conflict should be understood as a social process in which humans are actors that engage in diverging activities. The narratives of interviewees highlight this grey area between war and peace and its complexity. War and peace are experienced as a continuum in which not only physical violence is taking place *across* borders. Instead, more delicate types of violence are also taking place *within* Israeli borders. Section 5.2 and 5.3 will delve into these (delicate) types of violence. What can be

concluded from this section, is that conflict is not only characterized by bullets and bombs, rather interviewees stipulate that it is important to realize that it is not peaceful to live inside Israel even though it is not an official warzone.

5.2. Explaining structural divides

In the following section, a securitization framework will be used to explain divides among Israelis and Arabs. During fieldwork, many stories and examples were shared about refined governmental policies that are discriminating and disadvantaging the Arab society within Israel (Interview 4,7, 11). Securitization theory can help explaining why such discriminatory laws, contributing to divides within Israel, have passed since the Second Intifada in 2000 (Olesker, 2014). Briefly said, securitization refers to a process in which a speech act, most often performed by political leaders, presents an issue as a threat to national security. Once the threat is accepted by the public, it becomes 'securitized' meaning that it has become legitimate to use extreme measures in the name of national security. Securitization occurs in different ways, for instance through 'historical narratives, social and political contexts, images, media, institutions, and physical acts such as protests'(Olesker, 2014). In the following section such securitization dynamics will be discussed in order to show how the public is being influenced in accepting the threat of Palestinians and Arab Israelis.

To provide more context in terms of securitization in Israel, the author would like to highlight an important moment in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As mentioned in section 5.1.2, the Second Intifada was a turning point. Violence broke out in Gaza and the West Bank, and in reaction to this, Israeli Arabs protesting against the Israeli government as an act of solidarity with their fellow Palestinians. This moment influenced the dynamics within Israeli because it was revealing the dividedness in Israel (Interview 4, 7). It gave a rise to the belief of many Jewish Israelis that Israeli Arabs were (and still are) posing a threat to the security and identity of the Jewish population (Interview 5, 7). In the name of security, the Israeli police responded to the protests with great violence and they killed and injured many Arab Israelis. Due to the securitized matter, these extreme security measures were accepted by the biggest part of the public.

Furthermore, the author would like to paint a general picture of the extent of securitization before diving into examples. Daily life in Israel has been securitized for many years. In fact, Israel has developed its security system to such a high level, that political leaders from all over the world come to Israel to ask for their expertise (documentary 'Tears of Gaza' of VPRO Tegenlicht, 2017). Israel did not only develop top-notch security in terms of safe infrastructure, advanced military techniques and a profound army but they also developed less tangible security measures. Next, examples of less tangible securitization measures will be touched upon.

Army time

Although the army is obviously a security measure, the underlying, less visible dynamics of the army are also important to understand its full importance in terms of securitization. Several interviewees highlight that military time strongly contributes to the creation of fear, and a divide among Arabs and Jews. All Jewish Israeli citizens are obliged to serve in the army, this is clear from the moment a child is born (Interview 2, 5, 11). One can imagine that the awareness of an external threat is built up from a young age, which can contribute to a mindset of fear. Besides the fact that Jewish Israeli need to serve the army themselves, soldiers and security officials seem to be everywhere in Israel. Extreme interrogations at airports, strict checks at malls and stations and military clothing and guns are apparent in daily streetscape. This can unconsciously raise a sense of (in)security. Interestingly, I noticed myself that I got used to these dynamics quite easily and in fact, after a while I felt more safe in the presence of the Israeli army. The first time I stayed in the West Bank, I was quite overwhelmed

by some Arab men who were very persevering and in my experience obtrusive. Looking back at the situation, I know that these men were trying to advocate for their hardship in the West Bank and they were frustrated by the fact that I could come and go as I pleased, whereas they could not move freely. However, at that time, I felt more safe when I crossed the border, back to Israel, back to the army, back to a culture that is more similar to my own. Experiencing this myself too, gives more understanding in how Israel's security measures can be viewed as legitimate by the Israeli public.

Informal talks with Israeli friends and by passers reveal the importance of the army in their lives. Pacifists, activists, and as the pacifist and activists would say: mainstream Israelis that are proud to defend Israel, all agree that the army shaped their lives. Rather than thinking about becoming a princess, firemen, doctor or a nurse, children grow up with the idea that they will work for the army. Girls -or should we call them women- are serving at least three years, and boys -or should we call them men- are serving at least four years, meaning that until the age of approximately 22, their lives are planned around the army. The author highlights this because it shows the greatness of the impact of the army in a mainstream Israeli family.

Furthermore, according to several workers in Sindyanna, the army 'brainwashes' Israeli people: *"How you grow up in Israel, 'a soldier is an engine, when you grow up you will be a soldier, they are the best people, we are the moral army, you can go to the army because we are moral'. You need to go, it is pride to go. The government controls you like this"* (Interview 11). In the light of securitization, one can explain that the government tries to include people in the process of securing their nation. By promoting the army and positioning army service as a heroic deed in which one protects its people from harm, the government can gain more legitimacy for its security measures.

Framing in the media

> *"Do you know that Bibi has his own newspaper? And it is free? The first free newspaper in Israel. Until that time, you bought a newspaper, so I am not reading this newspaper, it is a joke to read it. Because you know that it is the right… they take the reality and use it. If you don't take the whole reality you can change it. And what is happening now in Israel is that they are changing the books of history that people learn"* (Interview 12).

Informal chats and interviews repeatedly touch upon the influence of the media on the imaging of Arabs and Palestinians, the creation of fear and advocating political views of the right-wing government (Interview 4, 9, 12, 14). While staying at the house of one of the founders of Sindyanna, a news item was broadcasted about a fire that had occurred in northern Israel. The police raided Arab houses because they assumed that the fire was planted by Arabs. Some weeks after the event, research showed that the fire was caused by extreme drought, meaning that no human action was involved. The founders of Sindyanna pointed out that it is not unusual that media reporting goes hand in hand with finger pointing to Arabs without a probable cause. In their view, such actions are part of the strategy of the Israeli government to feed negative emotions towards Arabs, which in turn feeds divides among Jews and Arabs.

> *"All the political leaders in Israel who want to be reelected, they are using very racist and nationalist language to become popular. Trumpism, in Israel, is a very apparent in our society. For a long time, the result is that the society as a whole is adopting very racist and anti-Arab positions"*(Interview 9).

Other recurring topics in the media are international relations and developments, with a focus on issues that have potential effects for Israel. One eloquent example that is put forward by one of the interviewees is that the Arab Spring is referred to as the Arab Winter in Israel. '*The idea of recognizing, that this coming together of Arabs and Jews CAN do something, this idea is not existing*'

(Interview 4). According to the interviewee, media reporting and president Netanyahu's are presenting the Islamic Winter as a threat to Israeli society. One, among many, articles published by the free Israeli newspaper, illustrates this: 'Four years on, something of an Arab Winter' (https://www.timesofisrael.com/four-years-on-something-of-an-arab-winter/). The trend of the article says that although the world celebrates the Arab Spring as proof of the need of people to be free, the reality shows that events are not kind to optimistic thinkers. The article highlights the horrors taking place as a result of the Arab Spring and concludes the article with the following:

> **"No Palestine Spring**
>
> The Arab revolts did not spread to Palestine, but they are having a big effect. Events in Iraq and Syria make it seem not unreasonable that the Islamic State group could attack Jordan and in the future also make inroads in a Palestinian state composed almost entirely of Sunni Muslims.
>
> Palestinians tend to dismiss such fears. But Israelis listen when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu argues it would be folly, as such a time of chaos, to pull out a territory that sits on the cusp of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.
>
> So the occupation grinds on, and with it continues the Jewish settlement of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, each day bringing the sides closer to a single binational entity whose component pieces can no longer be ripped apart. That would be the end of the Jewish state- perhaps the most ironic potential outcome of the events sparked by a Tunisian street vendor on Dec. 17, 2010."

The above shows that the Islamic Winter is put forward as a threat to Israel, due its potential spread to Sunni Muslims in Palestine. Moreover, the article implies that the occupation of the Palestinian territories is legitimate because it is needed to control the situation.

In short, one can conclude that the media is used as a channel for promoting and spreading securitization measures. Securitization theory explains how media can contribute in the creation of divides, highlighting the threat of Arabs within Israel and in the Arab world creates a sense of threat and thus an urgency to provide security.

'Subtle' discriminative policies

> *"I think in some way or another the Israeli government reached the conclusion that in fact the Arab community is so poor and underdeveloped that it is not good for Israeli economy in general. So they try to invest economically, they try to integrate Arabs, Arab companies, Arab entrepreneurs, Arab business people in the economy of Israel... It doesn't mean that they are not racist to Arabs, on the contrary, this government is so racist against Arabs. Just a week ago they demolished eleven houses in a village and yesterday they demolished houses in an Arab village in the South and killed...."*
> (Interview 7).

Discriminative political decisions and actions are not put to the fore under a clear banner of discrimination and are therefore not very straight forward. According to interviewees, Israeli government is currently supporting Arab society on the one hand, while discriminating them on the other hand (Interview 4, 7, 14). This sounds rather contradictory, but interviewees provide an explanation for this contradiction. Israel regards itself as a very developed and modern nation. However, due to the high inequality and underdeveloped economy, they are not accepted by the OECD. In order to become a member, they have to develop itself economically, and the government realizes that they need the Arab society for this, since they make out one fifth of the population.

(Interview 4, 14). At the same time, discriminative policies are apparent, and are contributing to divides within Israel. People engaged in Sindyanna, share their perceptions of 'the meaning of what is between the lines' of such political actions. According to most interviewees, generally speaking, the Israeli government is developing and investing in 'Jewish' Israel, while they do not, or at least not proportionally, invest in the Arab society (Interview 1, 2, 4). lack of investments of the government affect a lot of crucial aspects in Arab life, such as agriculture, education, job opportunities, housing.

Agriculture

Until 1948, the biggest economic source for Arabs was agriculture, and specifically olive cultivation (Interview 2, 4, 7). As explained before, many Israeli Arabs lost their lands when the Israeli state was declared, and until today it is almost impossible for Palestinians to live from their traditional agricultural activities. According to workers at Sindyanna, the government is not investing or supporting Arab agriculture while they do invest in Jewish agriculture (Interview 4, 7, 10). While in the car from Tel Aviv to the Golan Heights in Northern Israel, one of the workers in Sindyanna says the following: *"Do you see? Within 1 minute you move from the first world to the third world, there is no border between Arabs and Jews, but you can see it in the landscape"*. One side of this nonexistent border is flat and fruitful Jewish land, while the other side, the Arab land, is rocky and dry. According to another worker, the government is investing in maintenance and an advanced irrigation system when it comes to Jewish lands, while they fail to do so in Arab lands. Moreover, while they are protecting Jewish economy from import, they are not protecting the biggest agricultural source of income from Arab, olive production (Interview 4, 7, 11). For many product, like fruits and dates, high import taxes are raised, but olive oil is imported in large numbers from Spain and Italy. These examples of interviewees highlight how strategic policies are disadvantaging Arab society.

Education

The issue about lack of qualitative and equal education for Arabs is brought up frequently in interviews (2, 4, 9, 10). *"An Arab pupil gets like half of what a Jewish pupil gets. And the results are accordingly"* (Interview 9). Although formally there are no separate schools, informal settings result in a divided schooling system. An Arab woman working at Sindyanna explains how this works in practice (Interview 2). When subscribing her children to a Jewish school she was told that Arab families need to go to Arab schools. The school and the municipality tried to persuade her to take her children to a different school, however she was persistent not to listen to this, since she strongly believes that Arabs and Jews should co-exist and build a life together. Thus, she decided to go high up and find out the rules at a ministry level. It turned out that formally there are no rules that bound her children to go to an Arab school. Discouragement, societal pressure and separated villages for Arabs and Jews result in a highly divided schooling system. As a result, investments can be targeted more easily to Jewish children and the Arab children are being disadvantages structurally (Interview 4, 9, 10). Thus, Jewish and Arab children are physically divided due to separate schools and next to that, they are not getting the same treatment.

In terms of the content of education, Arabs and Jews are learning different realities, because different narratives are shared in their history lessons. Whereas Jewish schools, teach their children about the 'War of Independence', the Arab schools teach their children about the 'Nakba'. Although they are explaining the same event, the interpretations are very diverging. Nakba means the Catastrophe, illustrating their feelings regarding this part of history. And war of independence implies a very different setting, one of the interviewees says the following: *"All the time during my childhood, they told me **we** are the right and **they** are the wrong, **we** are the good and **they** are the bad. **We** are the justice, **we** have the justice with us and **we** are moral and ethical."* (Interview 11). Due to different

schooling systems, it is possible to teach different realities about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As the quote illustrates, through education, children are indirectly taught how 'they' are the good side in this conflict which can indirectly feed the creation of an enemy.

Job opportunities

In line with the former, job opportunities and working conditions for Arabs are generally not good, and unequal compared to Jewish society (Interview 1, 2, 7, 10, 11). In Arab society, women are often not educated, which gives them little chances on the labor market. Due to this difficulty, combined with a need for a job due to the expensive life in Israel, women are often working under conditions that are illegal. In fact, one of the Arab interviewees says that Arabs and Jews working at the same factory, are getting a different salary. (Interview 1, informal chat with the husband of the CEO of Sindyanna). Several reasons are given for this issue of low paid work in Arab society *"First of all the Arab society, it is a traditional society, that the men dominates the lives of women, the men can decide what she can learn, where she can work, if she can go outside the home or not... and the Israeli government didn't develop the Arab society and villages in Israel, they do not open up job opportunities for women, nor supply the Arab citizens with busses, taxis that can move between the country or the village. This is one reason that it is not allowed that women move and the life is very expensive here in Israel and the Arab family if the husband or the men work it is not enough salary to live here and Israeli in twenty years it is different"* (Interview 1). In terms of working conditions, the Arabs are very disadvantaged in Israel. Lots of criticism is raised against the attitude of the government regarding this. To put this criticism into perspective, it is important to note that the government is currently developing some policies that should improve the situation for Arabs in Israel (Interview 14).

Illegal housing

Another issue taking place in Israeli society is illegal housing (Interview 5, 7, 9, 11). When Israel declared its independence in 1948, lots of Arab people fled to neighboring countries, leaving all their lands and houses behind (Interview 7, 9). The Arabs who stayed, remained living in Arab villages that are still existing today. However, over the years, Arab people who returned to Israel did not have the property rights over their lands anymore after all those years (informal chat in Akko), instead, they were confiscated by the Israeli state (Interview 10). Furthermore, between 1948 and now, the population has been growing, but the Arabs are not getting allocation of land accordingly (Interview 9). As a consequence, Arab villages are utterly over-stretched. Despite this problem, the government does not give lands nor licenses to build houses (Interview 7, 9, 11). In fact, as the following quote illustrates, they are cracking down illegal housing: *"Most of the houses, the new houses are without license but the decision to destroy 11 houses without notice or giving any alternative to the owners is a policy. A policy to frighten, to terrorize, I think Netanyahu is convinced if he will be so bad to the Arabs, he will get more support from the Jewish supporters. And maybe he will turn the attention from his criminal investigation, from the accusations"* (Interview 7). This quote also shows how discriminating Arab society is a result of, and at the same time a breeding ground for legitimate securitization.

In short, many discriminative policies are apparent in Israel. Arabs are structurally disadvantaged in core aspects of life such as education, agricultural development, job opportunities and housing. Securitization theory (Olesker, 2013) can explain how perceived threats can lead to a state of (extreme) security measures. Discriminative policies, the occupation and building the separation wall are examples of this. Securitization perspective offers a way to understand the vicious circle of divides

leading to the creation of more divides. When perceiving a threat, security measures are taken, which in turn result in the creation gaps and fear between Arabs and Jews.

5.3. Day to day divides within Israel

 "Why this feeling of fear and why this feeling of the enemy? It is very complicated, it is very hard to explain it, but we live it. For somebody from outside it is difficult to understand" (Interview 2).

As discussed above, political decisions and policies have a large impact on the perceived divides within Israel. Next to discriminative policies, there are also a lot of unwritten and informal values that contribute to the continuation of a divided society. Negative thoughts, like the quote above is illustrating, are existing. How do such thoughts develop? One can imagine that over the course of seventy years, a society in conflict develops complex thoughts, dynamics and structures. Although it is difficult to pinpoint exact causes of 'a feeling of the enemy', the following section serves to unravel a piece of the puzzle by explaining experiences of day-to-day divides. Observations and interviewees point out three significant factors, namely language (barriers), segregated living and diverging cultures, these will be discussed next.

Language

When walking through the streets of Israel, one will see and hear Hebrew and Arabic. Language is an important aspect in the divided lives of Jews and Arabs. Firstly because it is a very visible characteristic which makes it easy to 'outgroup' someone (Interview 11) and secondly because not being able to speak each other's language leads to a communication barrier. Several Arab women mentioned this issue, and how their lack of ability to speak Hebrew or English is making them very insecure to communicate with non-Arabs (Interview 1, 2, 3). As a consequence, they used to be very focused on what was familiar to them, the Arab society rather than mixing with Jewish society.

