

Dialogue

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ABSTRACT

Dialogue used within music in peacebuilding includes social, musical, and educational processes of rehumanisation, while also disrupting oppressive knowledge that has been learned and preserved through structural violence, cultural violence (Galtung, 1990), and conflict. According to educational philosopher Paulo Freire, dialogue is an 'act of creation' (2000) through which individuals raise their critical consciousness in order to name their world. Developing this praxis requires dialogical musical spaces and 'communicative creativity' (Urbain, 2016), within which to explore and reflect upon values, narratives, realities, and power dynamics, to build more inclusive and equalizing communities, and potentially a just peace.

KEYWORDS

dialogue; music education; peacebuilding education; critical consciousness; youth

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DIALOGUE

Below is a paraphrased portion of dialogue from when my students and I unpacked the concept of what it means to ‘overcome’ within their lives. This topic was approached as the subject for a small songwriting project, upon the invitation of an American artist, to co-write parts of a new song together. All four members, a small group of Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs within the Jerusalem Youth Chorus, have been chorus members between three to five years, and have experienced weekly intensive dialogue about values and the conflict, in addition to chorus rehearsals, retreats, and local and international performances. I have chosen a pseudonym for each.

Malik: Overcoming to me means living in Jerusalem... Despite all that is hard here, I am constantly doing the things to improve oneself – to improve myself despite everything. That’s why I am here in the chorus, why I was in the Facilitation Skills Course, and Leadership Course.

Me: What does ‘overcoming’ mean to you, Rami?

Rami: How can I overcome when there are the checkpoints that I must pass every single day to come to Jerusalem?

Me: True... so is there anything that you do to perhaps emotionally overcome this?

Rami: There is nothing to do – I boil inside and prepare for an early death from the stress I experience. I understand that it is bad for my health, but what can I do?

Me: How about you, Wassim? Do you have anything you would like to add?

Wassim: The Occupation changes my life because if I wasn’t under occupation, my dad wouldn’t be continually fined by the Municipality of Jerusalem for our home (built without a building permit)¹. I left high school to help pay these fines, which stunted my learning. But I will continue to fight the Occupation by doing everything I can to continue my learning, and this for me is overcoming.

Ronit, the Israeli member present, is listening intently as these initial reflections enter the beginning part of our dialogue session. This is not the first time Ronit is hearing these statements, and they² know, from already several years as a participant in this music education - encounter dialogue program, that these statements of personal truth will continuously return to the conversation. As a practitioner and the facilitator of this group, I believe it is my role to ensure there is concurrent witnessing of youth realities. At times this manifests within heated conversation that may reach resolution, further discord, or a mix of resolved and unresolved feelings and thoughts. Other times this means there are more contemplative silences, allowing for perhaps further intrapersonal reflection, representing the internal dialogue (Kahanoff, 2016) happening within, and beyond the dialogue we can see or hear. Dialogue sessions may at times begin or end with, or spontaneously erupt with an improvised jam through which we move in and

¹ Most homes in East Jerusalem are built without permits, which is considered illegal by the Jerusalem Municipality. It was reported upon in 2015 that within the previous years, only 7% of Jerusalem building permits were given to East Jerusalem Palestinian neighborhoods, even though that is where 40% of the city’s population lives (Hasson, 2015).

² They choose to be called by gender neutral pronouns.

between worlds, communicating our inner most feelings that may be unspeakable at that moment (Lederach and Lederach, 2011; Urbain, 2016).

Whether exploring the music of our cultures and ancestors, celebrating and questioning the music we are listening to today, or co-creating new music, these activities are all structured as a dialogical practice within an overall process of educational dialogue. Even discussing a songwriting prompt like, “What does it mean to overcome?” enables multi-layered spaces for self-discovery, questioning, and uni-national and binational existences, through which peer learning as an aspect of educational dialogue happens. My experiences in practice at the grassroots level with Israeli and Palestinian youth musicians and singers have led me to understand that dialogue is an integral and generative form of educational learning and understanding within music in peacebuilding contexts. Dialogue, when used within music in peacebuilding, fosters social, musical, and educational processes of rehumanisation, while also enabling the disruption of oppressive knowledge that has been learned and preserved through structural violence, cultural violence (Galtung, 1990), and conflict.

