My Friend is a Palestinian Bedouin:

Challenges and Opportunities in Intercultural Friendship

by

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Friendships are essential in human development. In an era of globalization, in which the intermingling of cultures is on the rise, individuals are more likely to create friendships, which are intercultural. Intercultural friendship can be full of challenges, but can also provide opportunities for mutual growth and be a small step toward social justice. This autoethnographic study focuses on the interface between interculturality and friendship. It does so in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an environment that is not conducive to the creation of friendships between Arabs and Jews. The author, a Jewish Israeli man of Dutch origin, investigates his friendship with a Palestinian Bedouin man,

through the perspective of Hofstede's (initial) four cultural dimensions, namely individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity/femininity. The respective cultures in which they were raised are far apart on all four dimensions. After a literature study, the socio-cultural context of this friendship is described, with emphasis on Bedouin life. The analysis of the differences was performed through the discussion of selected topics for each of the dimensions. The cultural differences as they appear in the friendship were found to be tremendous on each of the dimensions. Bridging these differences involved emotional, cognitive and behavioral challenges. Challenges and opportunities in the friendship were explained in detail and illustrated expansively by stories. The differences are in line with Hofstede's theory for three of the cultural dimensions, but in the field of "uncertainty avoidance" they conflict with the theory. It was suggested to divide this field into two separate dimensions, "tradition" and "discipline". The study, which became an integral and increasingly significant part of the friendship, ends with a discussion on possible implications for personal and professional growth, and for social justice.

Keywords: autoethnography, intercultural friendship, cultural dimensions, values, Bedouin, Palestinian, Israeli, Dutch.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Prologue

A specific theme keeps recurring in my life: I sort out and tend to grow through my encounters with different cultures. I was born the eldest of five sons of Holocaust survivors and had a reform Jewish upbringing, as far as that was possible in a small village in the Netherlands. After high school I moved to Jerusalem, studied Psychology, joined the Israeli army, became a Human Rights activist, and studied Business Administration. These are some of the changes in my life involving engulfment in a different culture. Each of these changes resulted in major socio-cultural challenges - expressing themselves in emotional, cognitive and behavioral realms. Consequently, each change provided an opportunity for personal growth. Some of the changes also primed me for social activism.

Friendships have been a specific and important part of these intercultural encounters. In the last decade, I am friends with a Bedouin man, a Muslim Palestinian. He lives just a few minutes driving from my home in Jerusalem, but on the other side of the separation wall and in a highly different socio-cultural and political environment. His worldview is in many ways opposite to mine, complementary and empowering. He too went through extensive transformation in his life, from a childhood in the desert to obtaining a university degree. The friendship is a struggle against restrictions of various kinds: socio-political, geographical, cultural and mental. It endures tremendous social pressures and has been extremely challenging for both of us. Nevertheless, it provides us with new insights and greatly enriches our lives.

I regard this intercultural friendship as an alternative form of social activism and, realizing that the friendship is special and - in some sense - paradigmatic, I considered studying and publishing the opportunities and challenges involved. Studying a friendship is a challenging endeavor, raising severe ethical concerns, such as the questions around what to

disclose and what to conceal. This issue becomes even more delicate in an intercultural setting, when there are large differences between the cultures in what is considered private. In addition, the socio-political context makes a close friendship across borders between an Israeli Jew and a Palestinian Arab risky in many respects, and putting the friendship in the public sphere only adds to these risks. Moreover, the study itself is likely to affect the friendship in unpredictable ways. Still, I considered the study of this friendship worthwhile and its publication. Our hope is that it will be enlightening for others as well.

Grasping the views of my friend Bashar[1] was a major effort throughout this study. Once we were in the Palestinian capital Ramallah in a café, when he suddenly asked for pen and paper. He then wrote some points in Arabic and subsequently asked me to note down the following text in English[2]. This is one of the very few times that I succeeded in obtaining from him a complete statement, and I will present it here as a whole.

> What means friendship for you? If you asked yourself who is my friend, is
> it a friend from your country or from another country? Did you speak
> another language? Somebody said: 'If you are looking for a friend who has
> no mistakes, you will not find him'. Do you think like that? Today it's a
> global world. Lots of people speak about how to turn the world into one
> village, an open world. That means one language, open people, and more
> important – humanity. In this book I have just one message: 'Don't be
> afraid from another'. One needs more hope, love, and friendship. One needs
> to understand another. How we can live with the enemy? One needs to look
> at the half-full cup and not at the half-empty cup. This is a story between
> two friends; one of them coming from the desert, the other from a small

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[1] In order to secure the privacy of those involved, I have used pseudonyms throughout this study; for explanation, see: 2.4 Notes of caution.

[2] We spoke in English for security reasons. Speaking Hebrew, as we usually do, would have disclosed my identity as Israeli or Jewish, which could have put us in danger.

country. The story is speaking about two views, and how each one sees things through his eyes… Someday when I sat with Daniel, he told me: 'Bashar, we can change the world'. I told him: 'maybe'. And he sent to me an email with a picture of the world and two friends changing it[3]. I forgot this, but today when I write these words, I remember it. Now I have more hope than yesterday. There are a lot of names you can find in history books, important names, changing the world with war and blood, but we can find more names of those who change the world with peace and love. We are looking to see our names on a sign, and below it will be written: This is a good way (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, September 24, 2011).

Figure 1: Bashar & Daniel – Holding the world (June, 2009)

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[3] **See:**

Figure 1: Bashar & Daniel – Holding the world (June, 2009)

PART I:
THE AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF FRIENDSHIP

This part will start out with an introduction to this auto-ethnographic research study on intercultural friendship and continue with its methodology.