Next to the practical side of the language barrier, it seems as though the two languages serve as a metaphor for two populations, and the divide existing between them. Although 20,8 % of the Israeli population is Arab, the second language spoken in Israel is English, not Arabic (Informal chat with sister of one of the workers at Sindyanna). One can wonder why the schooling system is not bilingual in a country like Israel. Moreover, one can question whether Arabic is fully accepted in Israel. When discussing this matter with two workers at Sindyanna, it is mentioned that a recent news item stated that there has been a request in Southern Israel to not allow Arabic on busses anymore. Furthermore, it is said that: "*You can see them in restaurants or sitting drinking a beer, and they whisper. Not to be heard loudly. It is not acceptable, the Arab language in the street, but officially Arabic is one of the languages in Israel*" (Interview 4). These examples show that Arabic is not appreciated by a part of Jewish society and that Arabs so not feel comfortable to speak Arabic freely. Although it is difficult to fully understand as an outsider, taking in mind the long history of violence between Jews and the Arab world, one can imagine that Jews are opposing Arabic language because it is indirectly perceived as a threat to the independence of the Jewish state. It thus means that language, one of the most important means of communication, can contribute in creating a gap between the two different groups.

Living Apart Together

Although Jewish Israelis and Arab Israelis live in the same country, they are living very segregated (Interview 10,14, 2, 5). "*99 percent of the Arabs and Jews are living separately in Israel, in different cities. So when or how to overcome a divide? There is no mix so they don't know about each other's lives*" (Interview 14). Jerusalem provides a clear example of segregation, the old city is divided in a Jewish quarter, a Muslim quarter, an Armenian quarter and a Christian quarter. Although there are no

boundaries, Jewish and Arab people are generally staying within their own quarters. To illustrate, when looking for a hostel, a Jewish man with a kappa showed me the way, but, only until a certain point, because this man did not want to go into the Arab neighborhood in which the hostel was located. Mixing between Arabs and Jews is very limited. All over Israel, most of the villages, or at least neighborhoods are either Arab or Jewish.

Albeit the general image of Israel is segregated, it should be noted that the situation is currently changing a bit (Interview 10). Segregation of housing is getting smaller because the lower class is growing and housing is very expensive in Israel (informal chats with three workers of Sindyanna). Due to this trend, students and poorer Jewish families are starting to live in cheaper neighborhoods, that are Arab.

Culture

Besides structural factors such as language, the educational system and separate living areas, culture also plays a role in the divides lives of Arabs and Jews. When the Jewish start their weekend at Shabbat, on Friday, Arabs are going to school and work. When the Arabs celebrate their weekends on Sunday, Jewish people start their work week (Informal chat with CEO of Sindyanna and her husband). Besides such concrete differences, less visible cultural differences are also trickling through in society.

Both Arabs and Jews often mention that the Arab society is very traditional (Interview 1,2, 4, 7, 14). According to several interviewees: "*men dominate the lives of women, men can decide what women learn, if, and where they can work and whether they can go outside the home or not*" (Interview 1). Besides the internal dynamics in Arab society, the Israeli government also maintains the rather isolated position of Arab women because they do not invest in enabling infrastructures regarding schooling, jobs, and transport (Interview 1, 4, 7). This combination of a traditional society on the one hand and a lack of infrastructure on the other hand, results in little mixing between Arab and Jewish society.

In line with the former, one of the Arab women explains that the Jewish society has been developing a lot quicker in terms of the emancipation of women than the Arab society (Interview 2). According to her, due to the co-existence with the more emancipated (non-orthodox) Jews, young Arabs tend to "move to the other side" in terms of emancipation. Traditional Arabs consider this as a threat to culture, their language and their mentality, and thus believe it is more beneficial to keep the cultures separated. On a daily basis, it is thus not encouraged by the traditional Arab society to mix life with Jews.

In general, it is difficult to pinpoint how divides are experienced between Arabs and Jews. On a daily basis, differences in language, living areas and cultures are contributing to divided lives. But as one of the interviewees once said "*you need to learn psychology in order to fully understand it*" (Interview 11). And another interviewee pointed out: "*It is not like Apartheid in South Africa, which was very clear. Here you have Arabs and Jews sitting together and nobody will ask Arab women for their ID, there are no laws of this kind, bathrooms or cafés are shared. So, it is a very kind of sophisticated discrimination*" (Interview 10). However, for Israelis it is not difficult to identify who belongs to 'your group' or not, because you can tell by the subtle things such as the confidence of people in certain settings or the food that people are eating (Interview 11). What can be concluded from this section, is that on a daily basis, divides are very prevalent in many levels.

5.4. No more sitting on the sideline

This section builds on the former sections, by providing a more thorough understanding in *why* people are partaking in a local fair trade peacebuilding initiative such as Sindyanna.

"My father used to say 'be revolutionary, who is not a revolutionary before the age of 40 has no heart, but who is a revolutionary after 40 has no brain'.... Now, ok borders, armies, we live under the army but ok.... I will never accept it, I have confidence" (Interview 4).

People working at, or together with Sindyanna want to make a change. A change in the political situation in Israel, a change in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a change in poverty, a change in hostile relationships among Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs, and a change in the difficult circumstances for many Arabs living in Israel. As the quote above illustrates, sitting on the sideline doing nothing is not in the vocabulary of interviewees. In order to understand why these people are actively trying to change society, while the majority of people in this region are not, two questions are answered. Which problems are they trying to address? And why are they putting their beliefs into action? The first question is elaborately discussed in the former sections. The second will be touched upon next.

TABLE 1: MOTIVATION TO WORK AT OR WITH SINDYANNA

Motivations	Jewish Israeli	Arab Israeli	Arab Palestinians
"To change the relationship between Arab and Jewish citizens in Israel"	++++	++	+
"To develop Arab women (and society) socially and economically"	++++	+++	+
"The work for Arab and Jews relationships and the *fair trade*"		++	+
"The idea that we must stop the injustice, settlements must stop and we must of course live together with justice and dignity and having the same rights as equal lovers."	+++		+
"Doing business and gaining income"			+++
"We drown together with pessimism, we must *do* something to raise up (and change society)"	+++++	+	+

* amount of + represents how many people within the categorization identify with the motivation
** categories consist of 8 Jewish Israelis (of whom 3 are Zionist Arabs), 3 Arab Israelis and 3 Arab Palestinians

Table 2 presents motives that are highlighted in interviews. In line with narratives and experiences that are explained earlier in this chapter, interviewees highlight the importance of solving macro issues. In Sindyanna, they find a place to *change hostile relationships between Arabs and Jews*, *empower Arab society* and *ending the occupation of Palestine*. Furthermore, Israeli and Palestinian Arabs identify the fair trade philosophy of Sindyanna as an important factor to work for Sindyanna. Besides this, all three partners in the West Bank emphasize the business aspect of working with Sindyanna, because they see opportunities in expanding their market. Finally, what is often mentioned as a motivation, is how people feel the urge to really *do* something in order to build towards a more prosperous future.

Besides the motivation to work in Sindyanna to address macro issues, some of the interviewees mention share their personal stories to explain their affiliation with Sindyanna. The table above mostly

represents people who work for the organization itself. However, a lot of the stakeholders involved in Sindyanna do not work at the organization, but rather make use of their programs or supply them with olive products. When interviewing them, one can identify the individual motivation to engage in programs of Sindyanna. For instance, women partaking in the basket weaving programs or language courses are motivated to learn their own skills and get a life outside of the household (Interview 3).

Countering cynical reason

Since the conflict has been taking place over 70 years, everyone involved in Sindyanna was born during the conflict. That makes one wonder, why do these people choose to act, while most people are 'just living their lives'? Why is the majority of people in "*total despair and disillusion. Many Israelis that I know, they don't believe in anything*" (Interview 7) while the interviewees keep hope and try to fight the situation? (Interview 2, 4, 10, 11). Table 2 illustrates that, and how people in Sindyanna find the strength to fight for peace and prosperity in an environment that seems to be politically and socially stuck.

TABLE 2: COUNTERING CYNICAL REASON

Interview Number	Quote
Interview 4	We drown together with pessimism, we must *do* [emphasis added] something to raise up.
Interview 11	We are not just talking and going to election day and say here we are. It is daily, we believe in people. We believe we did crimes so now we need to do something else.
Interview 2	What can I *do* today? Several years I have been thinking like this. From here, all of us are here and nobody will go away, but how can we collaborate together to make this a better place, for us, for our children?
Interview 10	And since there are so many you always have a chance, sometimes you lose sometimes you win. If you lose, you fight… And, I mean it is a question of faith. The extremes don't have an idea of on the long run we can survive… We will fight back; I will fight it; I am a fighter
Interview 14	I was looking for this kind of platform that doesn't only have criticism about the situation but also offering an alternative. Building something positive. What we are doing here is actually doing things, not only talking about it.
Interview 6	I am a person that really thinks that grassroots level movements are going to make the change. But it is going to take a while because unfortunately we are not trained, we don't have a lot of power over our governments, they don't listen to us. But I love working with Sindyanna.
Interview 7	I was talking with someone from Colombia who was working now, after the peace agreement, she is trying to develop a fair trade movement… I talked to her, what happened is that 5 years ago Colombia was the worst place in the world, people were killed on the streets, and now, in my eyes, it is one of the best places in the world. So you see in 5 years, everything will change in 5 years, I keep hope.

In order to understand the choice of people to act in times of a protracted conflict, it is useful to look at the theory of Boyer and Yurchak (2010), as discussed in chapter 2. When looking at the narratives of the people who are working in Sindyanna, one can identify clear linkages with Boyer and Yurchak's theory on cynical reason. Generally speaking, a fundamental change in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not seem to be happening any time soon. However, people working at Sindyanna are active agents that are trying to build a more peaceful and prosperous future, despite this rather pessimistic prospect. As Boyer and Yurchak would say, they have 'an attitude with a focus on possibilities, seeking for transformation and change' (Rethmann, 2013, p. 230). A relevant question remains, which path did these people take? And how did these people come to the point that they found possibilities in fair trade and the olive tree branch?

As was briefly mentioned before, many of the people who are currently working for Sindyanna have been -or still are- politically active in the left wing (Interview 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14). However, interviewees share several views and developments to illustrate that their political engagement has not been influential enough. For example, interviewees mention that the right wing government has been in power for more than 20 years in Israel (Interview 4). In the eyes of interviewees this is important due to two aspects. First, it shows how the majority of Israeli citizens is still supporting the right wing and its policies and actions regarding Palestinians and Arabs. Secondly, as long as this government is in power, peacebuilding efforts nor fruitful policies will happen any time soon "*I think we will wait until Godo: something that will not come*" (Interview 7).

In line with this, some interviewees question the motives of the Israeli government, since they believe that the government is continuing warfare and discriminative practices in order to fill their own pockets, instead of putting the needs of Israeli people first (Interview 4, 6, 7, 11). Furthermore, interviewees are mocking so- called democratic practices, because they think "Israel is a puppet of the United States", rather than an independent democratic government (Interview 4,7). History, and current events, have shown them how one decision of Netanyahu, or even Trump, can influence events in Israel and Palestine (Interview 6, 9, 10). All in all, interviewees see the limits of their own political engagement and have little faith in the current government to change the conflict situation and other issues in Israel.

Enabling changes through politics seems to be a bumpy ride, but people in Sindyanna are still hopeful. According to people working at Sindyanna, a recipe for change encompasses more than a political peace, as the following quote illustrates: "*In order to change you need to do two things. One, daily, what we are doing. And two, go to the government, change, really change, not just say. Try to do it on both sides, if you only do one it is not enough*" (Interview 11). As table 2 shows, people in Sindyanna believe that it is key to *act* and build a change in society on a daily basis. Being in the opposition, or merely fighting politics is not fruitful according to people working at Sindyanna (Interview 7, 10, 11). Instead, building something tangible, something that is empowering people and at the same provides an example of successful cooperation between Arabs and Jews is what they believe in. Firstly, because it is affecting the lives of Arabs and Jews on a daily basis, and secondly, because it is perceived as an important strategy to realize peace. The local 'warscape' of the olive tree branch became their focus point within the bigger conflict, because this is where they saw opportunities to actually bring about transformation and change.

The founders of Sindyanna believed that they could find space on a local level to contribute to peacebuilding. In fact, the CEO of Sindyanna, and the CEO of Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans both believe that grassroots movement is needed to build peace among people (Interview 6, 7). When peace would be realized at a state level, it would not necessarily mean that people feel and act as if there is peace among them. According to the CEO of Sindyanna, grassroots peacebuilding is needed to prepare people for peace in order for a political peace to gain legitimacy and thus be effective (Interview 7).

5.5. Concluding: a motor for change?

In the former sections, the author has made an attempt to demonstrate the complexity of divides that are experienced within Israel and between Israelis and Palestinians. Through many narratives, perceptions and experiences, it is clear that there are divides existing in several ways which are caused by very diverging factors. Firstly it is important to realize that divides are not limited to Israel and the Palestinians territories, but also exist *within* Israel. Secondly, it should be notes that divides are ranging from very extreme situations such as the separation wall until more subtle situations such as eating in different restaurants.

The data that is gathered in this chapter is a mix of experiences from workers of Sindyanna and random people whom are living in Israel. Although most of the (negative) experiences regarding the divides or 'the other' do not represent the feelings and thoughts of workers of Sindyanna, it *does* affect their lives and it determines their choice to work in such a politically sensitive organization. As this chapter illustrates, conflict dynamics are still very much alive, in a violent and a non-violent way. What can be concluded is that the people working in Sindyanna try to take matters in their own hands and try to make a change.

6. Local peacebuilding: shaping divides?

Chapter 5 served to give insights in the divides existing between Israelis and Palestinians, and concluded with the statement that people in Sindyanna want to make a change in this divided society. In this chapter, it will be discussed *how* Sindyanna is aiming to shape divides within Israel and between Israelis and Palestinians, thereby answering research question two: *Why and how do Sindyanna and its stakeholders aim to shape the divide through their work in the fair trade olive tree branch?*

This chapter serves to answer the *'how'* question by linking the philosophy and mission of Sindyanna and its practices. In order to understand the strategy and focus of Sindyanna you have to go back to its origins. Thereafter, the theory of change of Sindyanna will be discussed by going into the projects and strategies that are aiming to bridge divides. Since an organization is shaped by the people working in it, this will be analyzed by looking into the ideas of Sindyanna's workers. Finally, it will be discussed how Sindyanna is trying to shape the divide on a local, national, transnational and international level.

6.1. How it all started

Before 1993, the founders of Sindyanna were peace activists against the occupation of Palestine, who were fighting against inequality (Interview 6). When the Oslo agreement failed to materialize, they realized that they wanted to build an alternative in which they could really *do* something, rather than merely demonstrating, opposing politics, and talking about making a change. From that moment, the founders started to think about ways in which they could bring about changes on a daily basis.

According to the founders of Sindyanna, the role of Arab society is key in making a change in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and in the divided Israeli society (Interview 4, 7, 10, 11). Without getting bogged down in a discussion on the origins of the conflict, the founders identified the declaration of the Israel state - or the Nakba - as an important event to explain current issues taking place in the region. When the Israeli state was declared in 1948, the majority of Arabs left their lands and fled to neighboring countries (Interview 6). Since that moment, Arabs have faced a lot of hardship and interviewees state that hardly any investments are made to support the Arab society (Interview 4, 7, 10). In line with scholars such as Richards (2005), the founders of Sindyanna believe peace is not merely the absence of violence. That is why they want to tackle the divides and negative relationship between Arabs and Jews *within* Israel. At the same time, they believe that changes in the Arab society need to be made in order to make a change in the broader conflict between Israel and Palestine. As one of the interviewees stated they 'need the Arabs for a rise up' (Interview 4), this cannot be reached with solely leftist Israelis. Sindyanna mostly focusses on making a change in the Arab society, and the mutual relationship between Arabs and Jews within Israel, because they feel that this lies in their capabilities and influence sphere. Of course, speaking in the words of interviewees, they also aim to contribute to a change in the bigger conflict with the Palestinian territories. Whenever they can, they try to work with organizations in the West Bank and help out where they can.

To make a change happen, the founders of Sindyanna started by pinpointing the core issues that they wanted to address, namely hostile relations between Arabs and Jews, racist behavior towards Arabs, the (violent) occupation of Palestine, and an economically underdeveloped society. To tackle these issues, the founders of Sindyanna started a social program called El Bakar in an Arab village in the Galilee area (Interview 6). They organized all sorts of events and projects in a cultural center in which they tried to empower Arab society by providing educational and language support.

After a while, they realized they could make more impact if they would integrate an economic aspect to the program. Firstly, because this would make the organization itself more financially sustainable. And secondly because the economic aspect would be a way to economically empower the Arab society. Moreover, creating a space in which Arabs and Jews meet each other on a regular basis and for a longer period of time is quite a challenge in the divided society. Providing an economic incentive could possibly help in finding more people willing to work with people from 'the other side' and at the same time make it a long-term project. Thus, what started out as sporadically organizing small social events, grew out as a social *and* economic, long-term project. In other words, while the initial reasons to start Sindyanna were foremost social, they thought it was important to combine it with a business aspect.