After around 30 minutes of dialogue between all youth singers, the idea of making the city of Jerusalem the central focus of the song arises. Jerusalem is as divided, separated, and segregated as ever, regardless of any rhetoric of unity the Israeli Government uses or any pursuit the Palestinian Authority exercises in claiming part of Jerusalem as their capital. There is West Jerusalem, and there is occupied East Jerusalem³, making any possibility for shared living and binationality⁴ at the current moment at the grassroots level within this complex city difficult and often non-existent. Even though this group is already critically aware of the existent oppressive realities, hearing the aforementioned statements is still fundamental and powerful when considering the space co-created for them to be heard, and the acceded responsibilities of both Israeli and Palestinian members in making shared space for one another. My positionality and subsequent responsibility are neither separate from this process as a white Jewish woman with roots in Israel-Palestine who identifies as a feminist, writer, thinker, musician, and grassroots practitioner. Reflecting upon and examining my positionality is a synonymous dialogical practice as I interpret what is happening when we move through dialogue and co-creation. It is also part of the tapestry of what is present during our session, alongside the presence of truths and realities still outside of my framework of understanding (Feld, 1987), where I am further learning and relearning alongside my students.

It is also my responsibility as the facilitator of this group to challenge the existent power dynamics within the group dynamic as a microcosm of society at large, while also caring for the emotional needs of both Palestinian and Israeli youth singers and musicians, separately and together, existing in this unresolved place. In this ‘location of possibility’ (1994) as bell hooks speaks of, dialogue and co-creation enables individuals and communities to not only reflect on their realities, but also be a part of co-creating their realities through critical thinking, empathy, liberation, resilience, and love as a way to build more inclusive and equalizing communities,

³ East Jerusalem was annexed in 1967, though its status is still undefined as Jerusalem is a final status negotiation issue. East Jerusalemites do not have Israeli citizenship, but rather a permanent residency card issued by the Israeli government. Many East Jerusalem Palestinians consider themselves to be occupied by Israel.

⁴ Binationality within this context recognizes the existence, culture, heritage, narratives, and rights of both Israelis and Palestinians within the Holy Land.

and potentially a just peace. Dialogue within music education and peacebuilding education spaces journeys from thesis to antithesis to synthesis, where the equal exchange of co-creation, musicking (Small, 1999), and peer learning is continuous, reaching new questions, discoveries, memories, and understandings brought to and sparked by the ensemble as their praxis and agency grows.

Though the latter is an open definition of dialogue within music education and peacebuilding education contexts, one can still question whether the previous snapshot with my students constitutes as a facet of dialogue, and what relation this interaction might have with musical co-creation and musicking. In many ways, this resonates with a larger conversation surrounding the term ‘dialogue.’ Relevant points of consideration include how dialogue should be defined, amongst who should it be held, if it is structured and in which ways, what are its theoretical underpinnings, and how is it used in practice in spaces of conflict, systemic injustice, and post-conflict.

Though it is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate how dialogue has evolved over the arc of time, as a musician-educator and activist within the field of music education and peacebuilding at the grassroots level, I choose to critically investigate this term. I must ask: What significance does dialogue possess within educational philosophy and practices? How is the term dialogue relevant or perhaps even a necessary transformative tool within peacebuilding, music education, and critical pedagogy? In what ways is the use of dialogue evolving within practice at the grassroots level, enabling new forms of activism and social change? I approach these questions through several perspectives, including that of education philosophy, liberatory education, peacebuilding education as an integral part of conflict transformation (Schell-Faucon, 2011), and encounter dialogue from my work with Israelis and Palestinians. By sharing with the reader this cross-section, the relevance of the philosophers, authors, practitioners, and theories I engage with can be further understood.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND PRACTICAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF DIALOGUE