1. Introduction

In this era of heightened tension and polarization between Arab and Western cultures and ideologies, intercultural friendship receives additional significance. Bridging the challenges of intercultural friendship could be a small step toward social justice and a great opportunity for personal growth. Following, I will relate to the relevance and the intent of this study. This will be followed by an overview of this study and a description of the friendship studied.

1.1 Relevance

In previous centuries, the average person tended to stay more or less within her or his own environment, surrounded by family. While the family and heterosexual marriage lose their central place in Western society, friendships and alternative forms of intimacy and care become increasingly important (Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). Moreover, physical and mental borders disappear and instead there is a global tendency for people to move around the world and intermingle with other cultures, either voluntarily or forced, temporarily or permanent, whether for vacation, jobs, marriage, as migrants, or otherwise (Lee, 2008; Samovar et al., 2009; Van Tilburg & Vingerhoets, 2006; Ward et al., 2001). Also within countries, people are increasingly likely to encounter diverse ethnic cultures, and growing numbers of countries need to deal with issues related to multiculturalism (Baum, 2007b; Bizi-Nathaniel et al., 1991). The world is becoming smaller particularly because of internet based communication, which increases intercultural contact (Flache & Macy, 2011).

For members of the dominant culture multiculturalism may not necessarily be a central part of life. Despite the notion that acquaintance with other cultures may actually be enriching, they are likely to turn a blind eye and ignore cultural minorities in order to keep

the status quo and their dominant position. In contrast, people with a minority status usually continue to be confronted with their minority position through constant comparison. For them the clash between their own values and beliefs and those of the dominant culture is inevitable and can become a source of (di)stress. Therefore, the intercultural encounter, which could be growth enhancing, may as well become traumatic. National governments, political parties, and organizations play a crucial role in this respect, since they may influence people's perception of intercultural differences in order to either foster intercultural integration or enhance xenophobia and exploit intercultural conflict (Flache & Macy, 2011).

As a psychologist and human rights activist, let me turn for a moment to the work of psychologists within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a conflict providing part of the background of the present investigation. There is a range of studies on the difficulties for Jewish Israeli therapists in treating Arab clients (Baum, 2007a; Gorkin, 1986; Lichtenberg et al., 2003; Van de Vijver et al., 2008; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006). There also are several psychological accounts of the hardships in dialogue between Arabs and Jews (Berman et al., 2000; Duek, 2009; Weinberg & Weishut, 2011). Although there are a few groups of mental health professionals involved with political and social issues within Israeli society in general, and with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular, it was argued that in recent years, Israeli psychologists at large have remained relatively silent and not taken an active stance (Avissar, 2007a). The role of the Israeli mental health community as regarding this conflict was disputed (Avissar, 2007b; Berman, 2007; Dalal, 2008; Strous, 2007). My view is that psychologists are in an excellent position to catalyze social change.

1.2   Intent

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one that involves many factors, related to history, geopolitics, national and religious identity and more. However, the conflict is also related to differences in value orientations, which guide attitudes and behaviors. In recent years, conflicts between Western and Muslim/Arab value orientations have been source of great tension, not only in Israel (Weinberg, 2003; Zemishlany, 2007). There is an abundance of studies on intercultural encounters (Schwartz, 1992), but not that many on encounters between Westerners and Arabs or Muslims in general, or with Palestinians or Bedouins in particular. Furthermore, most of the studies on intercultural encounters either combine theoretical and quantitative knowledge or provide a narrative, whereas integration of theory and a personal perspective seems rare. This study will try to integrate these different aspects of the intercultural encounter.

People tend to group together in communities or nations with similar value patterns (Hofstede, 2001; Ward et al., 2001). Groups tend to stereotype and distancing between groups can reinforce prejudice (Cottam et al., 2004; Samovar et al., 2009). This certainly seems true as regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Aberson et al., 2004; Rabinowitz, 1992). Personal acquaintance with people from other cultures is one of the ways to reduce prejudice. Friendships, as in intimate form of personal acquaintance, can be central in these intercultural encounters, providing the possibility to diminish stigmatization, widen horizons, and enhance mutual growth (Peterson, 2007; Sonnenschein et al., 2010). Studies on intercultural adult friendships are rare (Lee, 2008). With this dissertation, I will provide an autobiographic study of intercultural friendship, in an attempt to fill part of the gap in academic research in this field.

Intercultural friendships can provide an abundance of positive experiences, but also a variety of challenges. This study intends to provide more insight into the challenges and

opportunities inherent in an adult friendship across cultures, within the context of political conflict. It will do so by using real life examples from my friendship with a Palestinian Bedouin and discussing these in light of the literature. This friendship knows many enjoyable moments, but the study will focus on the cultural gap and the attempts to bridge it through mutual understanding. It will shed light on certain aspects of Bedouin and Palestinian cultures, and to lesser extent on Dutch and Israeli cultures. In addition, it may be relevant in finding alternate ways to personal growth and in supporting projects for social justice.

