

RACHEL HERTZ-LAZAROWITZ, ABEER FARAH, TAMAR ZELNIKER**SYMBOLS OF HYPHENATED IDENTITY DRAWING MAPS (IDM) FOR ARAB AND JEWISH STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA¹****Abstract**

In 2008, we conducted a large scale study following our methodology developed for the analysis of drawings to assess identity (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Farah & Yosef-Meitav, 2012). We gathered interviews and asked for Identity Drawing Maps (IDM) from 184 students aged from 20-30 years. The symbols in the drawings were grouped in five categories: Religious, National, Emotional, Secular-Cultural and Nature and person figure symbols. The most frequent symbols were related to the nature and person figure category, and the least frequent were symbols from the secular-cultural category. The symbol categories most indicative of identity conflicts were religious and national. The Arabs had more conflicted and complex IDM messages than Jews and the evaluation of their emotions were less positive and less optimistic than the Jews. The IDM methodology revealed the complex and multi-layered expression of identity construction. These findings can provide better understanding into the dynamic of identity construction of youth living in the University context which has been conflict ridden for many decades.

Key words: Hyphenated Identify; Arabs and Jews; Haifa University

Hyphenated identity

The theory of "Hyphenated Identity" (HI) argues that people living in complex political-social contexts construct a "new identity" that include many identities depended on the socio-cultural and political contexts. Research had documented that young adults includes various sub-identities and "live on the hyphen", between identities found in contrast vs. harmony (Farah, Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2009).

Israeli society is bi-national, comprising a Jewish majority and an Arab minority. For many years, the Arab population in Israel was referred by the majority as "*the Arabs*," as a matter of distinction from "*the Jews*". Throughout the years, definitions have changed within each group. Jews and Arabs are now defining themselves by more identity terms. Especially the Arab minority in Israel added many hyphenated identities, among them terms of collective identity: Palestinians, Arab-Palestinians, and Palestinian citizens of Israel (Yosef-Meitav, 2008).

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, identity has been a core concept that challenged the Israeli society. Particularly challenging has been the term *Jewish*, as it refers to both religion and nationality (Herman, 1977). Young Arabs and Jews have encountered complex political changes, adjusting to greater diversity of ethnicity, culture and religion, while continuing to live in the context of an intractable conflict (Rouhana, 2004; White-Stephan, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker, & Stephan, 2004). Over time, identity definitions in Israel changed from simple or binary to multiple and more complex identities (Ghanem, 2006). Especially Arabs

¹ We thank to Katsiaficas, Sirin & Fine, for their cooperation in developing the measures.

and Jewish immigrants negotiated their identity via a complex course of action (Gerges, 2003). The aim of this study is to explore the deeper meaning youth in Israel assign to their identities.

The context of the University of Haifa

The University of Haifa is a unique environment for studying how nationality, religion, and ethnicity contribute to students' construction of their identity, and how identity in turn is related to students' perception of their experiences on campus. The University of Haifa is a meeting place for Arab (Muslim, Christian, and Druze) and Jewish students, from different ethnicities. All the students are either religious or secular, with varied ethnic background; political orientation, as well as different calendars that mark their religious and civic life. Within this multifaceted context identities are constantly under reconstruction as young people live in a complex mixture of conflict and harmony.

Since 2001 and up to 2008 Hertz-Lazarowitz and a team of Arab and Jewish researchers conducted annual studies as part of a research seminar entitled "Social psychological aspects of the University". The full questionnaire asks the students to rate attitude on a Likert scale and rates their perception of Haifa University (HU). In those studies students were to choose one identity from a list, and there was an option to add an identity definition (Zelniker, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Peretz, Azaiza & Sharabany, 2009).

In the 2006 and 2008 study students were interviewed in order to explore identity construction. At the end of the interview students were given a blank page and were asked to write their identity definition. They were also asked to draw a picture expressing their identity and write a text related to the drawing. Their written identity definition, plus the drawing, plus the text related to the drawing, constituted the Identity Drawing Map (IDM). This method followed the procedure used by Michelle Fine in her study of Hyphenated Identity (Katsiaficas, Fine, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Sirin, Yosef-Meitav, Farah, Zoabi, 2012). The maps were examined by qualitative and quantitative methods of analyses; and added important understanding of the HI in its current construction. We assumed that in Israel we will also find HI and student that "live on the hyphen", between identities in contrast vs. harmony (Farah & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2009; Hertz-Lazarowitz, Yosef-Meitav & Zoabi, 2007). This study focus is using the IDM methodology to explore HI in a mixed University context. We aim to understand differences as well as similarities, within and between Arabs and Jews.

Method

Participants

In the year of 2008, seventy six Jews (27 from Ethiopia, 32 from Former Soviet Union, 17 born in Israel) and 109 Arabs (31 Druze, 35 Muslims and 43 Christian), all of them UH Students in their third year, from various departments participated voluntarily in the study. They created the IDM as part of the questionnaire; all of the 185 maps were documented and analyzed (Farah & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2009).

This paper presents two types of results: One detailed analysis of two examples IDM as a detailed guide to use the IDM method. Second we present a general

analysis by percentages ($n=185$) to find similarities and differences between Arabs and Jews.

Procedure

Following answering a Likert type questionnaires. Each student was engaged in a one to one, 90 minutes semi structured interviews; students were interviewed about their life in general and specifically on campus. At the end of the interview they were asked to write an identity definition, draw their identity map, and add a brief text related to their map (Yosef-Meitav, 2008; Hertz-Lazarowitz, Yosef-Meitav, Farah & Zoabi, 2010).