There are multiple perspectives through which to further understand dialogue philosophically and constructively. Dialogue as a term has a long lineage of meanings and significances across cultures, spaces, and time. Etymologically dialogue originates from the Greek word *dialogs*, holding a central significance in traditions and religious practices from the East and West. There are various opinions of how to translate the word dialogues, though commonly *dia* is understood as ‘through’ and *logos* is understood as ‘word,’ ‘meaning,’ or ‘speech.’ Essentially through communication, and ostensibly nonverbal communication as well (Urbain, 2016), meaning-making is created through relationships (Isaacs, 2008). Broadly, one could say that dialogue happens in conversations with our families, between strangers and friends, within our religious and contemplative practices, in and between our music and books, as an educational practice in our formal and non-formal educational spaces, between community members and governments within our evolutions and revolutions, and of course, within each of us as individuals. Our ears hear dialoguing in our mass media and podcasts, and our eyes watch it unfold on social media through Facebook and Twitter. It can be a weapon for freedom and resistance, especially when suppressed by authoritative governments and leaders, systemic injustice, and conflict. It is possible to learn with and through dialogue particular values, ideas, and narratives related to our socialization explicitly and through a hidden curriculum (Freire, 2000). Finally, dialogue is also embedded within art in cross-cultural, multimodal ways. This

includes through musicking, where the music we make is also in turn the music that makes us (Allsup, 2016), by which we can experience in real time complex meaning-making and relationship-building (Small, 1999).

Through a philosophy of education lens, dialogue is an ‘act of creation’ (Freire, 2000) through which women and men raise their critical consciousness in order to name their world. Martin Buber (1958) soulfully illustrates in his book *I-Thou* that only through mutual existence can we look beyond individualism and collectivism. He states, the primary word *I-Thou*⁵ can be spoken where “I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become *I*, I say *Thou*.” (p. 11) Mutual existence is necessary through which “all real living is meeting” (p. 11), enabling agency when an individual “enters into relation with her/his whole being” (p. 29). Audre Lorde (2012), black-lesbian-feminist poet and activist, proclaims in *Sister Outsider*, “it is vitally necessary for each one of us to establish or examine her function” in the transformation of silence into language and action, “and to recognize her role as vital within that transformation” (p. 43). Michael Bakhtin’s (1981) philosophical analysis of literature and language as dialogical and existent in “an environment of social heteroglossia” (p. 292) can be applied to dialogue itself through the understanding that consciousness cannot exist in isolation, for the making of meaning is otherwise impossible. How does this transfer and translate to an educational place of liberation through which “individuals can be provoked to reach beyond themselves in their intersubjective space” (Greene, 1988, p. 12)? If peacebuilding is the work of an artist being touched by the moral imagination as John Paul Lederach elaborates, “Who we have been, are, and will be emerges and shapes itself in a context of relational interdependency” (Lederach, 2005, p. 35). Perhaps it is this recognition of interdependency, or space ‘in-between’ (Greene, 1993), where those in locations of conflict, post-conflict, and systemic injustice can cultivate through dialogue the space necessary “to perceive and experience a change process as genuine” (Lederach, 2005, p. 56).

Shifting from the philosophical to the practical, in her book *Jews and Arabs in Israel Encountering Their Identities*, Maya Kahanoff (2016) speaks of dialogue as a complex, multidimensional, and dynamic process “fraught with tensions” (p. 28). In her words, dialogue “brings people together and drives them apart. It comforts and upsets, it breaks and restores. Sometimes it is experienced as a struggle for life or death” (Kahanoff, 2016, p. xvii). She continues to elaborate that dialogue does not guarantee a solution, but nonetheless, “contains the potential for growth and change” (p. 220) as individuals “expose their fears and yearnings” (Kahanoff, 2016, p. 220). In this space, individuals risk embracing vulnerability (Brown, 2010), through which they can wrestle with their inner reflections on the individual and intergroup level, in addition to listening and engaging with new ideas, narratives, and realities. Furthermore, depending on whether dialogue is facilitated or not, and how it is facilitated in turn affects the outcomes of the process, sometimes reflecting the desired educational goals. Many of these decisions mirror how a program or facilitators view what constitutes as dialogue and how dialogue happens. For example, choosing a psychodynamic model of facilitation within dialogue prioritizes individual and interpersonal relationships over political intergroup dynamics. This decision affects the entire process of dialogue, from what type of learning to what outcomes are possible (Suleiman, 2004).