The friendship will be analyzed through the perspective of cultural dimensions or value orientations. The four cultural dimensions as suggested by Hofstede (2001) seemed to be most helpful in demonstrating the challenges and opportunities in the friendship, since he formulized his dimensions in concrete and practical terms, and specifically studied the cultures relevant for the present study. Hofstede's dimensions were individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity-femininity; on all of the dimensions, he found large differences between Israel, the Netherlands and Arabic-speaking countries (See Figure 2: Radar diagram of scores for four cultural dimensions, based on Hofstede (2001)). Furthermore, he specifically stated that these dimensions could be used as a base for comparing cultures in the realm of qualitative research[4]. However, it

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[4] Hofstede's indices are based each on a few specific questions he asked IBM employees regarding their work environment. These indices were found to correlate with many related factors and therefore he conceptualized the dimensions in broader terms. In this study I will use Hosfstede's concepts in this broader sense. The indices are based on data from the late 1960's and early 1970's; Netherlands, n=1797, Israel, n=357, Arab-speaking countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Republic), n=141. Findings were replicated in later years – by many researchers – in a variety of countries and circumstances (Hofstede, 2001).

would have been possible to do this analysis through the lens of any other classification system and/or regroup the challenges and opportunities according to these classifications.
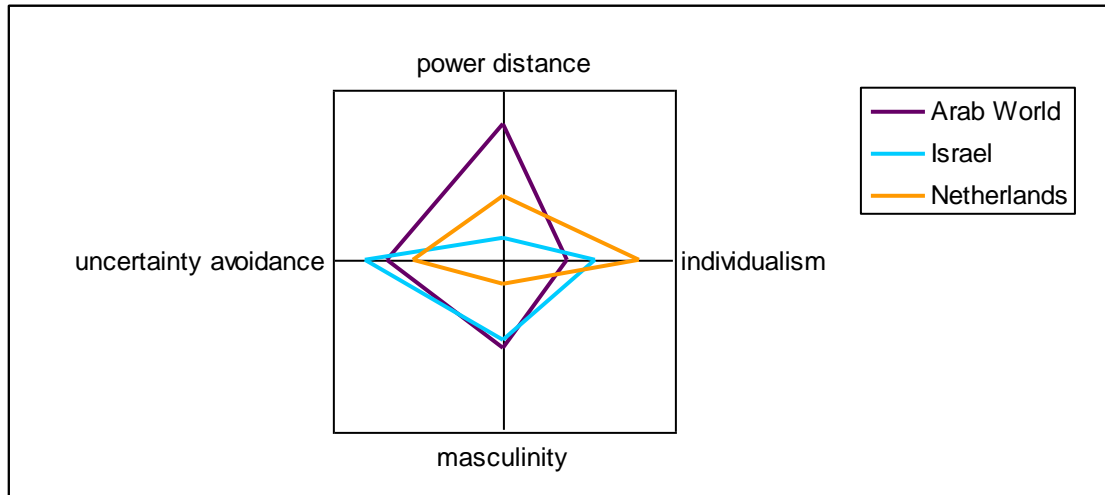
Figure 2: Radar diagram of scores for four cultural dimensions, based on Hofstede (2001)

1.3   Overview

Friendships are essential in human development. In an era of globalization, in which the intermingling of cultures is on the rise, intercultural friendships are likely to occur more often. Intercultural friendships can be full of frustrating challenges, but they can also provide excellent opportunities for mutual growth and bring about small steps toward social justice. This autoethnographic study focuses on the interface between interculturality and friendship.

The dissertation refers to a friendship that crosses not only cultural borders, but also the national borders between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The friendship thrives in the midst of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is an environment that is not particularly conducive to the formation of friendships between Arabs and Jews. It attempts to provide

an answer to the question: What are the challenges and opportunities in an intercultural friendship between a Jewish Israeli man of Western-European origin and a Muslim Palestinian man of Bedouin descent?

Part I of this dissertation starts with a section on the factual aspects of the friendship. Then it presents background to autoethnographic research and sets out the methodology. The methodology relates among others to some of the hardships to be expected in this kind of study.

Part II provides a literature study on interculturality, and includes discussion on culture, value orientations, and the intercultural encounter. Then, the socio-cultural context of this friendship will be described, referring in particular to the Dutch, the Israelis and the Palestinians. This part will also address issues as honor and aggression. The discussion on interculturality will be followed by a literature study on friendship. A special chapter will be devoted to the arduous Bedouin life.

In Part III, the friendship will be analyzed through the perspective of cultural dimensions or value orientations, as found by Hofstede (2001). The analysis of the cultural differences will be performed through the discussion of selected topics for each of the dimensions: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity/femininity. As will be shown, the differences affecting the friendship are tremendous on each of the dimensions. Since the impressions from the friendship as regarding "uncertainty avoidance" do not fit the theory well, it is suggested to divide the field of "uncertainty avoidance" into two separate dimensions, namely "tradition" and "discipline". The disparity on the dimension of "tradition" does not seem to bring about major challenges or opportunities within the realm of the friendship, whereas the opposite is true for the dimension of "discipline".

Bridging cultural differences involved emotional, cognitive and behavioral challenges, but provided opportunities as well. Challenges and opportunities will be explained in detail and illustrated expansively by stories from the friendship. Among others, I will discuss having a first birthday at 34, crossing the border between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, working at the garage, getting stuck in a traffic jam, being a man, dancing with a drug dealer and losing calmness over the sister of Moustafa's wife. Some of these stories are casual and relaxed, but many are thrilling.

The dissertation will close with Part IV, which contains the conclusion of this study, referring to the important place of the dissertation within the friendship and the challenges in studying a friendship. It also relates to the process of transformative learning, value change and personal growth because of the intercultural encounter. This is followed by possible implications of the study for the field of psychology and for social justice.