Measures

Three coders proceed through three stages of coding the IDM:

(1) Categorization of objects to groups of symbols: First, all objects in the drawing were counted, the sum was 100. Then up to 3 most salient objects were coded in the fitting category of symbols and entered later to the analysis. Examples of symbols within the five categories were:

- a. *Religious symbols*: Mosque, Synagogue, and Cross.
- b. *National symbols*: geographical maps, Israel flag, Palestinian flag.
- c. *Emotional symbols*: heart, family, sadness-tears.
- d. *Secular and Cultural symbols*: books, university, village.
- e. *Nature and person figure*: person, parts of body, trees.

(2) The message of the maps: The coders defined the IDM according to the following distinctions:

- a. *Integrated message*: If symbols of identities (at least two) and text were blended in integration.
- b. *Conflicted message*: if symbols of identities (at least two) and text were depicted with high tension, and intense rage.
- c. *Separated/parallel message*: if symbols of identities (at least two) and text were separated or parallel.

(3) Evaluation of emotion: The coders used 12 emotions. Positive emotions such as satisfaction, pride; and negative emotions such as anxiety, anger. The coders decided in a (1-3) scale if they are very certain (3) or very uncertain (1), about the emotion presented in the map.

Reliability

The coders were three students of psychology and education on their B.A and M.A degree. They were trained 12 hours by the main researcher. Each coder received an identity map, read the text written beside the identity map and described it. They start working individually and then rotated in pairs. At the same time they wrote a protocol which provides a basis for testing the reliability, the coders agreed 90% between them about the three stages of coding of the IDM (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Yosef-Meitav & Zoabi, 2007).

Identity Map Results

We present two IDMs of an Ethiopian Jew and a Muslim Arab.

(1) Abed: Arab – Muslim – male

Background information:

Abed is 21 years old, single, traditional Muslim, Arab, he defines his identity as an **Arab Palestinian who lives in Israel**. He was born in Israel and lived in Arab village.

The identity map drawing: The text

"Maybe my drawing map is influence by the coming independence day, but I feel that the flag meaning the Jewish Zionist flag of the state, is crashing our Palestinian and Arab identity. I draw the Palestinian flag on the soil because it is the soil of our land. The figure of Handala symbolize my Arab identity, the Israeli flag symbolize the occupation that hides both Handala and the Palestinian flag".

Map analysis and summary:

Abed drew three national symbols in different sizes: a small Palestinian flag, a large Israeli flag over the whole page and a figure of Handala² which became a known symbol for the Palestinians occupation. The Israeli flag symbolize the oppression of the Palestinian people, on the legs of Handala he drew the Palestinian flag. The Israeli flag is overruling the Palestinian flag; Abed writes that he is not satisfied living in Israel. The map expresses a message of conflict between s national and civic identities; the emotions expressed are sadness and other negative emotions.

Shmual: Jewish male born in Ethiopia

Background information:

Shmuel is 28 years old, single, traditional Jewish, he defines his identity as a **Jewish-Ethiopian**. He was born in Ethiopia and lives in Jewish settlement.

The identity map drawing : The text

"I am a Jewish man that immigrated to Israel from Ethiopia, I am very pleased here, I want to continue living in the land of Israel, I want to grow roots, develop and help the Ethiopian community. As my family has adapted to the new state and overcome some difficulties, I want other Ethiopian families develop and always remained in the land on Israel".

Map analysis and Summary:

Shmuel drew many symbols in four categories. **National:** an Israeli flag, an Ethiopian flag and a map of Israel. **Religious:** Star of David. **Secular and Cultural:** an Ethiopian house, (the hot) Nature and Person figure he draws himself. The map expresses a message of integration "being an Ethiopian Jew". His positive emotions are expressed in pride, hope and elevation.

Shmuel drew a human figure with dark blue face and curly hair. On his body there is a map of Israel and above him a large Israeli flag with glorified stars of David around. On the left there is a colorful Ethiopian flag and there is a typical Ethiopian hot (home). Shmuel defined himself as **Jewish-Ethiopian** and writes about the close connection with the Ethiopian community and his desire to help them. He uses a lot of symbols to express his jewishness but he keeps the Ethiopian symbols as well.

² From approximately 1975 through 1987 Naji Al-Ali created cartoons that depict the complexities of the plight of Palestinian refugees. These cartoons are still relevant today and Handala, the refugee child who is present in every cartoon, remains a potent symbol of the struggle of the Palestinian people for justice and self-determination.

Finding and Discussion

IDMs comparison (N=185)

Similarities: The two groups generated the same symbol categories and had similar percentages of symbols in each of the categories. For both groups, percentages of Nature and person figure symbols were highest; followed by national and emotional Categories. Only two categories out of five: National and Religious, include symbols that expressed the source of conflicts. The religious symbols in Israel are naturally political expression of conflict, oppression, unjust and occupation. Those are the events that are perceived by the Arab and the Jews as threat to their life experiences.

This finding comes with the data that Arabs expressed more negative emotions than Jews, (anger and sadness). These emotions pertain to their difficult and discordant existence among the Jewish majority, and to the continuous oppressed existence of their Palestinian brothers under the Israeli occupation (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker & Azaiza, 2010). The reality in Israel is that on one hand Arab can express their love for the Palestinian flag, but this flag is not recognizing in Israel and cannot be part to a political approved demonstration.

It is a positive sign that student can express their positive and negative emotion in regard to these symbols and toward the University. But the Israeli-Jewish culture gives priority to the Jewish religious symbols in the daily life on campus and in the State. But slowly some positive changes are taking place on campus. Mixed classrooms are the routine. Students live within an island of coexistence and cooperation for the last forty years. Inter-religion dialogue groups are formed. Prayer places are assigned to different religion groups. Few civil groups continue for years to create a dialogue and understanding sites for different groups. The holidays of all religions are now acknowledged by UH authorities, thus we can dream and imagine a reality where national and religious symbols will reach more acceptance and respect from all groups.

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