⁵ Italics in original

Moreover, in some schools of thought concerning dialogue, facilitators are more involved in the process of guiding participants, whereas others suggest that facilitators should let the conversation between participants flow, choosing to be less involved. Additional relevant questions concerning the structure of the dialogical encounter include: Are participants set up by facilitators to conflict with each other with the purpose of debating historical narratives and collective memories? Are participants invited to bring their multiple identities (Maalouf, 2001) to the space or are singular markers of identity, such as nationality and religious affiliation, more pronounced? Is peer learning supported, creating a space of educational dialogue? Are other activities included within the dialogue process, like the arts, sports, or other competences? Each of these considerations affect the space of dialogue and whether what is happening is dialogical or dialogue according to practitioners, academics, and participants.

In a way, as the term dialogue is quite expansive within the literature of conflict resolution, peacebuilding and education philosophy at large (Kahanoff, 2016; Bartlett, 2005), and within the field at the grassroots level, it can be difficult to ultimately define it uniformly. Perhaps dialogue should not be turned into a ‘closed form’ (Allsup, 2016) after all, preventing it from becoming an ‘object.’ In Bakhtin’s *The Dialogic Imagination*, he warns that when a word is perceived as an object, even meaning becomes a thing, where “there can be no dialogic approach to such a word of the kind immanent to any deep and actual understanding” (p. 352). Yet mirroring the importance of contextualization within education, it is accordingly important to give context to dialogue when speaking of dialogue within a particular purpose and discourse. This entry’s focus questions in what way the keyword dialogue, when used within music in peacebuilding, can be an educational process of rehumanisation, while also disrupting oppressive knowledge that has been learned and preserved through structural violence, cultural violence (Galtung, 1990), and conflict. By putting critical thinking, empathy, and the importance of educational process at the forefront, dialogue here is understood as a space to expand individual and intergroup reflexivity, within which to explore and reflect upon values, narratives, present realities, and power dynamics internally and externally. When music education and co-creation is added to this dialogical space as part of the educational process, it is also possible to enliven ‘praxis,’ (Freire, 2000) or reflection and action, through experiential learning in real time, where “to exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it,” (p. 88) as a right of everyone as equals.

EDUCATIONAL INTERSECTIONS WITHIN PEACEBUILDING, AESTHETIC EDUCATION, AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES

What is the place of peacebuilding education within the dialogical space? Similarly to the keyword dialogue, there are many definitions and considerations when defining the term ‘peace education’ (Hantzopoulos, 2011). One accepted definition by scholars and practitioners is that peace education is

“a multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary field that encompasses many subfields, including human rights education, development education, conflict resolution education, disarmament education, and environmental education” (Hantzopoulos, 2011, p. 22).

Often definitions of peace education also reference the need to include an understanding for and about what Johan Galtung (1990) calls ‘positive peace,’ which is not merely the absence of war, but as well the eradication of systemic violence and cultural violence within society. The philosophical foundations of

peace education usually include the teachings of educational philosophers, such as Maria Montessori, W.E.B. Dubois, John Dewey, and of course, Paulo Freire. A critical approach within peace education programs includes providing “learners with information and experiences that lead to knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and worldviews that promote peace,” while also “anchoring the learning process in local, democratic participation, and social action” (Bajaj, 2015, p. 155).

Dialogue groups, especially within protracted conflict, are often utilized as the chosen form of peace education (Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kahanoff, 2016) through which generational change, or conflict transformation, becomes possible (Schell-Faucon, 2011). Through dialogue and dialogical encounters that often include “project-oriented activities, such as art-making, sports, and joint tasks,” (p. 23) relationships are transformed

among conflicting or minority/majority groups by creating spaces in which all parties are ostensibly granted equality of voice. These personal transformative relations would then translate into the broader societal context. (Hantzopoulos, 2011, p. 23).

There is still a lot of debate within peacebuilding and human rights education communities about whether dialogue within encounter programs are effective in changing behaviors and attitudes amongst participants and if so, then how (Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kahanoff, 2016). These are worthy, contextually relevant concerns that should be considered by every practitioner, academic, and participant involved in peacebuilding education. For the purposes of this entry though, the focus is on the pedagogy, or process of learning, that can be activated within dialogue, rather than looking simply at outcomes.