1.4   Two friends

Before turning to the methodology of this study, let us first introduce its two main subjects; one of them is my friend Bashar, the other is me. Below I will share the story of our first encounter. Next are some factual details about each of us, followed by a general description of our friendship.

Stories of friendship: The first encounter

Jerusalem, Summer 2003. I was going home after a long day of work out of town. I descended from the intercity bus at the central bus station and halted a taxi with the purpose of getting home quicker. When I looked into the taxi, I saw that another passenger

was there already. When asking about this person, the driver said "do not bother; I will take you both". I thought "what the heck?" and entered. During the short drive, the three of us started talking. I enjoyed their company and at the end of our ride, I invited them in for coffee.

The passenger was Bashar and since then we are friends. The taxi-driver was Jaffer, and he will play some part in my life as well. I was brought up with notions of privacy and taking distance from strangers. For me it was unusual to join them in the taxi. In contrast, they were brought up with the idea of doing things collectively. Bashar was not a paying passenger in the taxi, as I had interpreted at first; he simply had joined his friend Jaffer in his work. From a cultural point of view, inviting strangers in my flat was not at all in line with my Dutch background. In the Netherlands invitations tend to be made much in advance, and there is not much space for spontaneity, in particular not with strangers. Nonetheless, enjoying their company and out of curiosity I trespassed cultural norms. For Bashar and Jaffer my invitation was nothing out of the ordinary. Palestinians do not seem to have this urge to plan. Israeli culture is actually a mixture of many cultures, but the dominant (Euro-American) culture would allow for some spontaneity. Still, in most Israeli Jewish circles in would be out of the question to invite two - unknown - Arabs to one's home.

Bashar

He stems from a family of Muslim Arabs and belongs to the Jahalin Bedouin tribe. His tribe was relocated from Beer Sheba (Israel) to the Judean desert (Palestinian Authority), by the Israeli authorities in the early fifties. He is the youngest of ten children from his father's third – and last - wife. He was born in 1975 while his mother was herding the goats, and lived in the desert -sometimes in a tent, and sometimes in a cave - until age 12. Then he moved with his family to a house in Anata (See Figure 3: Greater Jerusalem (Ir

Amim, 2009)), a refugee camp near Jerusalem. Most of his siblings live in adjacent houses, but some in adjacent villages.

He walked daily for hours to reach school. There, being a poverty-stricken Bedouin child, he was initially looked down upon, but – unlike other Bedouin children – he rapidly found out that excellence brings him honor. He finished primary and secondary school, while working after school hours. He sold pieces of aluminum he found, in order to buy storybooks to read while herding the family's goats. When he was out of money, he would look in the streets for old newspapers to read. During secondary school, he mainly worked as shepherd, for which he was paid with a goat every three or four months. Later, he worked in and around Jerusalem in a variety of jobs such as guard, hairdresser and gym-teacher. From the start of this century, it became more and more complicated for him to enter Israel, until in the last couple of years it became too difficult because of the separation wall and the lack of opportunity to obtain an entry permit. He subsequently looked for jobs in the Palestinian Authority.

After secondary school he went to jail for suspected anti-Israeli activities, where he continued studying. Released from jail, he was strengthened in his wishes to achieve higher education. His father pressed him to invest more time in working, to build a home and to marry, but eventually agreed that Bashar enroll in AlQuds[5] University, in Abu Dis, even before marriage (but after making some more money and buying a house). At university, he received a Bachelor's degree in both Media Studies and Political Science. At the time of writing, he is working on his Master's thesis in Political Science. He intends to continue studying for a Doctoral degree. Together with one of his brothers, he has the highest academic education in the clan.

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[5]   AlQuds is the Arabic name of Jerusalem.

Bashar was elected sheikh of the Jahalin clan, a leadership role in which he functions as advisor for the members of his tribe, and as mediator in family disputes. He also owns and manages a garage. He is married and has four children. He considers himself a global citizen, and he would like to migrate with his nuclear family to the United States.

Me

My father migrated from Germany to the Netherlands in the late 1930's in his childhood, whereas my mother is Dutch by origin. Both my parents are Holocaust survivors. I was born in 1963 in a maternity clinic in The Hague in the Netherlands. I am the oldest of their five children. I lived most of my childhood in a small village in the East of the Netherlands, where I obtained a reform Jewish upbringing. I did not experience pressure from my family as regarding my plans for life, but I was expected to excel in whatever I chose. In my environment, it was customary to follow higher education and I did not consider otherwise. At age 17, I moved to Israel on my own in order to study and get some more Jewish education. Since then my nuclear family dispersed; my parents and siblings moved to different parts of the Netherlands, while some lived for substantial periods in other countries. I started my first job at age twenty as research assistant, while studying psychology, having before been completely dependent on my parents. I obtained first a Bachelor's degree and then a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology and many years later a Master's degree in Business Administration as well; both from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Presently studying for a Doctoral degree, I have the highest academic education in my extended family in the generations of my parents and me.