Although the founders of Sindyanna knew they wanted to develop an economic program, they did not know how to shape this idea. After a while, someone enlightened them with the idea to start doing business in a field that was traditional and thus familiar to the Arab society, namely the olive tree business (Interview 7). The founders were convinced this was a good idea because it would match their core business to their core mission. Later on in this section, this will be discussed more elaborately.

Today, Sindyanna works according to five pillars that reflect their values, ambitions, business approach, and mission:

- *Reclamation*: Sindyanna reclaimed neglected lands and transforms them into flourishing Jewish- Arab olive groves.
- *Development and modernization of traditional Arab farming and agriculture:* traditional Arab famers work with techniques that are commercially insufficient. Sindyanna helps to bring advanced techniques in order to make olive groves profitable for Arab farmers.
- *Women's empowerment:* Sindyanna believes that empowering Arab women is key to empowering Arab society.
- *Jewish and Arab coexistence:* Sindyanna aims to bridge divides between Arabs and Jews trough storytelling about the cooperation between Arabs and Jews within Sindyanna and by selling their products which represent Arab and Jew cooperation.
- *Fair Trade:* Sindyanna believes in Fair Trade, they build strong partnerships with producers and highly value trust, respect and a social conscience" (http://www.sindyanna.com/about-us/mission-and-goals/).

In between the lines, the researcher identified that interviewees believe in the following overarching mission of Sindyanna: building a peaceful society. In the following, the theory of change of Sindyanna will be discussed by diving into these five pillars in more detail.

6.2. Bringing the pillars into practice

In order to understand the strategy of Sindyanna, it is useful to look at its theory of change. Theory of change is a widely used and defined concept, the following description explains the basic components: *"the theory of change includes a big picture analysis of how change happens in relation to a specific thematic area; an articulation of an organization or program pathway in relation to this; and an impact assessment framework which is designed to test both the pathway and the assumptions made about how change happens"* (Intrac in Stein & Valters, 2012, p. 4).

The mission and vision of Sindyanna have been mentioned in the section above, and thereby briefly explain the thematic area in which they are operating and at the same time try to implement change.

Linking to the pillars discussed, the pathway of Sindyanna will be explained next, by elaborating on the 'plan of action' regarding the 5 pillars that all together serve to make a change happen.

Pillar 1: Reclamation of lands (in Israel)

As explained before, one of the ways in which the Israeli government and army could confiscate lands is through article 78 of the ancient 1858 Ottoman Land Code. The code states that *"everyone who has possessed and cultivated, land for ten years without dispute acquires a right by prescription [. . .], and he shall be given a new title deed gratuitously"* (Hughes, 2008, p. 89). The Israeli independence resulted in a large amount of Arab refugees, referred to as 'absentees', who could no longer cultivate their lands in Israel. This Ottoman code enabled the Israeli government to confiscate Arab lands, and today, Arabs are still facing the consequences (Interview 4, 7). Moreover, these events have contributed to the ill-will between Arabs and Jews in both Palestine and Israel.

Due to the issues of land and the (forced) migration of Arabs, the olive production tradition has declined tremendously over the years. Since Sindyanna aims to overcome divides in Israel and empower Arabs, it only seemed natural to them to start projects to revive the Arab tradition of olive cultivation (Interview 4, 7, 10). By doing so, they not only make a statement about the right to lands for Arabs, but they also find a way to bring about economic prosperity. In practice, Sindyanna has been working on several projects, among which the 'Oasis Project' and the 'Scottish Grove Project'. These projects started in 2010 and 2012 respectively, and are still going on today. In these projects they reclaim lands, build fruitful relationships and develop modern and sustainable ways of olive cultivation that can contribute to economic development of the Arab society. This is illustrated by the following quote:

> *"Sindyanna promotes her products and the cooperation between Jews and Arabs and overcomes the division between Arabs and Jews in Israel, through the projects, like, the groves. Sindyanna has groves in central Israel, 50 acres of organic olive growth that is a mutual Jewish and Arab, together. I mean this is at itself, because it deals with land, which is the core of the conflict here in Israel, and the idea, the power of this idea"* (Interview 14).

As mentioned before, the olive tree lands are a local warscape within, and a reflection of, the bigger conflict. As interviewees and scholars (Hughes, 2008; Meneley, 2014) argue, the Israeli government targets the lands of the olives to thwart Palestinian development. Interestingly, the founders of Sindyanna used the same strategic setting, but with the opposite goal: empowering Arab society. Although reclaiming lands is initially targeted to empower individual Arab people, the secondary goal is unifying and activating the Arab society at whole, in order to bring about a change on the macro-level. Thus, for Sindyanna, this issue of lands and the hostilities stemming from it, were an important factor to choose the pillar *Reclamation of Lands* and start projects in traditional Arab agriculture.

Pillar 2: Development and modernization of traditional Arab farming and agriculture

To make this successful, Sindyanna identified the importance of a second pillar, namely *providing support in the development and modernization of traditional Arab agriculture*. As was mentioned several times during informal talks, Arabs who fled abroad did no longer farm their lands and therefore couldn't develop their practices, while their competitors - i.e. Israeli Jews - could develop all sorts of modern techniques (Interview 11). In line with this, as explained in section 5.1, the Israeli government is undertaking discriminative policies at the expense of Arabs, for instance by not facilitating import protection of olive oil: *"The government does not protect growing olive trees, nor do they tax import from Spain and Greece because it is agriculture from the Arabs"* (Interview 4).

History and recent events remind Arabs of the fact that their lands can be confiscated by the Israeli government or army for unclear reasons (Interview 7). One can imagine that the Arabs living within Israel are hesitant to invest in their lands, since they feel no certainty about their ownership of the lands. Thus, Sindyanna realized that in order for the reclamation of lands to have long term effects, they would have to support modernization and development processes. This might then support Arabs to reclaim their position in the market and build a sustainable business. The following narrative shows Sindyanna's approach within Israel:

"We take the difficulties of the growers, and the workers. And instead of exploiting these difficulties, we enrich them. We, like the deal with a family that has this piece of ground on the mountain, was that we built the plantation of olive trees, we built it, we exploit it for 15 years, the first 6 years it has no revenues, we did it, we put in every shekel, the irrigation, the water from down to up. Everything, all the investments, WE [emphasis added] did that and after 15 years, we give it, as it is, back to the family. This is what's fair in it, this is how to enrich the economy of the Arab through agriculture, also other things but in this case agriculture" (Interview 4).

While the main focus of their projects is in Israel because this is where Sindyanna is located, and where they feel they should foremost make a change (Interview 7), they also try to support Arab agriculture in the West Bank. Sindyanna is selling the products of two partners in the West Bank, Nablus Soap and Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans, in order to enlarge their market and 'expose them to the outside', which in turn boosts the revenues of olive products (Interview 4, 6, 9, 10).

Pillar 3: Empowerment of Arab women

Besides agricultural development, Sindyanna has developed other programs that aim to empower Arab society, and in particular Arab women. The founders of Sindyanna believe women have a key role in the empowerment of the Arab society at whole. Firstly, because they believe that women are more likely to invest their learnings and earnings in their families than men. And secondly, because unemployment of women is a pressing issue, especially because life in Israel is very expensive (Interview 7). One of the interviewees explains that Sindyanna 'is born from a need' because only 30 percent of the Arab women is working, which directly contributes to the continuation of poverty. It is put to the fore that the degree of children that are educated in Arab villages, and that go to Universities, is continuously reducing. In fact, an interviewee state that it is common for young girls to go to work instead of learning, because the family needs money (Interview 4).

The above shows that poverty and lack of education contribute to a vicious circle in which women are victimized the most. Sindyanna tries to break this cycle and bring about positive change in the chances of Arab women. On the one hand, they do so by offering rather concrete support programs focused on developing 'hard skills'. Sindyanna, for instance, offers educational programs and language courses in Hebrew and English. Mostly because women that do not speak a language other than Arabic have very limited options in terms of jobs in Israel. Another program that Sindyanna developed consists of basket weaving courses. In these courses, women learn how to weave all sorts of things and can sell their baskets at home or via Sindyanna (Interview 1, 2, 9, 11). On the other hand, they invest in less tangible things, or 'soft skills', such as social skills and emotional empowerment, as well.

On top of soft and hard skill development, Sindyanna heavily focusses on opening up economic opportunities for Arabs. One of these activities is through 'Bread and Roses' (Interview 11, 14). This is an arts exhibition in which Arab women and (activist) artist in general, can sell their artwork in Tel Aviv on a yearly basis. Revenues of the arts exhibition are reinvested in the empowerment of the Arab community. Finally, Sindyanna has close relations with Workers Advise Center (WAC). They co-

organize projects that help people to enter the labor market and team up to fight for the rights of Arab society, and women. The approach of Sindyanna is illustrated by the quote below:

"Our target group, are women who really don't have another opportunity. Research shows, the higher the education of women is, the easier it is to integrate into the job market. The women that we are confronted with, are women -and this is the vast majority of Arab women BTW- the women are housewives, while men go out to work. And by coming to Sindyanna and learning a skill, they are doing a first step in integrating into the society. Because, even, let's say a woman starts to learn how to weave a basket and sell this basket. Of course this is not possible to live from this because Israel is ultra-expensive. But, if she is very good she can start teaching other women how to weave. We have trained quite a few women who became teachers. And, in other cases, we call it in sociology the first step, you go out of your house, you look around and see the world and then you decide that you want to work full time or want another course... it is a stepping stone. They also learn Hebrew, we started a course because many of them do not know enough Hebrew to work" (Interview 9).

In order to empower Arab women, Sindyanna is aware that they need to take into account the cultural and religious background of the Arab community. As is pointed out in the quote above, the role division in the Arab culture remains rather traditional, at least from a Western point of view. Therefore, Sindyanna tries to set a process into motion in which women start to feel free to take opportunities to empower themselves.

Pillar 4: Jewish and Arab coexistence

Building bridges is interwoven in activities taking place in the above pillars, but is also a pillar in itself. In order to build a peaceful and equal society, Sindyanna actively promotes cooperation between Arabs and Jews within Israel and has partnerships with organizations in the West Bank.

Sindyanna aims to build bridges by initially targeting the people-to-people level. As one of the interviewees explained: "w*ith projects and practices in Sindyanna we build relationships and if there is a political change in the conflict, it would not be all of a sudden, and the society will not be completely divided"* (Interview 7). In line with the theory of Richards (2005), the CEO of Sindyanna believes that there is a continuum between war and peace. She states that even if political peace would 'magically' come about, it would not mean that Arabs and Jews are suddenly at peace with each other. For this reason, Sindyanna, believes in the importance of grassroots peacemaking practices, they are doing so with their fair trade organization in Israel and work together with organizations in the West Bank - i.e. Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans and Nablus Soap (Interview 6, 7).

Sindyanna aims to bring Arabs and Jews together by creating positive experiences and settings. As explained in the first pillar, working together in the business of olive trees is one of the settings that provides continuity in mutual Arab and Jewish cooperation. Within Israel they also organize other activities during the harvesting season. They try to engage more people by organizing picking days in which everyone can help out the farmers in an informal setting. Another way in which Sindyanna tries to 'build bridges' in Israel is through their contact programs (Interview 1, 2, 11). Next to learning the weaving skill in the basket weaving courses, for instance, this also serves as a place where Arab and Jewish women meet each other regularly. The same goes for the language courses. Sindyanna believes that learning each other's language is key to build a society in which people can communicate and interact between groups (Interview 3, 4). With these programs, Sindyanna aims to facilitate regular contact in which people start to understand each other, and ideally even become friends.

Next to the work Sindyanna does in Israel, they also cooperate with Palestinians to build a common society. Together with an Italian organization and Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA), Sindyanna

launched a project called 'fair trade fair peace' (Interview 6, 7, 9). The main idea was to develop a line of products that combined a product of Sindyanna and BFTA that gave a different perspective on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. It aimed to show the world that solutions can come from the ground, and to set an example of cooperation between both 'sides' that is built on trust and on common goals (Interview 9). A message was sent out through a product, signed with the idea that injustices and settlements should be stopped and that Israelis and Palestinians should build a life together, *'with justice and dignity and having the same rights as equal lovers'* (Interview 6).

Along with these activities, Sindyanna believes a physical place is very important to facilitate cooperation between Arabs and Jews (Interview 1, 2, 14). Firstly because it would be a safe place to meet each other, and secondly because this would be a way to show their work to the outside world. The visitors center in Kfar Kanna serves as this physical place. In here, Sindyanna organizes most of its activities and sells products at the same time (Interview 2, 14). The following quote shows the philosophy Sindyanna tries to communicate about cooperation between Arabs and Jews:

> *"In Sindyanna you can see that it is possible, because Sindyanna almost exists 20 years and it is still working, Arab and Jews together, and with a starting point of equality, not being a Jew or Arab as a human being, together working for the same goal and I believe it is possible"* (Interview 2).

Pillar 5: Fair trade

The fifth and last pillar, fair trade, is an important pillar that lays the foundation for all the other 4 pillars. Sindyanna wants to build a more peaceful and equal society, and in order to practice what they preach, Sindyanna does everything in a fair way. One of the interviewees said, *"fair trade and Sindyanna are like a glove to a hand"* (Interview 5). As explained before, Sindyanna wanted to include a business aspect in their program. However, an important addition to this is that Sindyanna follows fair trade principles in their business activities. Table 4 provides an overview of how Sindyanna incorporates fair trade principles in their organization and how this perfectly aligns with the principles of fair trade as discussed in chapter 2. What can be derived from the fair trade practices in Sindyanna is how it enables them to build a basis of trust with 'the enemy' and at the same time empower the Arab society in a sustainable way.

TABLE 3: FAIR TRADE (FT) PRINCIPLES APPLIED IN SINDYANNA

FT Principle (Stenzel, 2012)	FT in Sindyanna
1) Fair Trade organizations: are committed to Fair Trade as their core mission. This includes providing financial and technical support to producers and campaigning for changes in conventional international trade	Sindyanna invests in long-term relationships. Both with partners in the West Bank and with people within Israel. In fact, long-term relationships almost go without saying in the olive tree branch because it takes a long time for olive trees to give fruits (approximately 7 years). Sindyanna invests in lands in terms of irrigation and technical support and at the end of a contract, a farmer becomes the owner of the land. In the West Bank they have been partners with Nablus Soap and BFTA for over 10 years and they support each other when needed.
2) Trading partnership: Fair Trade is based on the premise that trade is a partnership based on "dialogue, transparency and respect.	For Sindyanna, trade is a means to an end. Due to their intrinsic motivation to build peaceful relationships and equality, they highly value the human aspect of trade. With all their partners, they build relationships based on trust, respect and equality.
3) Better trading conditions: Fair Trade means paying a fair price, helping with pre-harvest and pre-production financing, and making long-term commitments.	As mentioned above, Sindyanna makes investments for the farmers in order to make the revenues for olive cultivation profitable again. They make long-term commitments in which they have agreements that guarantee that Sindyanna buys their products. Moreover, they pay the fair trade premium to give them a better income. On top if this, Sindyanna reinvests her own profits in social projects for farmers and other (Arab) people in Israel.

4)	Securing producers' and workers' rights.	*Illustrated by the following quote:* "of course, we are a special project, we are all, we can say we are earning the same wages as the workers that work with us, and we have different approach to work, we work as people, we see them as partners, not employees" (Interview 10)
5)	Process of sustainable development: Fair Trade organizations make a commitment "to promote long term improvements in the economic and social opportunities of small producers and wage workers and in the environmental practices of their organizations.	Sindyanna invests in multiple aspects of the lives of farmers and especially the Arab community at whole. They invest in terms of education, language courses and working skills in order to empower them. Besides this, Sindyanna teaches the farmers to produce organically because they value the environment. Moreover, in order for the Arabs to compete on the global market Sindyanna supports them with marketing, branding and obtaining quality certificates.

Taking a broader view, Sindyanna also engages in fair trade because they identify themselves with the origins of the movement (Interview 2, 3, 4, 9, 11). Several interviewees bring to the fore that Sindyanna has the implicit goal to oppose the exploitative global system as it is today (Interview 4, 11). They believe that the conflict in fact serves as a cover for the continuation of capitalist politics (Interview 4, 6, 11), as the following quote illustrates:

"Although the Jewish people have more rights and live in good health and care, still, most of the Israeli live simple. Working all day, paying taxes, paying cloths, paying rent, paying schools, pay, pay, pay, and go to sleep. Working.... what happens is that little people get control of most of the money and all of the rest, we work, we are producers. This is happening. So what Sindyanna says, me, all of us: why are we -the small people- look like you are Arab you are Jew, because, above, they are not looking at us like that. They are looking at us, all over the world as workers, producers. They want us to look at Arabs and Jews in order for us not to see that they are getting richer while we are not. And every time we are saying we are not living a good life, they are saying: the Arabs, we need the money for the Arabs, for the army... you know how much money spent for nothing in the army?" (Interview 11).