Betty Reardon of the field of peace education speaks of ‘reflective inquiry’ (Reardon and Snauwaert, 2011, p. 6) as a pedagogical methodology to use within peace education and within dialogue as well. Through this method,

human attributes of curiosity and wonderment” can be nurtured, mutually reinforcing purposes of development of the self and of the socially relevant knowledge and humanly enhancing skills and values. (Reardon and Snauwaert, 2011, p. 6).

She points to the importance of inquiry and connecting learning to the learner’s world by asking questions which personalize and ground a topic within peace education, making understanding more powerful and accessible. When reflective inquiry from the field of peace education is included within a critical process, I believe it echoes concepts from Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy and can correlate with elements of Maxine Greene’s aesthetic education and John Dewey’s experiential learning. Critical pedagogy consists of several components: recognizing all education is political; establishing horizontal learning through democratic teacher-student relationships and the co-construction of knowledge; problem-posing as a form of inquiry; and finally, raising of critical consciousness through the aforementioned methods, and of course, dialogue as a form of praxis.

Shifting to aesthetic education, educational philosophers John Dewey and Maxine Greene both point to the importance of the arts as a dialogical process of experiential learning, which can invoke ‘wide-awakeness’ (Greene, 2007) and raising of critical consciousness (Freire, 2000). Greene illuminates that, “Art offers life; it offers hope; it offers the prospect of discovery; it offers light.” (Greene, 1995, p. 133). Through wide-awakeness, we are made “aware of ourselves as questioners, as meaning makers, as persons engaged in constructing and reconstructing realities

with those around us” (Greene, 1973, p. 130). Explorations that are dialogical in nature foster (e)quality of experiences that enable participants to “live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences.” (Dewey, 2007, p. 28). In relation to the arts in particular, Dewey states,

Art, in its form, unites the very same relation of doing and undergoing, outgoing and incoming energy, that makes an experience to be an experience. (Dewey, 2005, p. 54).

Doing and undergoing within experiential learning and aesthetic education can also correlate with praxis when implemented in a critical process with the intention to facilitate problem-posing education (Freire, 2000), praxis, and anti-oppressive competences.

Dialogue is a challenge, and yet an opportunity in which to rehumanize one another, while also disrupting the knowledge that is already known about the Other and power hierarchies by challenging exclusion, invisibility, silencing, and distortion that are often taught by the socialization of conflict and systemic injustice. Anti-oppressive education scholar Kevin Kumashiro (2000) elaborates that more knowledge is not enough, but rather broadening and deepening the knowledge students already have is necessary, leading to an understanding that “there is always diversity in a group, and that one story, lesson, or voice can never be representative of all.” (p. 34). In addition, to address the intersectional issues always present within the educational space, Kumashiro suggests that what is needed then “are efforts that explicitly attempt to address multiplicity and keep goals and boundaries fluid and situated.” (p. 30).

Multimodally responsive pedagogies, as Lalitha Vasudevan (2001) speaks of, can challenge closed forms, enabling youth to “compose meaning across modes” which are, “culturally relevant to their multimodal selves.” (p. 97). In other words, Palestinian and Israeli youth singers can develop with the support of their facilitators uni-national and binational musical stories and realities of heteroglossia of themselves created by themselves. This proposes that it is relevant to make space for the multiple identities of participants within dialogue on the individual and intergroup levels, addressing both the interpersonal and the political. Secondly, a critical pedagogy should be implemented, though according to Freirean scholar Lesley Bartlett, with constant examination, reflection, and redefinition (Kumashiro, 2000; Bartlett, 2005). After all, practices that are not revisited also often become closed forms, an object, and therefore oppressive.

MUSICAL CO-CREATION AS A DIALOGICAL PRACTICE: FOSTERING DIALOGUE AND VOICE WITHIN PEACEBUILDING CONTEXTS

It is more than likely that the creators and writers of philosophies of dialogue across the spectrum of the aforementioned fields would not necessarily agree with each other about how dialogue comes into being and what constitutes as ‘dialogical’ in revolt of the monological, which sustains “knowledge as fixed and static, silencing the voice of the ‘other’” (Spruce, 2015, p. 297). As music can be considered languages, written, aural, experiential, participatory, and so forth, I perceive each writer’s concepts of dialogue to be a dialect within its own time and space, where possibilities, worlds, and voices sound. Dialogue clearly is a relevant term within the field of peacebuilding and reconciliation, as it is in educational philosophy and music education, but let’s examine what dialogue is at the cross-section of all three. What importance does dialogue hold within a musical context, whether playing music, composing music, or simply listening to music?