After finishing my degrees in Psychology I was drafted into the Israel Defense Force and worked for several years as a Mental Health Officer; a function in which I do reserve duty until today. I have worked in other mental health and social work settings as well. In recent

years, I am self-employed as psychotherapist and organizational consultant. I enjoy
working with groups and teach group work at a university-level ultra-orthodox Jewish
institute. I live in French Hill, a neighborhood in Jerusalem (See Figure 3: Greater
Jerusalem (Ir Amim, 2009)). I perceive of myself as a global citizen, which led me to
volunteer in a range of nongovernmental organizations, for social justice and otherwise. I
currently fulfill leadership roles in Amnesty International and the Israeli Association for
Group Facilitation and Psychotherapy. Within the realm of the friendship with Bashar, I
have taken groups of people to visit the Jahalin Bedouins. I also made a small – emotional,
instrumental and financial - investment in his garage.
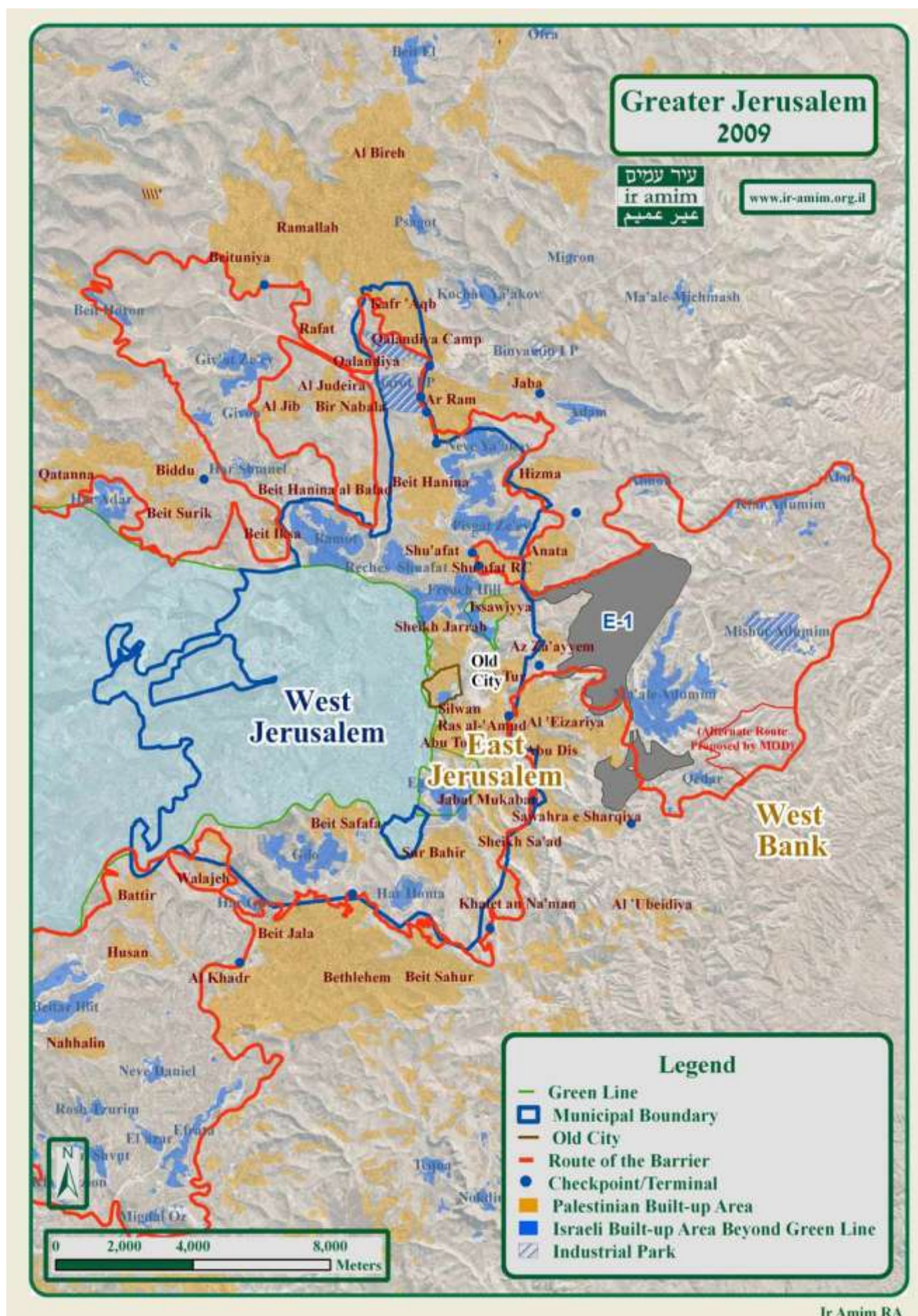
Figure 3: Greater Jerusalem (Ir Amim, 2009)

Our friendship at a glance

Initially Bashar and I were distant friends. Occasionally he would come and visit me at my home in Jerusalem and I occasionally visited him at his place of work. I took pleasure in his warmth and spontaneity, his manhood, the - for me - exotic stories he told me about his life, his different perspectives and his intent to make the world a better place. I admired his success in finding a way to move beyond the primitive desert life, in spite of tremendous hardships and his excellent skills in making contact with people of whatever background. He found me different from other Israelis he had met and appreciated my points of view. He also enjoyed my sensitivity, my interest in him, the way I plan life and the fact that I do what I say I will. During the years, we became closer, and we became motivating forces in each other's lives. In recent years, he was much less able to enter Jerusalem, because of the closure of the separation wall. Simultaneously, my visits to his village and his family became more frequent. Nevertheless, we mostly meet in public, like at the place where he works (wherever that is; recently at the garage), or at "his" university, the AlQuds University.