Interviewees want a change, a better future for their children, one in which *all* can benefit from the developments that are available in the 21st century. As the picture below illustrates, a street artist appeals to the government - headed by Bibi Netanyahu at the time - for a more prosperous future for the people with all colors in Israel. In line with this, one of the interviewees states the following: "*Who will be the first to divide between all? We need to build this idea of equality, how to fairly divide, how to live with your neighbor. For this, we must work together, Arabs and Jews*"(Interview 4). Fair trade enables Sindyanna to bring their ideals into practice and build a more equal future for all.

FIGURE 7: INEQUALITY AND DISSATISFACTION ILLUSTRATED BY STREET ARTISTS IN TEL AVIV

Concluding

How do the five pillars come together in one theory of change? To answer this question, it is useful to formulate the exact change that Sindyanna tries to bring about (as summarized in Figure 8). Although Sindyanna does not narrow down its mission to one clear goal, after many conversations I would describe their goal as follows: 'Sindyanna aims to bring about a change in the conflict situation within Israel, and between Israel and Palestine'. In this regard, it is important to note that Sindyanna perceives conflict as more than the absence of violence, and rather aims for a 'positive peace', referring to relatively harmonious relationships (Kriesberg, 2011). In order to reach their goal, they believe that the role of the Arab society living within Israel is key. According to interviewees there might not be direct violence or official war between Arabs and Jews in Israel, but one can't say there is a 'positive peace' in such a divides society in which one group (Arabs) is disadvantaged as a whole (Interview 2, 4, 7, 11). In order to bring about a change in the conflict, they want to empower Arab society by investing in a local warscape, the olive tree branch (pillar 1 and 2), and at the same time provide opportunities for Arab women (pillar 3). By doing so, they aim to create a positive and prosperous environment for Arabs, thereby contributing to building a 'positive peace'. Moreover, they believe that the Arab society needs to be empowered in order for them to 'join forces and rise up' against their discriminative Israeli government and their actions in the conflict with their brethren Palestinians. On top of this, Sindyanna aims to bring about a change in the conflict by building positive relationships between Arabs and Jews on a people-to-people level (pillar 4). Finally, fair trade (pillar 5) is a way of working that suits well to Sindyanna's goal to empowerment and at the same time create an environment of qualitative relationships between the two societies.

FIGURE 8: THEORY OF CHANGE OF SINDYANNA SUMMARIZED
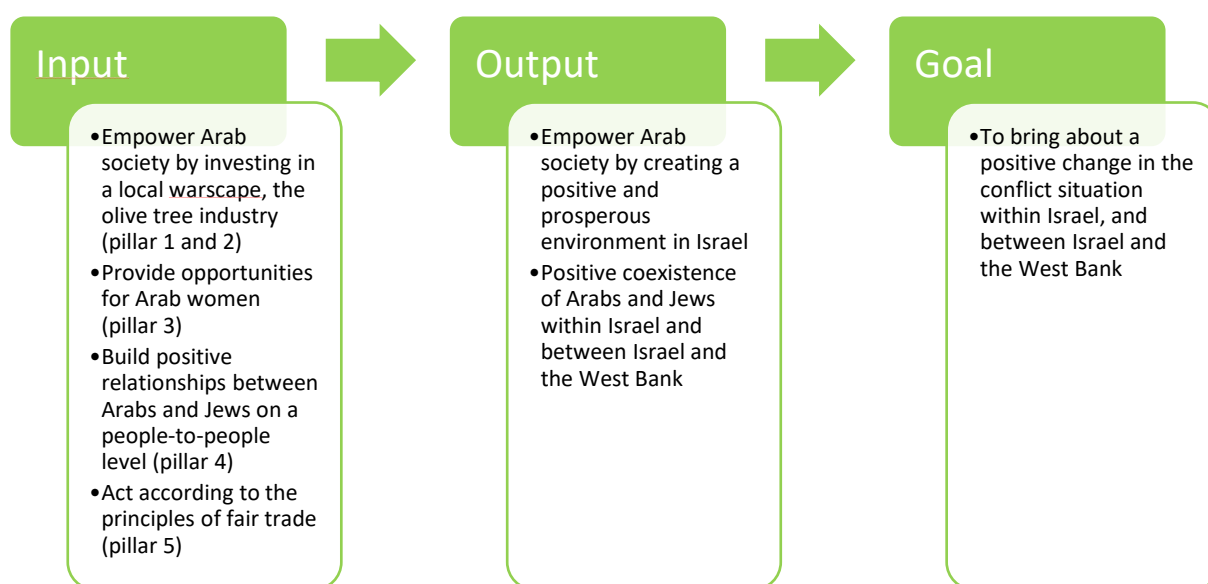
6.3. Influencing the local, national and international level

In the former paragraph, theory of change literature has been used to identify how the actions of Sindyanna would result in making a change in the conflict. Here, a next step will be taken by looking into another aspect of theory of change, namely the levels that are targeted in a change process. Shapiro (2006) distinguishes three actor-levels to bring about a change in conflict:

1) "Changing **individuals** involves strategies that shift attitudes and perceptions, feelings, behaviors and motivations of participants in an intervention.
2) Programs that focus on changing **relationships** often suggest that new networks, coalitions, alliances and other cooperative relationships between members of conflicting groups not only positively change the individuals directly involved, but can be a powerful force for fostering social changes that help resolve conflicts. These meso-level change strategies aim to effect both individuals and social structures.
3) **Structural**, **institutional** and **systemic changes** are the primary focus for some conflict intervention programs. These efforts are often directly aimed at legislative, electoral and judicial reform, establishing new mediating mechanisms and forums within society, economic development initiatives (e.g. microfinance, job training) and infrastructure support for basic human necessities (e.g. water, food, health care)." (cited in Stein & Valters, p. 9).

In order to make a change and to make impact with the five pillars, Sindyanna targets different levels in society. When analyzing these, I identified a distinction between projects that are mostly targeted on the local level, the (trans) national level, and the international level. It is important to note that all levels are interrelated and thus do not exclude each other. An explanation will now be provided on how Sindyanna is targeting these three levels and they will be linked to the actor-levels identified by Shapiro (2006).

On a local level, mostly in the Kfar Kanna region, Sindyanna organizes activities and projects in which Arabs and Jews are interacting with each other to build bridges. Interviewees believe in the importance of contact between 'the two sides' in order to reach mutual understanding and thus began to organize courses and events on a local level. Examples of such programs and events are basket weaving courses, language courses, olive picking days, and the organization of a pop-up mini Sindyanna shops at a food festival in Haifa, Northern Israel. Furthermore, Sindyanna aims to empower Arabs, reclaim Arab lands and develop agricultural activities in the Arab tradition, olive cultivation. In order to make this happen, Sindyanna invests locally, because they need to find suitable lands to reclaim. Furthermore, they need to build high trust relationships with Arabs in order to cooperate, which does not go without saying in a country with such tense relationships. They act on a local level because they aim to create a safe environment in which Sindyanna is easily accessible. Finally, Sindyanna aims to empower people with something tangible. Working locally helps Sindyanna to get a grasp of the difficulties and chances of the local reality, which helps in pinpointing important actions and events in achieving their mission.

Next to the local level, Sindyanna aims to make a change on a national level. Firstly by selling their products, telling stories and raising awareness all over Israel (Interview 14). They do so via their projects 'Bread and Roses', engagement in a Jewish educational program 'Taglit', and activities in the 'visitor center'. Secondly, Sindyanna is building partnerships with government officials and programs in order to have impact on the national level. As touched upon in chapter 5, most of the people working in Sindyanna have an activist history. However, such an activist approach is not perceived well by 'mainstream' Israelis and the authorities because they perceive it as helping out (potential) terrorists (Interview 4, 5, 7). In order to make a bigger impact with their work, interviewees realized that "*we* [they] *are not an island, we* [they] *want to grow*" (Interview 5). From that moment onwards, Sindyanna has been trying to position themselves as a business that is willing to cooperate with authorities and wants to connect with mainstream Israelis rather than fighting politics and making accusations. They thus want to interact with society at whole and seek for 'ground to move' and cooperate with the government (Interview 5, 10). Interviewees mention that they aim to work with civil servants, rather than politicians because "*they are more open, willing, they understand better*

what we are doing and more open to hear our story instead of advocating their ideology" (Interview 14).

Moreover, Sindyanna is targeting the transnational and international level. Firstly, by cooperating and building partnerships with people in the West Bank. Sindyanna aims to empower the Palestinians economically by selling Palestinian products via Nablus Soap and Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (BFTA). Moreover, BFTA and Sindyanna worked on a project called 'Fair Trade Fair Peace' to build bridges between the Israeli and Palestinian society by organizing a common project in which they try to create mutual contact and economic opportunities. Finally, Sindyanna is selling their products on the international market. Interviewees believe that the international arena is of great importance in influencing Israeli politics and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Selling their products together with their story in the international market can help raising awareness for their cause and at the same time enlarge economic revenues.

When looking at the local, (trans) national and international activities of Sindyanna, one can see that they try to bring about a change on all three actor-levels identified by Shapiro (2006). With their work, they aim to change mentalities of *individuals* by giving an example of positive Arab-Jewish cooperation and facilitate contact that tries to overcome 'othering'. Moreover, they work on the *relational* level, by creating a network in which Arabs and Jews can regularly meet, and have trade with each other. By doing so, they also aim to change social structures at large. In terms of *structural*, *institutional*, and *systemic* change, one can say that locally, Sindyanna aims to contribute to economic development. However, they foremost do so by making a business, rather than focusing on politics or legislation, as discussed by Shapiro (2006).

When looking at the levels that Sindyanna targets in their theory of change, they might be able to contribute to conflict transformation. Scholars have argued that local peace initiatives such as Sindyanna can in fact contribute to conflict transformation of the bigger conflict in which it operates (Gawerc, 2006; Ginty, 2014). As Gawerc states 'ordinary people' can move across the lines of conflict through peace initiatives, and by doing so establish shared interests and qualitative relationships. Theorists state that transformations of a conflict needs to occur on many levels, including the grassroots level (Kriesberg, 2011). If the strategies of Sindyanna in fact have the effects that they aim for, they might thus contribute to conflict transformation.

6.4. Concluding

This chapter provided an overview of the projects and programs that Sindyanna offers in order to accomplish their mission (as summarized in Table 4). As one can see, Sindyanna aims to shape divides through their five pillars, and strategically thinks about the levels of society that they should target in order for their work to succeed. This chapter thus focused on the ways Sindyanna aims to shape divides, the following chapter builds on this by exploring how their work actually comes about in practice.

TABLE 4: SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 6

Pillar	Activity	Location	Theory of change outcome *	Levels of society
Reclamation of lands (in Israel)	Revitalizing neglected olive tree lands	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local

Development and modernization of traditional Arab farming and agriculture	Promoting modern agricultural techniques	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local
Empowerment of Arab women	Basket weaving courses	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local
	Bread and Roses	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	National
	Language courses	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local
	Cooking workshops	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	Local
	Selling fair trade products	Israel & West Bank	Empower Arab society	National & International
	Food festival	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local
Jewish and Arab coexistence	Basket weaving courses	Israel	Empower Arab society	Local
	Sindyanna product tasting	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	National
	Story telling	Israel & West Bank	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	National & International
	Bread and Roses	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	National
	Olive picking days	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	Local
	Taglit	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	National
	Selling fair trade products	Israel & West Bank	Empower Arab society	National & International
	Food festival	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	Local
	Fair trade fair peace project	Israel & West Bank	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	International
Fair trade	Selling fair trade products	Israel & West Bank	Empower Arab society	National & International
	Supporting Arab producers with marketing, branding and certificates	Israel & West Bank	Empower Arab society	National & International
	Collaborating with Palestinian producers	Israel & West Bank	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	International
	Food festival	Israel	Positive coexistence of Arabs and Jews	Local

* The Theory of Change outcome that is mostly related to the activity is solely projected in this table

7. Local peacebuilding: processes in practice

In the following chapter, an analysis will be provided to answer the third research question: *How does the work of Sindyanna shape the divide between Arabs and Jews, and what can we learn about how this contributes to local level peacebuilding?* This chapter will look into the impact, potential and challenges that a fair trade local peacebuilding initiative such as Sindyanna can have. Moreover, this chapter will connect the dots of former chapters and start exploring if, and how fair trade can have potential in local peacebuilding, thereby touching upon the main research question. Section 7.1 will discuss if, and to what extent relationships across the divide are built due to the work of Sindyanna. Section 7.2 provides an analysis on how divides are being bridged, and discusses the role of fair trade in this regard. The third section (7.3) serves to put section 7.1 and 7.2 into perspective, by sketching the context and scope of Sindyanna's work.

7.1. Changing mentalities?

Sindyanna aims to bring about a change in the divides between Israelis and Palestinians, and Jews and Arabs. But how does it come about it practice? How are mentalities of people regarding 'the enemy' since they came into contact with Sindyanna? And in line with this, what is the nature of relationships between Arabs and Jews that occurred through Sindyanna?

Throughout the research, I have identified diverging stories and experiences. Whereas most interviewees explain that they built good relationships with people from the 'other side', others are less positive. And while relationships within Sindyanna seem to be very warm and respectful, the reality in the West Bank is still very different from the one in Israel.

The underlying premise for this section is that changing the mentalities of people can help in bringing divides between them, and thus might contribute to local peace dynamics on a people-to-people, or local level (Whitley & Kite, 2010). Next, it will be explained how the work and atmosphere of Sindyanna are affecting 'divides'. In order to fully understand this, I categorized the research population into three groups. The first group consists of people who work for Sindyanna, the second group consists of partners in the West Bank, and the third group consist of people who are enrolled in Sindyanna's programs. For each of these groups, it will be discussed how Sindyanna shapes the 'divides' from the perspective of the contact theory, which was introduced in section 2.5.

Relationships within Sindyanna

Within Sindyanna, one can say that Jewish and Arab colleagues have become friends (Interview 1,2, 3, 5). In fact, for these people it goes without saying that they are friends. Arab and Jewish people working for Sindyanna share the view of building a common and equal society. Most of them already developed these views before starting to work in Sindyanna, and have found partners from 'the other side' who can help them in building such a society, as the following quote illustrates:

'I went through a lot of change in the mentality....I believe if we want to make a change in my society, you must make a change both societies, in the Arab side and the Jewish side. The conflict does not help both of them, and we must participate to build a common society, a common life. I have a lot of Jewish friends and I live with them, it became to be a part of my life to be with Jewish people'
(Interview 1).

Another Arab interviewee (Interview 2) explains that at the start of her time at Sindyanna, she was only studying and working with Jewish colleagues, but after a while, it became more than this, she calls it 'true friendships'. This perfectly aligns with the contact theory, which claims that more contact between individuals from both sides of a conflict increases positive attitudes towards each other, which could in tun help in bridging divides (Byrne et al., 2012). My observations confirm the image revealed in interviews. As an outsider, I could not distinguish whether someone was Jewish or Arab (except for the Muslim Arabs who wear a hijab), which itself shows that the two 'groups' are truly mixed. Within Sindyanna, equality is highly valued, and as most of the interviewees say, they do not perceive each other as a Jew or an Arab, but rather as a human being. This could explain the underlying reason for contact contributing to peacebuilding, as derived from the contact theory. If contact can lead to mutual understanding, it can in turn contribute to perceiving the 'other' as more human, and less as an 'enemy'.

People working in Sindyanna are not merely colleagues, instead they call each other friends. But what defines a friendship? One can get an image of the nature of friendships by looking into concrete actions. Interviewees give examples about such actions, for instance playing with each other's children, taking care of each other when they are ill and celebrating birthdays with each other's families. These cases are prime examples of the second premise of Allport (1954), namely that contact can help in overcoming 'othering' when people engage in ongoing personal interaction. The quote below serves to provide understanding in processes that take place in Sindyanna regarding 'bridging divides' and building mutual understanding:

"In Sindyanna, I met a Jewish friend, she is teaching Hebrew for the Arab women and she told me before she met me and she knew my story, my personal story, for her a lot of things were not clear. A lot of anger, or fear that she didn't understand before and when she was in the army, in the region of Jerusalem she saw a lot of women and she was a guide for young in the school and all the nature and she said I didn't understand what the meaning of all of this was. There are villages that were destroyed in the war 1948 and she said I didn't understand the meaning of it all. She didn't know about the history and that people were living there before 1948. And after she heard my personal story, because I am also second generation of refugees. The village of my father was destroyed, he lived near Nazareth and all of this was destroyed, and when she knew my story, she started to understand and got a better understand what happened. They don't teach her in the army or in the school what happened in 1948 from the perspective of Arabs. She knew the Jewish version, that ok, we took back our land and we are getting independence, we are strong people. This is at least to give them a motivation to be in the army. And these things, the Arab version she didn't know..." (Interview 2).