One concept that might connect these together is relational and reflexive meaning-making through dialogical co-creation and communicative creativity (Urbain, 2016) as a way of raising critical consciousness. Looking beyond the dualities and internalizing new patterns and skills of critical thinking and empathy enables those in conflict to assume responsibility in addressing the internal splitting (Klein, 1975) of victim-perpetrator, simple-complex, and oppressor-oppressed. In other words, the process of moving beyond these distinctions by rejecting the oppressor within, seeing everyone as fully human and choosing to be in solidarity with those who are oppressed is what constitutes “a human in the process of achieving freedom” (Freire, 2000, p. 49). Musicking with a critical pedagogy has the potential to facilitate experiencing each of these within a supported educational process, allowing for a constant evolution of deeper learning.

Christopher Small (1999) speaks of ‘musicking’ effectively turning the word ‘music’ from a noun into a verb. In his words, musicking,

empowers us to experience the actual structure of our conceptual universe, and in experiencing it we learn, not just intellectually, but in the very depths of our existence, what our place is within it and how we out to relate to it. (Small, 1999, p. 14).

Musicking can be the relationships created between listener and performer at a performance, relationships between performers and creators when playing and writing music together with traditional or non-traditional notation, and relationships between sounds, such as the rhythm and melody to the harmony and the timber. Small points to the power of meaning-making through these experiences, in which sometimes there are “relationships between relationships” (p. 17), in this complex interconnected web of co-creation. Small challenges the concept that meaningful music-making and experiencing is meant for only the few and the privileged, while also recognizing that knowledge irrespective of training is already present, rather than accepting hierarchical limitations of knowledge and understanding imposed by dominant perspectives.

Nonetheless, for musicking to truly be dialogical though, I believe a critical pedagogy is needed through which to foster dialogue for co-creation, ultimately cultivating critical thinking and empathy. Critical pedagogy in dialogue, and for that matter music education and musicking, recognizes the ultimate importance of ‘voice’ - to be heard, to disrupt injustice, to share feelings and needs, to learn with and through – to rehumanize oneself and one another. These are also integral factors of peacebuilding, activism, and solidarity. For this reason, simply playing music together without educational dialogue and reflective inquiry (Reardon and Snauwaert, 2011), sparking critical understanding and commitment to each other, is not enough. Co-creation of sound without rehumanisation within an equalizing space is only merely symbolic, an object. Programs and individuals working towards peacebuilding and reconciliation with and through music must recognize that by the very nature of education being a political act (Freire, 2000), our role is to facilitate space for the speaking of one’s truth, including naming inequity, even when frightening and beyond our personal narratives of understanding. Only then can these spoken realities be uncovered further to understand why they exist, to then change them.

Dialogue within music in peacebuilding is not merely the use of technical language through words, or albeit organized or unorganized sound, but rather an awakening where co-creation is authentic, tying one’s freedom to the other’s (Schutz, 1951), for “once a situation of violence and oppression has been established, it engenders

an entire way of life and behavior for those caught up in it – oppressors and oppressed alike” (Freire, 2000, p. 58). It is local, and yet open to the new (Hansen, 2008), a space of inquiry where challenging of power dynamics is practiced alongside empathy, through which values can be learned, and horizontal learning facilitates musical knowledge that already exists, rather than beginning from deficiency. It is also discovering difference as “that raw and powerful connection from which our personal power is forged” (Lorde, 2012, p. 112), where community can form when not annihilated by oppression in all of its intersectional forms. In particular for young people who play such an important, and yet often overlooked role in peacebuilding and human rights activism, this is a space of home and agency to further understand and re-understand how to challenge what they have been told is impossible to change within their personal lives and within society. In the words of Greene, “We want to discover how to open spaces for persons in their plurality, spaces where they can become different, where they can grow” (Greene, 1988, p. 56). This growth, taking responsibility to change from within and throughout, must be individual, communal, mutual, and constantly revisited.