When we meet, which is in the last year about once or twice a week, we usually have Bedouin coffee or tea, and later we drink more coffee or tea. We often have something to eat. We talk about the daily things of life, the garage, our work, our studies, and our concerns; we communicate mostly in Hebrew, though we may use some Arabic or English. We refrain from talking politics. During my visits, I may join him in errands. He regularly seeks my instrumental support, while I tend to call on him for emotional support. We introduced each other to activities that are part of our respective cultures. I tried to learn Arabic and he knows a few words of Dutch. We do not "go out" in Western terms (like to a movie, performance, museum, etc.), but we do once a while go to some place outside

(like a mountain or desert) and make a barbecue together with company. Infrequently, we dine in simple restaurants; when we are hungry, and not as a pastime.

I met many of his male friends and acquaintances, and he met some of my friends. I am in close contact also with his nuclear family. Despite the hardships in getting Bashar a visa, we traveled three times to Europe for holidays, where he met my family too. The trips themselves were a series of intercultural experiences, not simply because of the encounters with the cultures we visited, but also between us. The intercultural differences between us occasionally caused conflict; solving these conflicts required clarification and mutual understanding.

Our friendship went through all stages and periods that intercultural friendships tend to go through (Lee, 2008). After the first encounter, we found complimentary needs, which moved us to a stage of interaction. A turning point in our relationship moved us to the third stage of involvement. In addition, many of the aspects of our friendship mentioned here pertain to those activities common among intercultural friends (Lee, 2006). The contents and parts of the process of our friendship will be described in further detail in subsequent chapters.

2. Methodology

Following I will pose the research question and provide background relevant for auto-ethnographic research. This will be followed by a description of the research design, which is in line with a recent call for diversifying research ideas in cultural psychology (Jones, 2010). Subsequently, I will share several notes of caution.

2.1 Research question

Many aspects of intercultural friendship and of Bedouin culture are worth investigating, but some limits needed to be set. The question that has guided this research throughout is as follows: What are the challenges and opportunities in an intercultural friendship between a Jewish Israeli man of Western-European origin and a Muslim Palestinian man of Bedouin descent?

2.2 An autoethnographic case study

It has been suggested that researchers consider among others "the duality of 'belonging' (to groups, institutions, society, culture) and 'uniqueness' (individuality, difference, intersectionality) and […] identify the ways positive psychological outcomes are achieved in complex multifaceted contexts and the mechanisms that produce them" (Jones, 2010, p. 705). The present study is an attempt to do so, while describing the challenges and the opportunities encountered in a friendship of two unique individuals in the light of their belonging to different cultural groups. I will now provide some background on narrative research, friendship research and case selection, respectively.

Narrative research

It has been suggested that one of the clearest channels to explore and understand the inner world of individuals is through their verbal accounts and stories about their lives and reality. However, we need to remember that a life story is just one version of reality, as perceived by the individual at a certain time and in a certain context. As suggested by Baumeister & Newman (1994):

> First, people interpret experiences relative to purposes, which may be either objective goals or subjective fulfillment states. Second, people seek value and justification by constructing stories that depict their actions and intentions as right and good. Third, people seek a sense of efficacy by making stories that contain information about how to exert control. Fourth, people seek a sense of self-worth by making stories that portray themselves as attractive and competent (p. 676).

Narrative research starts out with a research question, but usually not with a priori hypotheses. It requires self-awareness and self-discipline in order to continue examining the narrative from different perspectives (Lieblich et al., 1998). The analysis of relationships could be performed in a variety of creative ways, but commonly begins with text that expresses aspects of the human relationship and afterwards initiates a conversation between the phenomenological account and a psychological understanding (Josselson et al., 2007). That will be the structure also in this study.

Four approaches to narrative research have been described, differentiating between a holistic and a categorical approach, and between form and content (Lieblich et al., 1998). The first differentiation refers to the unit of analysis; whereas the holistic approach refers to the narrative as a whole, the categorical approach is more selective. The second differentiation refers to the reading (interpretation) of the text; whereas the content-approach refers to the facts and their meaning, the form-approach refers to the process and

the way in which they are presented. The goal of this study was neither to describe

Bedouin culture nor intercultural friendship as a whole, but to investigate specifically the

challenges and opportunities in the intercultural encounter. Therefore, the present study

will limit itself to a categorical/content approach, referring specifically to the category of

intercultural friendship, and focusing on the challenges and opportunities around certain

topics that recur in friendship interactions. It will relate to form and process aspects of the

narrative mainly to highlight issues of content.

Life stories are told in a certain context and the personal narrative cannot be seen apart

from the master narrative (Hammack, 2008). Three separate, but interrelated, spheres of

contexts were described: the immediate intersubjective relationships in which a narrative is

produced; the collective social field in which one's life and story evolved; and the broad

cultural meaning systems or meta narratives that underlie and give sense to any particular

life story (Zilber et al., 2008). The first part of this dissertation provides a broader cultural

context; the analysis of the specific interactions in the second part will be limited - in most

instances - to the immediate experience and the social collective.

The study follows in the steps of "critical autobiographies" (Church, 1995; Tillmann-

Healy, 2003), using the author's life stories as base for social science. The kind of

autobiography used to understand a societal phenomenon was coined "autoethnography",

an ethnography about oneself, a study in which the cultural experience of the researcher is

central (Awada, 2008; Humphreys, 2005; Maydell, 2010; Taylor, 2008). "The intent of

autoethnography is to acknowledge the inextricable link between the personal and the

cultural and to make room for nontraditional forms of inquiry and expression" (Wall,

2008, p. 146). In the autoethnography the – detached - doing of the research and the –

involved - being of the researcher intermingle (Mitra, 2010), both as part of the process of

investigation and throughout the text of the dissertation. Although autoethnographies are

becoming more common, autoethnographic methodology continues to encounter criticism in parts of the academic world. Critics of autoethnography relate among others to the lack of objectivity of the researcher, the problem of a single source of data, and issues of verification (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010; Holt, 2008; Wall, 2008). An autobiography is like a self-portrait (Howarth, 1974). Writing autobiographically one can – consciously or unconsciously - emphasize a range of different elements, and distort the picture to some extent, making it less scientifically grounded. Furthermore, autobiographies have been criticized as being self-indulgent, though the critique of self-indulgence can be overcome (Mykhalovskiy, 1996).