Relationships with partners in the West Bank

Relationships between Sindyanna and their partners in the West Bank are more complicated. The CEO's of Nablus Soap and BFTA have developed warm relationships with people working at Sindyanna, but generally it remains very challenging to build relationships with people in the West Bank (Interview 6, 7). Interestingly, the CEO of BFTA and people working at Sindyanna speak very positively about each other (Interview 6, 7, 9). Several narratives of the interviewees reveal the

feelings and thoughts regarding their relationships. One of the interviewees (Interview 9) mentions the following: '*She [the CEO of BFTA] told the audience that she trusts us [Sindyanna] more than Palestinian organizations sometimes..*' during a fair trade event in Italy. Due to in-depth conversations about the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, their perceptions regarding the conflict, and their shared philosophy on the importance of bottom-up peacebuilding initiatives and fair trade, the CEO's have found a common ground. In fact, they have found a partner on 'the other side', with whom they can cooperate and try to make a bigger impact in their share goal: building a peaceful and prosperous future for both Israelis and Palestinians. Due to their shared views, and positive experiences with each other, the CEO's have built qualitative relationships based on trust. Another indicator that shows mutual commitment and friendship towards each other is that the CEO's of BFTA and Sindyanna try to meet each other in person despite the difficulties to travel across the Israeli- Palestinian borders (Interview 6, 7). The CEO of BFTA mentions that when she goes to Israel, she always visits several friends from Sindyanna in personal settings (Interview 6). Very occasionally, the CEO of Sindyanna also visits BFTA even though it is perceived as relative unsafety to enter the West Bank as a Jew. Here, three of the four premises that Allport introduced are illustrated in practice. These people perceive each other as being of equal status, they regularly engage in personal interaction, and work together towards a common goal (Forsyth, 2009). Hence, according to contact theory this lays a strong foundation for successful improved interpersonal contact, which indeed seems to be happening on a personal level in this case.

In terms of the people that BFTA works with within the West Bank, for instance their partner farmers and artisans, it has proven to be more difficult to build relationships with Sindyanna. Over the years, Sindyanna and BFTA have developed several mutual programs, and run into quite some challenges while doing so. In their Fair Trade Fair Peace project, BFTA and Sindyanna aimed to sell products in which they could empower Palestinian society, and at the same time make a statement about a successful and peaceful Israeli -Palestinian cooperation. However, Palestinian producers were hesitant about working together with Israelis, especially women living in a refugee camp did not want their names written on any of the products that Sindyanna and BFTA would sell because '*to them, the Israeli government is the enemy, who have jailed hundreds of their children and have killed hundreds of people in the refugee camp*' (Interview 6). In another project, Sindyanna and BFTA wanted to raise attention about water scarcity in the West Bank and launched an arts projects in which Palestinian and Jewish artists made a piece of art on the topic of water. Whereas Jewish people were fine with putting their names in this art book, it was very challenging to find Palestinian artist that were willing to cooperate. Such projects show that changing mentalities seems to be an exception, rather than the rule. When people personally faced hardship due to the conflict, and feel a lot of anger towards the 'other side' it remains a challenge to bridge divides.

The CEO of Nablus Soap, another partner in the West Bank, shows true appreciation about the relationship that they have with Sindyanna. Interviewees state that they support each other whenever they can (Interview 7,12). In 2003, the Israeli army invaded the West Bank and demolished the workplace of Nablus Soap resulting in high costs. In order to help out, Sindyanna published the story of violations to Nablus Soap, which resulted in a jump of orders (Interview 9,12). Support has been mutual over the years, Nablus Soap is a very experienced organization because their family business was already founded in 1611. Sindyanna is a relatively young organization, which is why the CEO of Nablus Soap regularly advises Sindyanna in terms of business development. In terms of business, Nablus and Sindyanna strengthen each other, and besides this the CEO's have also become friends. They meet each other a couple of times a year to share dinners and meet each other's their families.

Whereas the relationships between the CEO's seems to be very friendly, the brother of the CEO stated the following about his view on the relationship between him and Sindyanna:

'Maybe I have business, even a lot of business, but they will never be my friends.... In all the countries, there are groups, they accept the system of the government, and some do not accept it. Sindyanna, they are one of the people who want to do something for the Palestinian people. That's why they buy herbs, soap, olive oil, a lot of things. To give a push to us. People like that, ok maybe we will have a relationship with them, but maybe... for me still Israeli. For me, personally. Now for my brother, I know the CEO of Sindyanna [name deleted] is his friend. But for me, no...' (Interview 8).

The quote illustrates the complexity of building bridges, even though Sindyanna fully supports Nablus and their struggle for independence, being friends seems to be one bridge to far for this interviewee. From the perspective of contact theory, the difference between the brothers is obvious (Forsyth, 2009). Whereas the CEO of Nablus does engage in ongoing personal interaction, is of equal status and experiences mutual dependency with Sindyanna. The brother solely experiences a sense of mutual dependency, i.e. being business partners, and does not engage, nor feel the urge to partake in personal interaction.

Relationships in contact-and empowerment programs

As explained in chapter 6, Sindyanna organizes all sorts of programs that facilitate contact between Arabs and Jews, which is one of the key mechanisms to contribute to improved relationships according to contact theory (Forsyth, 2009). Interviewees state that partaking in language courses, basket weaving and cooking lessons brought about a big change in their perspectives about the 'the other side'. In fact, over time, friendships are even occurring (Interview 1, 2, 3, 11, 15). This group of interviewees often has not been in contact with people from 'the other side' before coming to Sindyanna. Due to a lack of the ability to speak in Hebrew and differences between the two groups, Arab women were hesitant and insecure to get into contact with Jewish people (Interview 3, 15). Sindyanna seems to have opened up a window for them, because the contact programs enabled these Arab women learned Hebrew and English, which made them more confident to talk to Jewish people.

"When the women begin to speak the language, both of them, Arabic or Hebrew, it is breaking automatically the wall between the two societies. The Arab women, it is not meeting Jewish women in daily life. It is not famous and not regular to meet and speak to each other. What we do in Sindyanna, it is different. Both of them can sit down and talk about a lot of issues and problems and about their lives and to visit, common visits in the homes. They go to each other's home. It is a development, especially in relationships" (Interview 1).

One of the interviewees mentions that she used to be distant from Jews and was afraid of them because she didn't know what they were like. Since Sindyanna, a change occurred in her feelings and mindset, *'now we are closer, we know them, we are friends'* (Interview 3). Another Arab interviewee (Interview 15) mentions that she has built a lot of relationships with Jewish people since her engagement in Sindyanna. With people who work in Sindyanna on a regular basis, she has become friends with whom she shares her feelings and with whom she has frequent contact, also in their private spheres. Besides this, she has come into contact with a lot of Jewish visitors from all over the world in the visitors center, in which she shared the story of Sindyanna and the Arab society.

Concluding

Changing the mentality of people proves to be a slow and complicated process (Interview 1, 4, 7, 14). But, when people start to know each other personally, especially within Sindyanna, one could say the

divides are truly bridged. This case study indicates that the second premise of Allport, i.e. groups should engage in ongoing personal interaction, is the most prevalent mechanism for contact to contribute to peace dynamics through the work of Sindyanna. In the West Bank, obtaining personal relationships with CEO's has proven to be successful, but building trust and qualitative relationships with other people working in, or partnering with those organizations remains a challenge.

7.2. What works: which processes seem to be (un) successful?

In order to explain *if* bridges are being built between Arabs and Jews through the work of Sindyanna, the former section touched upon relationships that occurred through Sindyanna, and the nature of such relationships. This section will build on this by analyzing peace processes that explain *how* divides are being bridged. Is Sindyanna able to address root causes in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and if so, how? What is the specific role of fair trade in peacebuilding processes taking place in Sindyanna? And finally, but importantly, how do these questions apply in Israel versus the West Bank?

To answer these questions, the data will be analyzed by using the theoretical framework set out in chapter 2 and summarized in figure 1. Thus, to understand peacebuilding dynamics taking place within Sindyanna, and at the same time pinpoint which of these dynamics seem to be a result of *fair* trade, rather than just trade, I will discuss the results in light of economic peacebuilding theory, local peacebuilding theory and fair trade principles. This analysis will start by researching whether peacebuilding mechanisms identified in economic peacebuilding - i.e. economic interdependency, social ties, and economic growth - can be identified in Sindyanna. Thereafter, it will be discussed whether such mechanisms come about through the nature of *fair* trade, or come about trough merely trade. Finally, an exploration of the 'success' of Sindyanna in contributing to local peacebuilding will be done by using the framework of Maoz (2004) - as introduced in chapter 2 - that discusses the success factors of local peace initiatives in Israel and Palestine.

7.2.1. Peace dynamics taking place in Sindyanna

In the theoretical framework in chapter 2, it is argued that fair trade can deal with certain critiques raised in the economic peacebuilding debate, while incorporating the positive aspects. Therefore, I will first dive into the peace mechanisms that fair trade and economic peacebuilding have in common. Thereafter, I will look into the philosophy and principles of fair trade to research whether *fair* trade in fact positively distinguishes itself from 'just' trade by going into fair trade as a philosophy and fair trade as a label.

Economic peacebuilding mechanisms?

The three main peace mechanisms identified in economic peacebuilding theory are economic interdependency, economic development and the social aspect of trade (as shown in figure 1), which refers to what I summarize as regular exchange of culture information and building social relations. Next, it will be analyzed whether these mechanisms can be identified in the case of Sindyanna as contributing to local peacebuilding.

1) Economic interdependency

As (liberal) economic scholars argue, trade leads to interdependency, which in turn contributes to the incentive to be at peace with each other (i.e. in Lupu and Traag, 2013; Dorussen and Ward, 2010). So how does this work in the case of Sindyanna? First, when looking at the interdependency argument in economic peacebuilding, it is important to note that it traditionally emphasizes the effects of interdependency on an interstate-level (Lupu and Traag, 2013). This argument cannot be applied one

on one in the case of Sindyanna, since they not only operate on the interstate level, but also on the intra-state level. What is more, their initial focus is on the local-level rather than state-level. Regardless of this important difference, one can still look into the mechanism, because the underlying rationale refers to the idea that trade can connect people economically and thereby create a (global) community (Dorussen & Wars, 2010). Having said this, I will identify if, and how interdependency dynamics can be found in the case of Sindyanna.

In Sindyanna, one could indeed say that economic interdependency contributes to the existence of a trading relationship between 'conflicting parties', namely Arabs and Jews engaged in Sindyanna and their partners in the West Bank. The quote below illustrates that a certain extent of economic interdependency is signaled between Sindyanna and a partner in the West Bank:

"Listen, when you have business with someone, the first thing you think about is business. But you cannot mix the normal life with the business. The normal life is normal life, business is business. Only money between you and me, but I don't allow it to be more than money, it is just money. We have good income because of you, and that is enough" (Interview 8).

At the same time, this quote shows that economic interdependency alone might not necessarily suffice to develop more personal and qualitative relationships, which I will further elaborate on later in this chapter. Another interviewee from the same organization explains that they highly value the cooperation. However, Sindyanna is one of their many partners all over the world which makes them quite little 'dependent' (Interview 12).

In terms of the relationship of Sindyanna and BFTA, I would not say that economic interdependency is of high importance. During interviews, the financial aspect of their relationship was hardly ever mentioned by interviewees from both organizations. What is put forward in interviews, is that cooperation aims to empower Palestinian artisans and farmers by creating a selling point in Israel. But BFTA and Sindyanna themselves, are not, or at least not highly, economically interdependent (Interview 6, 7).

Nevertheless, when looking at the intra-state relations of Sindyanna one can say that Sindyanna and their olive farmers partners are indeed economically dependent. For Sindyanna, the revenues of the olive oil are the biggest source of income in the market, and these products can only be sold when olive farmers deliver olive oil. At the same time, Sindyanna does all the marketing and sales activities, thereby facilitating the farmers with their income (Interview 1, 4, 7).

   2) Economic development

As explained in the theoretical framework, economic peacebuilding theorists such as Doyle (2005) and Gartzke (2007) state that economic development that is resulting from trade might contribute to creating or maintaining a 'positive peace', mainly by addressing possible root causes of conflict such as poverty. As just explained in relation to economic interdependency, (liberal) economic scholars also focus on the macro-level dynamics of economic development in relation to peace. The traditional argument relies on the idea that trade is more beneficial for economic prosperity than being at war, thereby explaining why states are less likely to engage in warfare over resources and land. Although the focus in these strand of theory is focused on the macro-level, one could also argue that economic development can contribute to peace dynamics on a micro-level. Taking the perspective of Richards (2005), for instance, one can see that local agency and an aggregate of people could determine peace and war practices. Thus, when realizing economic development on a micro level, it might also

contribute to peaceful relations. Therefore, here, I will analyze whether economic development can be identified as a peacebuilding mechanism in the case of Sindyanna.

As discussed in former chapters, Sindyanna aims to make a change on the macro-level by empowering Arab society socially and economically. However, based on the data gathered in this research, it might be too soon to tell whether or not economic development has the desired effects on a macro-level. One thing worth noting in this regard, is that Sindyanna has been cooperating with government departments for the last couple of years to spur economic development of Arab society. In this way, one could argue that Sindyanna is expanding its influence in terms of macro-level economic development, even though their focus is on the micro-level.

On the micro-level, several interviewees share that Sindyanna's work contributes to economic empowerment (Interviews 1, 2, 4, 6, 11). However, most of these interviewees, both in the West Bank and in Israel, are not talking from their own perspective, but rather from the perspective of (other) Arabs, as is illustrated by the following: *"The salary encourages local producers to do marketing and make products. Yes, it is encouraging smaller producers to market products that do not have the economic method and money to do local marketing or abroad marketing. And with this, Sindyanna opens up economic opportunities to these producers. This producer, the competition, and qualification of products gives them a chance to compete with other and bigger producers"* (Interview 1). Only one Arab women explicitly mentioned that she feels economically empowered through the work of Sindyanna herself *"now I have money, earned by my own"* (Interview 3). This is highly valued by these women, since employment opportunities and cultural circumstances are not very enabling, as explained in chapter 5. However, generally speaking, the economic aspect of empowerment is hardly mentioned in interviews, instead the social aspect receives a lot of attention, I will dive into this later on in this chapter.

3) Regular exchange of culture information and building social relations

Scholars such as McDonald (2004), Rohner et al (2012) and Dorussen and Ward (2010) have argued that trade enhances peace because trading relationships go hand in hand with regular contact, trust and building a common identity that goes beyond a state-identity. In line with this, the contact hypothesis states that intergroup contact, which in this case occurs through trade, helps in overcoming 'othering'. Can these characteristics be found in the case of Sindyanna?

In the former section, I have discussed the processes of building bridges taking place through Sindyanna. Relying on this, one could argue that regular interaction and social relations are aspects of trade that are highly important in terms of building bridges between Arabs and Jews and that they are generally present between Sindyanna and its partners. When analyzing the economic peace dynamics, 'economic development' and 'regular interaction and social ties' that are facilitated by Sindyanna, the data shows that fair trade plays an important role, and has something to add to 'just' trade. As I will argue in the next part of this section, a large share of the nature of these trading relationships might actually be related to fair trade, rather than just trade.

Fair trade peace dynamics?

What can we actually attribute to *fair* trade in terms of peacebuilding dynamics in Sindyanna? During this research, I noticed that many interviewees spoke utterly passionate and positive about the work of Sindyanna and the fair trade philosophy that they follow. However, some of the interviewees also expressed themselves quite negatively about the fair trade network, and how it has developed over the years (Interview 9, 10). I realized that an important distinction can be made between fair trade as a philosophy and fair trade as a label, in explaining the effects of fair trade in Sindyanna on

peacebuilding dynamics. When talking about the philosophy, I speak about the broader vision and ideas behind fair trade, as explained in chapter 2. When referring to the label, I talk about fair trade in the sense of the network and label of international organizations such WFTO.

The philosophy behind fair trade

In the theoretical framework set out in chapter 2, it is argued that fair trade might have potential in local peacebuilding. From a theoretical point of view, fair trade is promising because it changes the terms of trade, and could thereby address negative aspects that are identified in economic peacebuilding. Here, I will analyze how this works in practice by identifying which peace dynamics are taking place in Sindyanna as a result of *fair* trade. As also discussed in chapter 2, I will take the fair trade principles of FINE as a point of departure, below (Stenzel, 2012, p. 569):

> 1) "Fair Trade organizations: Fair Trade organizations are committed to Fair Trade as their core mission. This includes providing financial and technical support to producers and campaigning for changes in conventional international trade.
>
> 2) Trading partnership: Fair Trade is based on the premise that trade is a partnership based on "dialogue, transparency and respect.
>
> 3) Fair Trade's better trading conditions: Fair Trade means paying a fair price, helping with pre-harvest and pre-production financing, and making long-term commitments.
>
> 4) Securing producers' and workers' rights.
>
> 5) Process of sustainable development: Fair Trade organizations make a commitment "[to promote long term improvements in the economic and social opportunities of small producers and wage workers and in the environmental practices of their organizations."

Discussing economic peace dynamics through fair trade

As mentioned, when analyzing the economic peace dynamics 'economic development' and 'regular interaction and social ties' in Sindyanna, the data shows that fair trade plays a key role, and has something to add to 'just' trade. The data shows that Sindyanna brings these fair trade principles into practice in many ways. Next, it will be illustrated what fair trade can add to economic peacebuilding mechanisms by discussing the case of Sindyanna.