The snapshot at the beginning offers a small window into the dilemmas and opportunities to co-create together as Palestinians and Israelis. Specifically, in any encounter of this type we can analyze multiple levels of dialogue, from the dialogue itself to dialogical educational structure and process, interactions of co-creation, co-created content, and reflections. The Palestinian members from East Jerusalem and nearby al-Ram across from Qalandiya Checkpoint do not only face oppression from the Occupation, but the intergroup oppression complex (Gottesman and Sappir, 2017). Through an intersectional lens, this is an intermingling web of factors of systemic injustice, patriarchy, colonialism, minority marginalization, white supremacy, and occupation enabling the conflict to continue in complex ways affecting race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religious affiliations circuitously. This also of course affects Israeli Jewish members, who have more power and privilege in society at large, but experience oppression in differing ways. Reaching points of disruption must include moving beyond the dualities of the conflict, where Israeli and Palestinian participants in dialogue often oscillate between distant poles, needing to breach the distance between historical narratives and the current reality on the ground today concerning land, potential outcomes to resolving the conflict from lessening hostility, progress vs. power relations and socio-political awareness (Kahanoff, 2016). Though these issues can be discussed in dialogue sessions, through musicking it is also possible to experience them differently by bringing topics of the conflict, systemic injustice, and peacebuilding from the worlds of the youth singers into musicking to embody these realities.

Exploring these topics musically within the educational space of dialogue might come directly from these dialogue sessions, where the musicking is healing, group-building, reflective, restorative, and so forth in which ever form it arrives from improvising to writing new music to playing and arranging covers to performing. Or what happens musically, from the content, lyrics, decision-making process, stories, everyday realities, and narratives, in turn informs the dialogue. This enables a reflexive, dialogical space in which to explore, re-understand, author, and re-author within a certain place in time among an ensemble of individuals with their affiliations, allegiances, stories, thoughts, and ideas (Maalouf, 2001). In particular, how decisions are made about the music being co-created is a crucial part of ensuring the educational space is equalizing, and that learning about values such as equality, rights, justice, and fairness is internalized. In the words of Spruce,

If each musical and educational encounter is unique, then the musical knowledge, understandings, meanings, and experiences that emerge from those dialogical spaces are also unique. (Spruce, 2015, p. 299).

This extends to dialogical musical spaces, where there is the possibility as individuals and within shared societies to transform narratives, identities, understandings of ourselves, and seek social justice through critical consciousness and co-creations - to overcome. All of these can foster (re)authoring of self and community as a transformative tool in which individuals “choose intelligently and authentically for themselves” (Greene, 1973, p. 273) as musicians, music lovers, music co-creators, and musical inquisitors and innovators.

Returning to our original dialogue, as we continue with the session lyrics begin to form about the topic of Jerusalem. The Palestinian members write lyrics saying Jerusalem is their capital, their city, but then question themselves: “What does this mean for the Jewish Israeli participants? And yet, how do we express what we want to say about Jerusalem, our birth city and homeland, at the same time?” These questions are equally relevant for the Israeli members as well. In response, I ask, “Well, in what ways do you think space can be made for both realities of home to exist? What could that look like?” Ronit adds their response, saying that the chorus itself is an example of home for everyone present, and then asks the group, “How do we extend this idea of ‘home’ to Jerusalem, where we have our differing realities of West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem?” What is often missed in these contexts of peacebuilding and music education is that the final product of a song is not where we see transformative change, it is within these dialogical educational processes where critical learning is happening. By no means is this ever complete or finished, as the practice of questioning and the dialogical are continuous. Another layer of binationality and shared living within the context of Jerusalem is at the forefront, awaiting further exploration, questioning, learning, and yes, musicking by those with the power to voice through their critical consciousness.

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Shoshana Gottesman devotes her time to the exploration and development of dialogical musical spaces as locations for youth-led conflict transformation. By combining her years of experience in the fields of music education and values-based education with her studies in peacebuilding and human rights education from Teachers College, Columbia University, Shoshana has enjoyed invaluable

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