In response to these critiques, guidelines for quality in autobiographical and narrative research have been provided. (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001) focused among others on the idea that the study needs to ring true and enable connection, promote insight and interpretation, engage history forthrightly, and that the author must take an honest stance. (Josselson & Lieblich, 2003) , referring to narrative dissertations in particular, suggested that they need to include the following parts: "1. Background of the study; 2. Research question and its significance; 3. Plan of inquiry; 4. Approach of analysis; 5. Significance of the findings; 6. Reflexive statement about the position of the researcher in relation to the work" (p. 262).

Friendship research

Friendship research, after being for long a relatively neglected field, attracts more interest only recently, and still does not provide a coherent bulk of knowledge. The study of friendship is complex, especially because it cannot be studied apart from its social context, since the environment substantially influences the relationship (Adams & Allan, 1998; Allan, 1998; Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). Therefore, it was suggested that "different research methods in different environments are useful for exploring the complexity and

multi-dimensionality of personal relationships and for understanding the interactive narrative processes through which such relationships are given meaning in situated contexts" (Davies, Heaphy, Mason & Smart, 2011, p. 14).

This friendship research may be considered a form of "participatory research". Participatory research has been defined in various ways, but generally refers to situations in which the researcher is an active participant in the community studied, in an attempt to understand the social forces in operation, and take part in overcoming oppressive situations (Park, 1993).

> The idea is that researchers, acting as facilitators and guarding against their own biases, seek to minimize any power differentials between them and the researched. The research design, therefore, is flexible, able to respond to changing contexts and emergent findings as they arise. […] This means that those who participate have their knowledge respected, have control over the research process and influence over the way the results are used (Ledwith & Springett, 2010, p. 93)

Studies based on specific friendships are gradually becoming more accepted as qualitative research (Al-Makhamreh & Lewando-Hundt, 2008; Arnold, 1995; Ellis, 2007; Jackson, 1990). Friendship research is performed through the practices of friendship, and in its natural context and pace. This kind of research therefore may take years, as is common practice in anthropological research. It involves setting aside the research in order to take part in affairs related to the friendship, and using the research for the benefit of the studied community. Moreover, friendship research follows the ethics of friendship, a stance of hope, caring, justice, and even love (Tillmann-Healy, 2001). People tend to make friends in their own socio-cultural environment, though with globalization this is changing. Still, friendships across socio-cultural groups are exceptional.

When friendships do develop across social groups, the bonds take on political dimensions. Opportunities exist for dual consciousness-raising and for members of dominant groups (e.g., men, Euro-Americans, Christians, and heterosexuals) to serve as advocates for friends in target groups. As a result, those who are "just friends" can become *just* friends, interpersonal and political allies who seek personal growth, meaningful relationships, and social justice (Seeman, 2002), p. 731).

This is what this study is about. It is based on one single case of friendship; a friendship between Bashar, a Muslim Palestinian man of Bedouin descent, and me, a Jewish Israeli man of Dutch origin. Understanding the development of cultural practices is a long-term endeavor (Rogoff, 2003). The friendship exists since 2003, whereas my involvement with other Palestinian Bedouins and participation in Palestinian life began in 2008. Descriptive data of the friendship will be provided to a) illustrate and validate dimensions of cultural difference in the encounter, and b) portray the inherent challenges and opportunities I ran into.

Case selection

This study is a case study. "Case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research" (Soy, 1997). Case studies have been especially helpful in creating high levels of conceptual validity, deriving new hypotheses, exploring causal mechanisms, and modeling and assessing complex causal relations (George & Bennett, 2005).

Even if this is an autobiographical study, it seems important to identify the kind of case to be investigated. We may distinguish between several kinds of cases. Extreme or deviant cases are good for getting a point across. Critical cases permit logical deductions more than other cases, since if things are true for this case, it may well be the same for all other

cases. Paradigmatic cases are exemplary in highlighting general characteristics of a society. Some cases fall simultaneously in more than one category. Case selection is not an objective process, and assumptions about a certain case at the start of a research may turn out to be erroneous when in a more advanced stage (Flyvbjerg, 2004).

Let us look from the perspective of case selection at the characteristics of the two parts of this friendship, Bashar and myself. Bashar, who was born in the Judean desert, spent, spent his youth in the most primitive environment. He struggled to get higher up and now has the highest education in his tribe (apart from his brother). He worked for many years in Israel, traveled abroad and – in his environment - has had relatively much contact with the Western world. Only in his thirties, Bashar was elected by his extended family to become the first *elected* sheikh of the Jahalin Bedouins, a role of major honor, power and importance. His life story is extreme, and at the same time in many ways exemplary of Bedouin values and lifestyle. In addition, if things are true for him, they may be true as well for many other Bedouins with less contact with Israeli or Western cultures. Accordingly, from the point of view of case selection from within the Bedouin culture, Bashar could be seen simultaneously as an extreme, a critical and a paradigmatic case.