In terms of economic development, Sindyanna facilitates empowerment trough fair trade in the olive tree branch and other activities. In accordance with fair trade principles 1, 3 and 5 (Stenzel, 2012), Sindyanna facilitates empowerment by giving Arabs a place in a competitive market, thereby generating an income for them. Through all the extra activities and support that Sindyanna offers to the farmers, they, and thus fair trade, distinguish themselves from 'conventional' trade. Moreover, what makes Sindyanna different from 'just' *fair* trade, is that Sindyanna works on a non-profit basis, and reinvests all its money in further economic development and social development of the Arab society as whole (Interview 4, 7, 9).

In order to analyze the effects of economic empowerment programs facilitated by Sindyanna on local peacebuilding, I will briefly discuss a macro- and micro-perspective. As explained in chapter 6, Sindyanna believes that empowering the Arab society is key in accomplishing a 'rise up' against the Israeli government and its discriminative policies and warfare practices against Palestine. When looking at the Arab people who work for Sindyanna, one can see that they are opposing the practices of the Israeli government by partaking in demonstrations and simply by voting (Interview 1, 2). However, as also mentioned above, it is too soon to tell whether, and to what extent, economic

empowerment affects economic development on a large scale. And thus to see how that contributes to a possible 'rise up' of the Arabs influencing the conflict dynamics within Israel and between Israel and Palestine.

On a micro-level, one can see the effects of the work of Sindyanna by looking at the development paths of two Arab interviewees. They state that partaking in the empowerment courses has served as a stepping stone in their personal growth and job opportunities (Interview 3, 15). While starting as 'students' in the basket weaving or language courses, some of the women became very enthused, increased their activities in Sindyanna, and became part of the regular staff of Sindyanna. Some have become teachers themselves, and others are even advocating their personal stories and examples of successful cooperation between Arabs and Jews for large groups of visitors. With these experiences, they feel more economically and socially empowered.

In terms of facilitating qualitative relationships, referring to 'regular interaction and social ties', fair trade seems to play a vital role. As Rohner et al., (2012) and Mc Donald (2004) argue, trust plays a key role in the link between trade and peace. However, if we strip down the work of Sindyanna to merely trade, we would not be able to grasp the ways in which Sindyanna facilitates qualitative and long-lasting relationships. Due to Sindyanna's work in terms of economic- and social empowerment, they have developed several programs in which contact is central, and not solely related to their trading activities. The programs that facilitate regular exchange have already been discussed elaborately in section 7.1. and have shown that this contact can in fact lead to building bridges. Here, I would like to add that the fair trade philosophy, and principles of fair trade strengthens economic peace dynamics because it brings something more to trade. Due to a focus on improving the lives of farmers and wageworkers in several ways, as prescribed in the fair trade principles (Stenzel, 2012), the starting point and foundation of relationships have a more positive connotation. This is shown by Sindyanna, who actively tries to support the people with whom they have relationships as much as they can, as is perceived very positively by the Arab society (Interview 1, 3, 14.)

Looking at trading relationships within Israel, Sindyanna has been in contact with certain farmers for over 15 years. They have been meeting each other on a regular basis, because Sindyanna supports farmers with agricultural practices and modernization, in accordance with fair trade principles 3 and 5 (Stenzel, 2012; Interview 4, 10). Unfortunately, I have not been able to speak to the farmers themselves, but in the view of workers in Sindyanna (Interview 4, 7) they have developed very good relationship with their partner farmers over the years.

In the West Bank, it is more complex. On the one hand, one can see that fair trade was key in creating trustworthy relationship between BFTA and Sindyanna, as will be discussed in more detail below. For Nablus 'a fair way of living and working' (Interview 12) is considered important, but the CEO does not pin it down to fair trade. On the other hand, one can question whether the social aspect of trade is always apparent in fair trade. Interviewees point out (Interview 6, 7) that a lot of the farmers and artisans in the West Bank only cooperate with Israelis to gain an income and do not want to be in contact with Sindyanna. Trade alone is does not seem to bridge gaps, because a middle man, in this case BFTA, is the one in contact with the Sindyanna.

To conclude, what stands out is that the social side of trade is of key importance in fair trade business and this seems to influence local peace dynamics, not merely the economic aspect. To note, the social side of trade is seen in a broad sense, including the importance of personal interactions as well as caring for others' welfare and development.

Fair trade: a foot in the door effect?

Another question that I would like to address is whether fair trade has a 'foot in the door effect'? One could think that fair trade principles can be appealing for people who are generally disadvantaged in a conflict. As Valiente- Riedl (2016) states, the fair trade movement came into existence to offer an alternative to 'conventional trade' and its exploitative character. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one could identify Palestine, and Arabs living in Israel as the 'underdog' while Israel, and the Jewish Israelis, have a dominant position. In the local warscape of the olive tree branch, one can especially make this dichotomy, since the Palestinians were hindered in doing their business due to measures taken by the Israeli government (Hughes, 2008). I wonder, could fair trade offer a positive alternative in this regard? When looking at the principles of fair trade described above, at least three things stand out that could have potential in decreasing this asymmetry: 1) fair trade principles talk about 'partnerships', rather than just trade relations, 2) they highlight the importance of 'dialogue, transparency and respect', and 3) they work with fair pricing (Stenzel, 2012). How do such 'fair' characteristics play a role in finding partners 'from the other side'?

Interestingly, some interviewees highlight that fair trade was an important factor to start working for, and with, Sindyanna (Interview 2, 3, 6, 11), while others expressed that they are less convinced of the pull factor of fair trade. The first quote below illustrates how fair trade can indeed have a 'foot in the door' effect, whereas the second quote shows more skepticism about the role of fair trade:

"I think the workers, and the women who work here in Sindyanna, have the support of the families. First of all because it is a good place to work, good conditions, good salary and fair, according to the law in Israel, with all the benefits. This is something very exceptional in the Arab society. I am talking about women who are working in factories or in a store, they work in bad conditions and they are being exploited in their workplaces. So when Sindyanna is hiring women and those women are working with benefits and rights, it is something that the families appreciate. it is an important factor" (Interview 14).

"I think they want to collaborate with everyone, not necessarily with fair trade organizations. Of course the want to end the occupation. I think that what the Palestinians want is to live like Israelis. Like to have the freedom to go and not to be under occupation. This is what they want, of course. But, the fact that Sindyanna and people like Sindyanna are against the occupation it supports their claim to be independent or to be treated with dignity and equally. It makes the relations much more stable, much more friendly" (Interview 7).

When looking at the first quote, one can identify several characteristics of fair trade that seem to enhance the 'foot in the door' effect. The first quote implicitly mentions fair trade principles 3 and 4, and states that better (trading) conditions and securing workers' rights are seen as important reasons to work for Sindyanna. In the second quote, it is implied that fair trade does not have a 'foot in the door' effect, because they simply look for means of income. According to this interviewee, the fact that Sindyanna supports the 'Palestinian cause' is more important. Hence, the interviewees show that there is no clear answer to the questions whether fair trade has a 'foot in the door effect', for some this appears to be the case whereas for other it does not.

Fair trade as an international label

Lupu and Traag (2013) state that the positive effects of trade go beyond dyadic relationships between two parties. They rely on network theory and use the concept of 'trading communities' to explain that parties engaged in a certain trading community are more likely to be at peace with each other, even though there is no direct trade between all partners in a dyadic manner. In order to understand hoe fair

trade can contribute to local peacebuilding, the following questions will be addressed. Could the fair trade community function as a trading community as described by Lupu and Traag? And how does the fair trade network facilitate peace dynamics in the case of Sindyanna?

Throughout the research it became clear that the international fair trade label has been of significant importance to Sindyanna in terms of 'bridging divides' in several ways. Firstly, because it enabled (initial) contact between the Israeli organization Sindyanna and the Palestinian organization Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (Interview 6, 7, 9). Secondly, because the fair trade network opens up an international market to sell the products of Sindyanna and its partners, which contributes to keeping them, and partners in the West Bank, financially alive (Interview 7, 9). In line with this, selling products abroad under a banner of Jewish and Arab cooperation serves to advocate for peace between Arabs and Jews on an international level. Next, these three aspects will be discussed in further detail.

As explained in former chapters, after the second Intifada, the relation between Israel and Palestine worsened. The CEO of BFTA mentions that this also affected trading relations on a macro scale (Interview 6). Whereas Palestinians used to cross borders very regularly to do their business in Israel, this declined tremendously after the second Intifada due to restriction of movement and other 'protection' measures. Besides the practical barriers to partake in trading relationships with each other, the second Intifada had also raised the emotional tension between Israel and Palestine, therefore influencing the ideas of trading with 'the enemy'. As repeatedly mentioned in interviews, despite the fact that Sindyanna is an organization that aims to support Palestinians and Arab Israelis in their struggle, finding Palestinian partners has been very challenging (Interview 6, 7). To illustrate the complexity to find space for cooperation from both the Palestinian authorities, and Palestinian citizens, the CEO of Sindyanna mentions the following: "*The Palestinian authorities are bound to Israel and are connected. So why are the people…? I don't understand it. Why are people not making a distinction between organizations like Sindyanna who is ready to collaborate and who is against the occupations, and organizations like settlers, right wing and the government that are maintain the occupation? There is a big difference. They would do more good for the people if they collaborate with organizations that are against the occupation. It would strengthen their influence or their claim to end the occupation, I don't understand, it is kind of a boycott*" (Interview 7).

The above shows that, generally speaking, Sindyanna has hardly been able to find partners willing to work together. However, the fair trade network has provided an opportunity in this regard. At a certain point, two people of Sindyanna went to a WFTO conference in Belgium and met a lot of Palestinian organizations. This in itself, meeting each other, was thus facilitated through the fair trade network, which according to interviewees is something that is not likely to happen otherwise. Six out of seven Palestinian organizations at the WFTO conference were not open towards 'the Israelis' and did not even want to talk to them during the conference (Interview 6, 7). But one person, the CEO of BFTA, thought differently, she wanted to find out more about Sindyanna and their story. Once having heard their story, she realized that Sindyanna was not a mainstream organization. She understood that these people actively opposed the politics of their own Israeli government, especially in the light of the occupation. The conference thus enabled them to start building a relationship and talk about the conflict on 'neutral ground'. This conference was the start of the Fair Trade Fair Peace project and a long lasting relationship between BFTA and Sindyanna, which still exist today. Exemplary is the following narrative that shows how one of the relationships between a worker of Sindyanna and BFTA evolved throughout the conference:

> *"We met the first time in Italy [WFTO conference] and she, as an Israeli that was coming to Italy to represent Sindyanna, did not know anything about Palestine. She was a soldier for two years but she was never in the West Bank, she was stationed in the offices. So, the first day we spoke at the first conference, I spoke about the political situation and she ended up leaving the room and being very upset, she was crying. We are here to speak about fair trade she said, not politics. So of course, it was a chance for me to explain to her... Do you know how I am living? Do you know anything about me as a Palestinian? You said you were stationed in the office so you were never in the West Bank. So you don't know what they were causing, your colleagues, the soldiers, in the West Bank, so you know nothing. And politics IS fair trade and fair trade IS politics. When I explain to a customer that I want to ship a big order, it has to go through your customs, straight through Israel. You put us in ghetto's, we are living behind a wall. And you have never been to Bethlehem and you call yourself an Israeli, a Jew, that is afraid of the Palestinians... Of course it took us a while. We were together for ten days, and the last day she cried, we said goodbye because she travelled via Tel Aviv and we can only go through Jordan. So when she started to work in Sindyanna she learned a lot of things. She did not realize that the Palestinian people who live inside Israel do not have the same rights as Israelis. She did not know that their soldiers and the checkpoint humiliate and shoot us, she didn't know any of these things…We met again after two years. She was talking pro-Palestinian, pro justice, more than me. Sometimes I needed to stop her, 'I need a coffee'. Let's just talk small talk for a bit. She learned, but without Sindyanna and our cooperation she would never had this chance. She would still be an Israeli who believes in the right of the Israeli to exist, and protect and do anything in order to protect their existence"* (Interview 6).

Apart from the CEO of BFTA, no one at the conference wanted engage in contact with Sindyanna. This made me wonder, why did she choose to take a different path than her fellow fair trade organizations from the West Bank? When listening to her story, it became clear that she used to have a lot of contact with Israelis by helping her father out with his trading activities on Sundays. In fact, she had positive memories about visiting families and having dinners together with their Israeli trading partners. To understand how this might have helped in breaking the ice with Sindyanna at the conference, again, contact theory can be helpful. As elaborately explained in chapter 2, contact between people of an outgroup (in this case Israelis) can reduce negative feelings, prejudices and stereotypes of an outgroup (Maoz, 2004). When comparing the narrative of this women of BFTA, to (the majority of) people who are not willing to cooperate with 'the enemy', one can identify one key difference. This women has given a face the 'the other side' and has had positive experiences with people from 'the other side', which results in her being able to make a distinction between Israeli people on the one hand, and Israel as a government or army on the other hand. At the conference, she saw an Israeli organization that could potentially be good, knowing that they are fair trade, and having heard their work for the Arab society living in Israel, rather than merely seeing 'the enemy'.

Besides the initial contact facilitated through the fair trade conference of the WFTO, the label also enabled contact between Sindyanna and BFTA through its peer visit system. As the CEO of BFTA

mentions, one of the ground rules of being fair trade certified is peer reviewing and visiting other fair trade organizations (Interview 6). Therefore, she visited Sindyanna for three days which she considered to be a nice experience in Israel: *'it was very interesting, we walked, we took the train from Jerusalem to Haifa, it was easy, you didn't feel like a stranger. We were sitting next to Israelis. I felt so comfortable, I didn't feel afraid'* (Interview 6). As has been explained in chapter 4 and 5, Palestinian people generally cannot easily cross borders to Israel, but with the invite of an Israeli organization, the CEO of BFTA was able to go to Israel.

What is mentioned during interviews is that the long-lasting Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not gain a lot of media attention in times of more pressing issues such as IS, the refugee crisis and all sorts of terrorist attacks (Interview 4, 6, 7). To note, at the time of the field study in the research, the 70th birthday of the Israeli state did not happen yet, but for many years, according to interviewees, the conflict was not a 'hot' enough topic to be addressed in worldwide media. Through their products, and their international network of fair trade, Sindyanna and BFTA found a way to continue advocating for mutual Arab and Jewish cooperation and existence in their fair trade fair peace project (Interview 6, 7, 9). Although it is difficult to determine the effects internationally, what was clear from the interviews is that the Italian organization Cospe very much liked the project and joined forces to make more impact (Interview 7, 9).

I conclude by coming back to the questions posed before: could the fair trade community function as such a trading community as described by Lupu and Traag? And how does the fair trade network facilitate peace dynamics in the case of Sindyanna? In terms of the first question, I would say that the fair trade network does not have the effects of a trading community as discussed by Lupu and Traag (2012). The experiences of Sindyanna show that they have been able to find a dyadic relationship through the fair trade network, but did not manage to find other partners in the West Bank who are also members of the same fair trade organization. I believe this indicates that the 'trading network' at whole is not truly at peace with each other. In terms of the second question, I would conclude that the fair trade label, or network, has helped in building bridges by providing the initial contact between Sindyanna and BFTA. An important factor that contributes to their qualitative relationship is their shared philosophy on fair trade and on a fair society in which Israelis and Palestinians can live in harmony.

'Failures' of the fair trade label and community

In the above, the positive characteristics of the fair trade label have been discussed. However, the interviewees also frequently reminded me of the 'not so fair' practices in the international fair trade network.

One of the shortcomings of fair trade is put forward in academics, (Rubens & Fort, 2012), which also comes to the fore in the interviews (Interview 9, 10, 12), is that the fair trade market is not big enough to sell the full range of fair trade products. In fact, one of the interviewees, the CEO of Nablus soap, mentions that in the near future they will not have the fair trade label anymore. According to Nablus, being part of the fair trade network does not provide enough benefits, and in fact, even comes with obligations such as paying for your fair trade certificate and peer reviewing other fair trade organizations (Interview 12). Since the fair trade market does not open up a lot of opportunities to distribute their products, Nablus soap considers it unbeneficial to be part of the network. Thus, even though they do not change the way they work, they will officially not be fair trade anymore. Such experiences uncover an important issue regarding fair trade because obtaining a label can have perverse effects. Rather than strengthening the position of an organization that follows fair trade principles, it is costing them money, and thereby making their financial situation more difficult. In

Sindyanna, they choose to sell their product on the 'non' fair trade market, because they need more income to invest in their social programs and prioritize this over selling on the fair trade market (Interview 10).

The following quote also puts forward a critique regarding fair trade:

"To tell you that I am very pleased with the way the fair trade community is acting today, I can't say it. When I look at fair trade, the full spectrum, I don't think they are taking their share in the political struggles that are taking place today. I think it was more something of the past. For example, there are some organizations that still have the spirit of solidarity, one that I know for example in Austria, they have maintained a very strong policy of solidarity... but I know many other fair trade organizations that have really turned into businesses" (Interview 9).

This quote, and input from other interviewee (10), raise attention about the lack of political involvement of the fair trade movement at large. Whereas it once started as a counter movement of exploitative trade (Valiente- Riedl, 2016), interviewees argue that the 'soul' is missing in today's fair trade practices. Some even bring forward in informal chats that fair trade has become a marketing tool. 'Doing good' resonates well with customers, and thus, the fair trade label can in fact increase the market for organizations that are in fact not very fair.

In the rest of the section, it is argued that fair trade seems to positively affect empowerment and people-to-people relations, thereby contributing to local peacebuilding. Looking at the critiques above, one can raise concerns about the 'true ethics' and social aspect of fair trade that seems to be lacking in a share of today's fair trade organizations. Since these characteristics have been identified as vital in the link between fair trade and local peacebuilding, one could wonder if these effects can be found in the fair trade organizations that are being criticized by interviewees.

7.2.2. Applying Maoz' work to Sindyanna

When can we consider the work of Sindyanna to be successful? And how can one conclude that their work contributes to local peacebuilding? In order to provide an answer to such questions, the former section looked into the influence of Sindyanna's work in terms of shaping mentalities. From this section, it was concluded that on most levels, there are instances where people have changed their mindset regarding 'the other' into a more positive image as a result of the work of Sindyanna. Furthermore, peacebuilding dynamics have been discussed in the light of economic peace mechanisms and other fair trade characteristics that facilitate contact. To go a step further in this analysis, I will now discuss the data in light of the work of Maoz (2004), who identified factors that determined the success of local peace initiatives in the specific context of Israel and Palestine. In order to continue the exploration of the effects of Sindyanna's work in local peacebuilding, it will be analyzed whether, and to what extent the success determinants identified by Maoz can be traced in Sindyanna.

1) There is an equal representation of Israelis and Palestinians in the hierarchy of the organization

Within Sindyanna, it is difficult to say whether there is an equal representation of Arabs and Jews in the hierarchy of the organization. Sindyanna is a flat organization, in which everyone is treated equally and earns the same salary - based on the fulltime position (Interview 11). Although officially there is no hierarchy - and I did not observe a sense of a 'boss' or other signs of hierarchical behavior in informal settings - it might be relevant to note that initially Sindyanna was born from the ideas of activist Jews. Since Jews are typically seen as of higher hierarchical stand that Arabs, it could be

possible that there are indeed hierarchical behaviors in Sindyanna, but that I did not identify them in my research.

2) Initiatives are either located in both the West Bank and Israel, or only in the West Bank

Although Sindyanna is located in Israel only, it is located in an Arab village called Kfar Kanna. When looking from the perspective of Sindyanna, whose aim is to bring positive peace *within* Israel between Arabs and Jews, one could argue that this choice follows the same logic as Maoz's. Interviewees put to the fore that Arabs are disadvantaged in the Israeli society, and that Arab and Jews mostly live separate lives. Locating Sindyanna in an Arab village is a conscious decision. It makes the step to visit and join Sindyanna as small as possible for Arabs, since it is located in the environment in which they are familiar and feel safe (Interview 5, 7).

In terms of local peacebuilding efforts between Israelis and Palestinians, Sindyanna works with organizations that are located *in* the West Bank, namely Bethlehem and Nablus. However, it is important to note that visits across borders are quite limited. Although the CEO's of these organizations meet each other on a regular basis - i.e. a couple of times a year at most - the rest of the people involved in the local peacebuilding hardly ever see each other. Critical here is that it is very difficult to get the permission to cross borders without special travel permits.

3) The language spoken in these initiatives is either English, or both Hebrew and Arabic

Sindyanna actively promotes being bilingual or in fact, trilingual. They believe that communication starts with language, and thus plays an important role in facilitating contact between Arabs and Jews (Interview 1, 2, 3, 4, 11). "*When they begin to speak the language, both of them, Arabic or Hebrew, it is breaking automatically the wall between the two societies*" (Interview 1). Everyone that works in the core team of Sindyanna speaks at least English, all the Jewish people in the team are able to speak Arabic, and some continue to learn in extra courses (Interview 4, observations). Moreover, all Arabs working in the team fully understand and speak Hebrew. During fieldwork, I even noticed that visitors of the visitor center were very surprised to hear that the Arab women where Arab, because of their high level of Hebrew. In the basket weaving and language courses, people learn to communicate outside their comfort zone and mostly start with English.

Besides these characteristics that foremost highlight the importance of equality and symmetry, Maoz (2004) identified activities that contribute to local peacebuilding. Next, I will discuss to what extent Sindyanna's activities correspond to those pinpointed as important to local peacebuilding.

According to Maoz (2004) successful local peacebuilding 'activities maintain an infrastructure of constructive relationships between the sides, not letting the ties between sides be completely broken but keeping what can be preserved'. Based on former chapters, one can state that Sindyanna maintains, and tries to build, constructive relationships between Arabs and Jews in Israel and Israelis and Palestinians across border. They have been able to build a 'local peacebuilding island' - i.e. Sindyanna and its ecosystem - that already exists over 25 years, which is also shown by a comment of one of the interviewees "*In the current situation, I think this is the most that we can do, doing something that proves that Jews and Arabs can work together, and can do things together and convince as many people as we can that there is a way to live together and do things together, it is like keeping the light a live and wait until*" (Interview 7). The partnership between Sindyanna and BFTA in fact has bottom-up, grassroot, and mutual cooperation between Arabs and Jews as a common goal (Interview 6, 7, 9). Moreover, Sindyanna has opened the visitors center in Kfar Kanna, Israel, which serves as a physical place where Arabs and Jews can meet each other, talk to each other and build thereby build a positive Arab and Jewish society (Interview 1, 2, 7, 14, 15), Maoz (2004) states that such a support system is

key for local peacebuilding, because this serves as a safe place to share ideas and views in their quest for peace. With such activities, Sindyanna, as described by Maoz (2004), 'does not let the extremists win', but instead tries to create peace despite the violence taking place on the large scale. As also elaborately argued in chapter 6, people engaged in Sindyanna try to counter cynical reason (Boyer & Yurchak, 2010) by partaking in peace activities on a daily basis, despite the bigger political situation. A final activity that Maoz (2004) highlight is 'prevent further escalation of violence, mutual dehumanization, and delegitimization'. Based on the data gathered in this research, it is impossible to draw such a big conclusion. However, it is clear that Sindyanna, and its partners in the West Bank, all *aim* to build peaceful relations. But how it comes about in practice in the olive tree industry at large, or the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict, cannot be concluded. As is shown in this section, changing mentalities is a slow process, and the group of people engaged in this local peacebuilding initiative is still relatively small.

7.3. Putting the work of Sindyanna into perspective

Section 7.1 and 7.2 discussed *if*, and *how* divides are being bridged through the work of Sindyanna. In order to understand the scope of peacebuilding activities in Sindyanna, it is important to understand the context in which it operates and interacts. How does the work of Sindyanna relate to the larger scheme of things? Whereas one can conclude from the former sections that Sindyanna manages to build (some) bridges with partners in the West Bank, and between Arabs and Jews who are involved in Sindyanna, it remains to be discussed how their work affects the broader conflicted context. In the following, an analyses will be provided on the scope of Sindyanna's work and the link between local peacebuilding dynamics and the broader conflict.

Working in a bubble?

In the West Bank, fair trade is well-known. As explained in the chapter 1, people in the olive tree industry use fair trade as a means to gain an income on the one hand, and advocate for their struggle and the Israeli occupation on the other hand. When looking at Israel, it would be an understatement to say that fair trade is not well-known. During my fieldwork, I have come across a lot of people, and 99 percent of these people were not familiar with the concept fair trade. Interviewees repeatedly mention that fair trade is not well-known nor popular in Israel, and one interviewee even said 'it is non-existent' in Israel (Interview 1, 5, 9). Moreover, a thorough online search, and conversations with several people working at Sindyanna, led me to merely one other fair trade organization in Israel. This made me wonder, to what extent can Sindyanna shape the minds of people and bridge gaps between Arabs and Jews? If they aim to share their story of mutual Arab and Jewish cooperation through their fair trade products, who exactly do they target? Is their reach limited to 'usual suspects' who are already sharing the views of Sindyanna, or can they also change minds of non-likeminded people? In short, are they working in a bubble?

As explained in chapter 6, Sindyanna aims to reach its mission by targeting different levels of society - i.e. the local, national and international - and in terms of their theory of change as presented based on Stein and Valter (2012) - i.e. according to the individual, relational and systemic level. But to what extent do they manage to bring about a change at these levels? Section 7.1 showed that the work of Sindyanna has contributed to bridging divides by changing mentalities in three groups, namely people working within Sindyanna, partners of Sindyanna in the West Bank, and people who partake in their contact- and empowerment programs. In this section, a fourth group will be discussed, people who are not in the directs sphere of Sindyanna.

Influencing the mindset of Israeli society?

With activities mentioned in chapter 6 (see table 4), Sindyanna aims to contribute to peacebuilding through external events and the visitors center. Throughout the years, Sindyanna has been developing more channels to share and promote positive coexistence between fair trade. However, the effects Sindyanna has on 'the outside world' are difficult to pinpoint. To give an impression of these effects, I will discuss the programs and projects of Sindyanna that have the widest reach. Central in Sindyanna's advocating strategy, is the visitors center, the following quote shows that Sindyanna is very satisfied with the results:

> *"We started the visitor center a couple of years ago. In this visitor center, Arab and Jewish people are working together, workshops are given and about 2000 people come each year and listen to the stories of the people and the projects of Sindyanna. They meet Arab women in Sindyanna, and help us to try to overcome racism and discrimination and to bridge Arab and Jewish people. 99 percent of the people is enjoying what they are seeing and think we are doing really good work"*
> (Interview 14).

During field study, I have been in the visitors center many times. While being there, I observed the interactions and spoke to some of the visitors informally. From what I have seen, and as mentioned in several interviews (Interview 1, 2, 5, 7, 14) the visitors center foremost receives Jewish Israelis and besides this attracts people from all over the world, via tourist agencies. In the center, people show their appreciation of the work of Sindyanna, interact with the Arabs who guide them and share stories, and buy products with the story of Jewish and Arab cooperation.

Another project that leads to many visitors in Sindyanna is 'Taglit'. This is an educational program for Jewish children of 14, 15 and 16 years old of the Jewish diaspora, who come to Israel for a summer school to learn about Israel and its history (Interview 5). At a certain point, the content given in Taglit was heavily criticized for showing '*a very narrow narrative of right wing and nationalist point of view. Scaring the kids like the way they are scared here. They changed their program to show different narratives. And for this reason they contacted us and we are building with them a program that will attract thousands of people here a year to see this cooperation between Arabs and Jews and I hope it will help them and us to spread the word*' (Interview 5).

Next to Taglit, which primarily focusses on diaspora youth, Sindyanna has been organizing Bread and Roses for 12 years (Interview 4, 11, 14). This project is a three-days arts exhibition in Tel Aviv, in which Sindyanna sells work of famous artist and focuses on storytelling of the position of the Arab society in Israel. The revenues from the artworks go the Arab society with the aim to empower them, as known by the visitors. I have experienced firsthand during fieldwork that Bread and Roses receives a lot of visitors, though most of them are 'usual suspects' as shown in the following quote: '*A lot of people from the left are coming, most of them, all of them really, are from the left. And there are not a lot of actions from the left in Israel. So here* [in Bread and Roses] *they can say I am part of something but I don't want to be activist*' (Interview 11).

The projects just discussed are the ones that gain the most attention in Israeli society. Although interviewees speak very positively about their achievements with these projects, it is important to put this into a broader perspective, since the number of visitors is still very small compared to the total population of Israel.

Generally speaking, interviewees state that the world outside Sindyanna still seems quite separated and hostile. Sharing their story and philosophy, and finding ways to let it resonate with 'mainstream' Israelis is considered a big challenge by most interviewees (Interview 4, 5, 7, 9, 14). One example that

exemplifies this difficulty is the following: while Sindyanna is selling olive products from farmers in the West Bank in Israel in order to support Palestinian farmers economically, it is explained that a large share of the Israeli population would consciously boycott such products *because* they do not want to empower 'the enemy' (Interview 4, 7). For people in Sindyanna, this is a daily reality, but all the more reason to keep fighting for their cause. A positive development for Sindyanna is that they can increase their influence by cooperating with government programs (Interview 5, 7, 10). As these interviewees explain, the Israeli government wants to be part of the OECD, but is not aloud as a member due to the high economic inequality in Israel - i.e. read between Arabs and Jews. This development strengthens the position of Sindyanna and might contribute largely to their mission. At the time of the field study, the effects were not clear yet, but interviewees expressed themselves very happy about the fact that they maneuvered themselves into the government system (Interview 5, 7).

Can fair trade contribute to conflict transformation?

Despite the fact that fair trade is not well-known, and one could therefore argue that Sindyanna operates in a bubble, they connect to different levels in society, and seem to make an impact on all these levels. In order to analyze whether the work of Sindyanna also shapes the macro-conflict, I will address the following question: can Sindyanna's work in the olive tree branch shape conflict dynamics in the bigger conflict?

In order to see how Sindyanna contributes to conflict transformation in the bigger conflict, I will use the typology of Stein and Valter (2012) who distinguish three target levels in the theory of change in the field of international development (also explained in chapter 6). At the individual and relational level Sindyanna appears to contribute to changes in conflict dynamics. Their contact- and empowerment programs have shown to change mentalities of Arabs and Jews, and have even resulted in the occurrence of friendships across the two groups. As Whitley & Kite (2016) describe, changing relationships on people-to people level, or local level, can be vital in peacebuilding. In terms of the systemic level (as defined in chapter 6), one can see that Sindyanna contributes to social- and economic development in the Arab society on a micro-level, but on a macro-level, it is still rather unclear. Whether economic- and social empowerment of the Arab society will lead to what Sindyanna hopes for - i.e. the Arab society raising their voices together against the practices of the Israeli government - remains to be seen.

Maoz (2004) speaks of 'minimalistic' or 'good enough' peacebuilding, when referring to local peacebuilding initiatives such as Sindyanna. Pfeil (2013) and Plonksi (2005) also argue that such arenas of people-to-people projects transform a conflict and contribute to peacebuilding on a systemic level. Even when such peacebuilding efforts are not viewed as 'the' solution to a conflict, as interviewees also highlight. However, they contribute by keeping, and making, positive relationships, even in times of failed peacebuilding attempts such as the Oslo Accords in Israel and Palestine, and therefore influence conflict dynamics. This resonates with the views of the founder and CEO of Sindyanna and the CEO of BFTA who state that their work will not realize a political change, but is needed to show a good example of mutual Arab and Jewish cooperation. They argue that changing attitudes of people regarding 'the enemy' is vital in order for a political peace to have success and for it to be perceived as legitimate (Interview 6, 7).

Hence, the work of Sindyanna, and its respective effects, are largely focused on the micro-level, and therefore have limited effect on the bigger conflict. Interviewees acknowledge the fact that their macro-level effect is rather limited, still they believe that nothing is obtained without even trying. Although they might not make changes on the political level, Sindyanna does contribute to conflict transformation.

7.4. Concluding

This chapter showed how Richards' (2005) theory on war and peace can work in practice. Interviewees strongly believe that they are making a positive change on a local level by building bridges between Arabs and Jews, thereby using their agency to bring about peace. At the same time, it is often mentioned how challenging it is to make a big impact with their work because 'mainstream' Israeli and Arab people do not follow suit and remain to live in two groups with prejudice and hatred towards each other. Therefore, interviewees repeatedly mention that their work does not have enough reach to build peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at whole. However, as Pfeil (2013) and Plonski (2005) argue, arenas of people-to-people projects transform a conflict and contribute to peacebuilding on a systemic level. Sindyanna contributes to transforming the society and builds relationships on a people-to-people level, in order to prepare Arabs and Jews for peace. As one of the interviewees ones said '*Sindyanna makes changes that the government cannot*' (Interview 1). When a political peace is reached, the work of Sindyanna would contribute to such a peace becoming a 'positive peace', using the words of Galtung. In the meantime, Sindyanna aims to facilitate positive experiences between Arabs and Jews on a local level, and contribute to a more prosperous life for disadvantaged Arabs (Interview 7).

8. Conclusion

The point of departure in this research was the local conflict - i.e. that of the olive tree branch - that has been taking place within the bigger conflict in Israel. Whereas other academics studied how fair trade can serve as a means of resistance in this local warscape (Hughes, 2008; Meneley. 2014), I aimed to contribute to finding sustainable ways of peace by researching whether fair trade could create a setting for positive experiences and cooperation among people that are (formally) on the opposite sides in a conflict, which I argue to contribute to facilitate local peacebuilding. The main guidance for this exploration was the following research question: *"How can fair trade in the olive tree branch shape the divide between Arabs and Jews on a local level and what does this mean for local peacebuilding?"*.

This reconnaissance was performed by diving into a case study, a fair trade organization working in the olive tree branch, named Sindyanna. Chapter 5 addressed one of the research objectives by explaining that a divided society can motivate people to partake in local peace initiatives such as Sindyanna even though the 'bigger' conflict seems to be intractable. Chapter 6 elaborated upon the theory of change of Sindyanna in order to provide insight in how they try to bring about local peace processes through their work. In chapter 7, I researched whether Sindyanna can indeed function as a 'peacebuilding island' by discussing the effects and scope of Sindyanna's work. Next, I will briefly touch upon these research objectives and by doing so, provide an answer to the main research question.

Final considerations

Living in a society in which Arabs and Jews live separately, and in which a (violent) conflict takes place between Israel and Palestine, combined with the difficulties in the local warscape of the olive tree branch, the workers and founders of Sindyanna found a driving force to initiate (and engage in) their fair trade organization. As practice has shown, and as is argued in academics, signing peace treaties between state leaders or policymakers is not enough to build a legitimate peace (Mac Ginty, 2015; Gawerc, 2006). Therefore, as Maoz (2004) and Pundak, Ben-Nun and Finkel (2012) argue, peace dynamics need to be facilitated on a grassroots level in order for peace agreements to be successfully implemented and digested by the people. Sindyanna seems to be one of these grassroots peacebuilding islands that empowers the Arab and Palestinian society, and provides positive experiences between Arabs and Jews and Palestinians and Israelis. But which lessons can we learn from Sindyanna? (How) can fair trade contribute to local peacebuilding?

Using theories on economic peacebuilding, local peacebuilding and fair trade, I have explored the potential of fair trade in practice. In line with critical economic peacebuilding theorists such as Doyle (2005), this local-level study confirms that economic peacebuilding mechanisms itself do not seem to be sufficient for the creation of a 'positive peace'. When looking at the work of Sindyanna, the fair principles that accompany trade generally seem to have an important role. Foremost by prioritizing a social aspect in their business and in creating the right environment for local peace dynamics to occur.

In order to understand the potential of fair trade in local peacebuilding, it is useful to look from two angles, fair trade in terms of its philosophy and the fair trade label. From the case study it can be seen that the fair trade principles and philosophy play an implicit, but important role in the local peace dynamics taking place in Sindyanna. In accordance with the fair trade philosophy and principles, Sindyanna focuses on sustainable economic- and social development while doing business, and works on a basis of trust, partnership and dialogue. As Maoz (2004) highlighted, equality is key in local peacebuilding dynamics in the context of Israel and Palestine, and in Sindyanna, one can see this is

one of the leading principles, resulting in very warm relationships 'across the divides'. The key mechanism that seems to bridge gaps between people in the trading relations, and in the programs of Sindyanna, is contact. Whitley & Kite (2010) already stated, and what is confirmed in this research, that contact can be a very strong determinant for peacebuilding dynamics, especially on a local, or people-to-people level. In terms of empowerment, one can see that on a micro-scale, Sindyanna's work has quite some success, but in terms of the bigger picture, in which Sindyanna aims for an empowered Arab society that raises their voices together against their government, one cannot see results yet.

The role of the fair trade label, or network shows to be rather complex in this research. One the one hand, one can see that the fair trade community enabled the (initial) contact between Sindyanna and BFTA in the West Bank, resulting in a long-lasting and positive cooperation and at the same time provided a sense of common ground for them. Moreover, the fair trade community does enable Sindyanna and BFTA to advocate for their struggles internationally and gain income. On the other hand, the case study shows that the global fair trade community does not serve as a 'trading community' as explained by Lupu and Traag (2013), since most of the other potential fair trade partners in the West Bank still considered Sindyanna as the enemy, regardless of their fair trade mission. To add more complexity to this, there is no such thing as 'the' fair trade community, since there is a lot of contestation about 'not so fair practices', as highlighted by interviewees.

Thus, the social aspect of fair trade seems to be key in facilitating peace dynamics on a local scale. Putting the needs of people first, economically and socially, has enabled Sindyanna to create a peacebuilding islands in which Arabs and Jews, and Israelis and Palestinians have worked together, and have become friends for over 25 years. Without the social aspect, bridging divides seems to be rather difficult still, as can be seen in the relationships that are either qualitative or not qualitative with partners in the West Bank.

It is important to keep the scope of fair trade in mind in terms of (local) peacebuilding. Even though it might contribute to tackling possible root causes of a conflict such as poverty and (horizontal) inequality, reality shows that a conflict is the result of an interplay of different factors (Cramer, 2003). While the effects of fair trade might have a positive effect on relationships on a micro level, as seems to be the case in this research, macro-level effects need to be assessed carefully. To illustrate, when Palestine was developing economically, namely with a 9 percent growth, the Second Intifada broke out (Feldman, 2009).

Concluding, based on the exploration through the case study of Sindyanna, I would say that fair trade is not a 'holy grail' in terms of local peacebuilding, but has a lot to offer in terms of positive peace dynamics. Although the scope seems limited, this does not mean that it is not important. On the contrary, local peacebuilding initiatives such as Sindyanna play a role in conflict transformation by 'keeping the light alive' and change mentalities of people on the ground. Thus, in the ongoing search in finding ways to create sustainable peace, we can adopt the positive aspects from fair trade to contribute to local peacebuilding, and thereby conflict transformation on a macro-scale.

Limitations

To fully grasp the effects of fair trade peace dynamics in Sindyanna, it is important to integrate the perspective of olive farmers. Although I tried to arrange interviews with olive farmers, I did not manage to include their perspective in the research due to a combination of two factors: 1) my timing of the research was during harvesting season, which is the busiest time of the year for farmers and

Sindyanna and 2) I was not able to speak Hebrew and thereby dependent on others for translation and meetings.

To truly understand the potential of fair trade, one could argue that Sindyanna is eventually not the perfect case study. On the one hand, Sindyanna is a perfect match when looking at the traditional fair trade movement and philosophy. But on the other hand, Sindyanna is not a mainstream fair trade organization in current times, because they are non-profit and reinvest all their money in the social mission of Sindyanna. In line with this, it is important to note that in this case, fair trade is not the only common ground found between Sindyanna and its partners. Instead, they find each other in the view regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where Sindyanna tries to support the Palestinians. In this regard, they differ from 'mainstream' Israelis, which makes the point of departure in a trading relationship very different, and more likely to succeed. This makes it difficult to distinguish whether divides are fully being bridged through the work of fair trade, or their opinion regarding the conflict.

Recommendations for future research

Despite recognizing the limitations of this research, I believe I have been able to initiative a new strand of research in search of the potential of fair trade in bridging divides, contributing to local peacebuilding and thereby promoting conflict transformation. This research cautiously concluded that fair trade can indeed have positive effects for local peacebuilding and conflict transformation. This exploration can be further developed by researching the following:

- A longitudinal study into the effects of Sindyanna's work in terms of economic development, especially in the light of the Arab society and its position towards the Israeli government and its war practices against Palestine.
- Diving into the effects of advocating the struggle of Israel and Palestine through selling products with a story within the international fair trade network. A quantitative study would be useful to see which people buy the products of Sindyanna and its partners on an international level. And research whether the story of Sindyanna resonates with the customers, and analyze whether this leads to any action to help the Israelis and Palestinians with their struggle.
- Perform an in-depth study in the perspective of farmers in the local warscape of the olive tree branch. Whereas this study focused mostly on the perspectives of the core organization, its partners in the West Bank and the 'recipients' of their support programs, the perspective of farmers is key to fully digest how fair trade works in the local warscape of the olive tree branch.
- Conduct a similar case study with two organizations that are on 'two sides' of a conflict, who engage in fair trade practices, but do not have a non-profit base like Sindyanna.
- From this study, one can carefully conclude that fair trade has something to offer in terms of peacebuilding, and addresses some of the problems that are highlighted by economic peacebuilding. However, the researched also signaled some question marks and entered the idea that 'conventional' trade might also work. Therefore, conducting a comparative study between a fair trade organization working across the borders of a conflict, and a 'conventional' trade organization that trades with partners on 'the other side' of a conflict would be useful as well.

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10. Appendix

10.1 Overview of interviewees

Interview number	Respondent
Interview 1	Worker at Sindyanna
Interview 2	Worker at Sindyanna
Interview 3	Women basket weaving at Sindyanna
Interview 4	Jewish volunteer at Sindyanna
Interview 5	Jewish worker at Sindyanna
Interview 6	Palestinian, founder Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans
Interview 7	Jewish, founder Sindyanna
Interview 8	Palestinian, owner Nablus Soap
Interview 9	Jewish, cofounder at Sindyanna
Interview 10	Jewish, cofounder Sindyanna
Interview 11	Jewish volunteer at Sindyanna
Interview 12	Palestinian, owner Nablus Soap
Interview 13	Jewish, owner of Fair Trade organization Achoti
Interview 14	Jewish, worker at Sindyanna
Interview 15	Women basket weaving at Sindyanna

10.2 Questionnaire for Arab women in contact programs

عزيزي سيدات سنديانة

شكراً جزيلاً لاشتراككم في هذا الاستبيان. في الشهور الماضية كنت اعمل على بحثي بالإضافة للتعرف أكثر على سنديانة والأهم على الأشخاص الذين يعملون هناك. البحث الذي أقوم به يهدف إذا أنه العلاقة بين التجارة المنصفة وبناء جسور التواصل بين العرب واليهود. لقد سررت جداً بلقاء بعضكم ولكن للأسف الوقت لم يساعد لأتحدث معكم كلكم. بالإضافة إلى أنني لا أتحدث العربية. ولكن حيث انني أريد أن استفيد من تجربتكم وذلك في أحدث هذه الأسئلة. أود أن أطلب منكم أن تجاوبوا على الأسئلة بصراحة. ولذلك أن يمكنكم أن أجوبتكم ستبقى سرية بشكل مجهول. وإذا كان أحدكم أي سؤال يمكنكم مراسلتي على واتس أب على الرقم (0031642361970) أو على الإيميل msluiter@hotmail.com

بالتوفيق!

1. هل تستطيعين أن تخبريني قليلاً عن نفسك؟ (أين تعيشين, هل أنتي متزوجة وهل لديك أطفال؟)

2. كيف تعرفتي على سنديانة وكيف بدأتي العمل هناك؟

3. كيف يؤثر العمل في سنديانة على حياتك؟ هل تشعرين بأنك أقوى؟ كيف؟

4. كيف تشعر عائلتك, أصدقاءك ومجتمعك بخصوص عملك في سنديانة؟ هل تستطيعين أن تعطين مثالاً حول شعورك بأنك مدعومة و/أو تشعرين انك غير مدعومة من قبل بعض الناس و لماذا يدعمونك او لا يدعمونك؟

دروس حبك السلال في سنديانة هي للنساء العرب واليهود. حيث إن سنديانة تريد أن تزيد ترابط الطرفين. بعض الناس يقولون إن هناك تفرقة بين اليهود والعرب (على سبيل المثال في النظام الدراسي او في الثقافة او التوظيف او السياسة). أريد أن اسمع عن تجاربكم في هذا السياق.

5. هل لديك تجربة في التفرقة بين العرب واليهود؟ إذا كان الجواب نعم, فالرجاء إعطاء ثلاث أمثلة في هذا السياق.

6. قبل العمل لسنديانة, هل كان لديكم تواصل مع اليهود؟ وإذا كان كذلك فما هي طبيعة هذا التواصل؟

7. هل أمن لكم العمل في سنديانة تواصل مع اليهود؟ وهل بنيتم علاقات معهم خلال هذا الوقت؟ ما طبيعة هذه العلاقات؟

إذا كان الأمر كذلك فكيف أثر على طريقة تفكيركم بالنساء اليهود وباليهود بشكل عام؟

سنديانة هي منظمة تجارة عادلة (مثلاً: رواتب عادلة, علاقة جيدة بين المنتج والمنظمة). انا مهتمة بماهية شعوركم حول أن سنديانة تقوم بالتجارة العادلة بدل النمط التجاري العادي.

8. برأيك, ما الذي يجعل سنديانة منظمة تجارة عادلة؟

9. ما هي أهمية فكرة التجارة العادلة لديك؟ بالنسبة لك, هل هو سبب بحد ذاته لتعمل في سنديانة؟

10. هل كنت لتعمل في سنديانة في حال لم يكن لديهم مبدأ التجارة العادلة؟

شكراً جزيلاً لكم لأنكم ملأتم هذا الإستبيان!

96

⑤ التفرقة أراها أنا شخصياً .... في المطارات اذ يقوموا بتفتيشنا بشكل موسع داكبر من اليهود

⑥ لم يكن هناك تواصل مباشر. فقط في المستشفيات والدوائر الحكومية د المطارات.
لكن ليس بطريقة شخصيه.

⑦ نعم امن العمل في سنة يان تواصل كبير مع اليهود وقد بنينا علاقه صداقه وزمالة
داصبحنا نشارك مشاكلنا اليومية مع بعض ـ وتعرفنا على حياة كل منا . دقد صار هناك
زيارات بيته عائليه بيننا

⑧ منظمة عادلو تعني الربع القليل

⑨ لا لم تكن فكرة التجارة العادله هي السبب الذي دحان للعمل في سنديانه
بل المعادله الحسنه والجيده بين الموظفين اليهود والعرب هو ماجذبني

⑩ نعم العمل هو الاساس د الموظفين والاداره هي التي شرتني للعمل بسنديانه
والمعالظه اليهودية العربيه جذبتني اكثر

97

10.4 Coding scheme MAXCDA

Code System	633
Nablus	1
view cooperation Israel	0
challenges due to seperation/ conflict	5
history	2
Alternative to conflict situation	39
grassroot movement	6
running away from conflict	1
general attitude conflict?	3
political situation	11
Political influence from abroad	12
Background interviewee	9
support family in working	6
motivation work	15
Role in Sindyanna	5
Land of Olives	15
challenges olive industry	5
Divides Arabs- Jews	23
divides in daily life	42
personal experiences	29
political differences	23
Fair Trade	3
fair trade fair peace	10
view on FT	22
characteristics in practice	24
view on effects FT	4
a bubble?	14
Conflict context	37
view on conflict or political situation	39
Sindyanna	4
cooperation palestinian org	17
challenges	22
view cooperation	5
challenges	15
How it all started	6

10.5 Example of coded text

\\homedir.ad.hva.nl\msluite\Documents\MAXQDA12\Scriptie Merel.mx12 - MAXQDA Analytics Pro 12 (Release 12.2.1)

Project   View   Documents   Codes   Variables   Analysis   Mixed methods   Visual tools   Reports   Stats   MAXDictio   Help

Background interviewee

Docu...

Documents   633
InterviewTranscripten.odt   633
Sets   0

Code ...

Code System   633
Nablus   1
  view cooperation Israel   0
  challenges due to sep...   5
  history   2
Alternative to conflict situ...   39
  grassroot movement   6
  running away from co...   1
  general attitude confl...   3
  political situation   11
Political influence from ab...   12
Background interviewee   6
  support family in wor...   6
  motivation work   15
  Role in Sindyanna   5
Land of Olives   15
  challenges olive indus...   5
Divides Arabs- Jews   23
  divides in daily life   42
  personal experiences   29
  political differences   23

Document Browser: InterviewTranscripten.odt

534 *This project is actually how I found Sindyanna, but I heard it stopped?*

535 It was a onetime project of the EU and it was a partnership between Sindyanna, COSPE from Italy and Bethlehem fair trade organization. The applicant in the program were COSPE and the main idea was to try and alongside the work of each organization with their own target groups, was to develop a line of products that will be a combination of product of Sindyanna and Bethlehem in order to manifest another perspective on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict showing that solution can come from the ground, can come from work being done from two organization from the both sides, showing that there can be trust and common goals and indeed, first of all we drafted a very nice, kind of credo, I will show you. But again, you have to take into consideration that Sindyanna is not a usual Israeli NGO.

536 *Because?*

537 Because our whole perspective comes from a very very deep solidarity with Palestinian people and the founders of Sindyanna are very, are people who were and are very politically engaged, I am talking about the founders, not the members and volunteers…

538 *Who are the founders?*

539 Me, yacov, Michal… a lot of people, ten maybe. SO I am not sure if this kind of bond could have been established if it was another Israeli organization?

540 Because of political background?

541 Very politically active and also advanced in understanding the Israeli- Palestinian conflict. Sometimes Suzan used to say, at least I heard her in speaking in a tour in Italy. She told the audience that she trusts us more than Palestinian organizations, sometimes…

542 *In what things?*

543 Integrity, really caring about Palestinian issues, our commitment in the occupation.

544 (showing me the brochure) I like it a lot, it is in English and Italian, not in Arabic nor Hebrew. We decided to do it in English because everybody knows English. It explains our philosophy.

545 *Why did the project stop?*

546 It just stopped because the funding stopped. But we continued to work together and we want to work… this is also why we want this meeting with Suzan, as I told you, because we are working in very similar fields of fair trade and tourism. And then we applied in EU to do another project, this was in 2015, t was really an amazing project in which we wanted a connection not only between artisans from both countries but also tourism. Connect Kana and Bethlehem which are two places where Jesus had a lot of things to do (laughing) in kana he turned water into wine and in Bethlehem he was born. So, but we didn't succeed.

547 *Because you were denied the funding of EU?*

548 Right. WE passed the first stage and we didn't pass the second stage and I am outraged about it because it was an amazing project, but we didn't succeed.

Simple Coding Query (OR combination of codes)