To some extent, my position is that of a critical case, if we refer to Dutch or West-European culture. Living for 30 years in Israel, I was widely exposed to oriental values and style of living and had the chance to leave at least part of my Dutch values behind. Hardships that I experience in this friendship – after this kind of extended exposure to the Middle East - are likely to be similar to those experienced by many Westerners in their friendships with Bedouins or Palestinians, or even more general with traditional Arabs. Israel knows a mix of cultures, because of the large numbers of immigrants. In Israeli context, my position would not be perceived as deviant from a cultural perspective, but it would be considered extreme from a socio-political perspective. If we look at the

characteristics of the friendship itself, we find that friendships between Palestinians and Jews are scarce in the present socio-political context, in which the Israeli-Arab conflict is so tense. Actually, both Bashar and I have experienced substantial pressure to distance ourselves from one another.

Furthermore, though Bashar and I also share common ground my socio-cultural background, liberal values, humanistic worldview and modern lifestyle are in many ways in sharp contrast with his. The contrast between us is expected to be an asset in the exploration of the challenges and opportunities in intercultural friendship. Thus, our friendship is an extreme case of intercultural friendship. At the same time, it could be perceived as a paradigmatic case as well, highlighting many challenges and some substantial opportunities in intercultural friendship between a Palestinian Bedouin man and an Israeli Jewish - or respectively, Dutch - man.

2.3   Data collection and analysis

Following I will present a summary of the way in which the data were collected, analyzed and presented.

Data collection

Data for this study stemmed from participant observation and self-exploration. However, as suggested by (Tillmann-Healy, 2003) in "friendship as a method", "our primary procedures are those we use to build and sustain friendship: conversation, everyday involvement, compassion, giving, and vulnerability" (p. 734). The studied friendship, which exists for almost a decade and has become increasingly intense, is made up of innumerable events and situations. It was impossible to register all of these events, even

for a limited period, and a selection had to be made. The selection of data was mostly made on base of striking cultural differences, whereas cultural similarities were often disregarded. Data (field notes) were collected and recorded in the period between June 2009 and November 2011. In a few instances, I added historical events; some of which I had put in writing already in earlier years.

Thus, I registered over a hundred observations – the tip of the iceberg. Some of these notes were descriptions of a few lines only whereas others were pages long. Observations were as much as possible recorded soon after they occurred; sometimes in a notebook, and sometimes on a computer. Notes were registered in a computer system and they include information such as date, time of day, place, event description, people involved, quotes and background information.

The way in which the study evolved was through the recording of recurrent and/or striking observations that led to the creation of texts, based on my interpretation of these observations. These texts were discussed with Bashar, who would regularly add cultural information, offer another viewpoint or point out subtleties; thus providing additional data. Texts were presented to Bashar according to the following procedure. I told him in Hebrew what I had written in English, so that he was able to tell me (in Hebrew) his views on my writings. The reason for this procedure was that not only is Bashar's knowledge of English insufficient to understand what I wrote, but he also has a clear – cultural – preference for oral communication over written communication. Texts were mostly presented in bits and pieces, since he was usually unable to spend much time on a row. After obtaining his ideas, texts were amended and often discussed again. Discussion and dialogue with Bashar over my observations continued until April 2012.

Analysis and presentation

The four cultural dimensions studied will be individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 2001). Data will be organized here as descriptions according to topics and analyzed in light of the literature. For each cultural dimension a choice of topics will be presented, each of which will be highlighted through focusing on two or three different aspects. The selection of topics will be guided by the degree of difference between the cultures in this field, and not necessarily for their importance in the particular culture. Only topics on which major cultural differences affected the friendship will be presented. Each of the topics will be illustrated with one or more examples ("stories of friendship"). Affective, cognitive and behavioral aspects, that are central to bridging cultural differences (Hofstede, 2001), will be emphasized. Background information will be provided where needed.

Although Bashar offered invaluable input as part of this study, the focus will be on my experience in the friendship and on the challenges and opportunities for me (and not on those for him). In most descriptions the emphasis will be on the contrast between Bedouin and Dutch cultures, since the cultural variations between these cultures are most distinct. Israeli culture, which provides another part of the context of the friendship and affects both of us, is hard to define because of its heterogeneity. For both reasons, the impact of Israeli culture on the friendship is much more subtle. In most topics its description will be limited, unless highly relevant for the specific topic. Note that the discussion of each topic is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather attempts to display the cultural differences that need to be dealt with within an intercultural friendship.

It needs to be clear that the cultural dimensions described in this study relate to the environments that affected us, and not necessarily to our own personal values. Hofstede's four dimensions (Hofstede, 2001) are used here as a perspective. No attempt was made to

measure our personal value systems. In any case, it was suggested that the "signs of cultural difference cannot then be unitary or individual forms of identity because their continual implication in other symbolic systems always leaves them 'incomplete' or open to cultural translation" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 313).

2.4   Notes of caution

Three broad issues need to be emphasized while interpreting the findings in this study; these are cultural relativism, issues of reliability and validity, and selectivity of information.

Cultural relativism

This study required making certain cultural comparisons. Comparisons will be based on generalizations deriving from the dominant cultures in which we grew up. Throughout this study, I have drawn on the term "Western" cultures, but this is actually an over-simplification of the situation, because it does injustice to the large variety of cultures – both between and within nations - in Western Europe and the United States. Unless stated differently, I will use the term "Western" as referring to Caucasians with middle class status, Euro-American upbringing and Judeo-Christian roots.

As regarding cultural identity, it seems that in practice it is difficult to provide exact definitions of one's identity even though instruments for measuring cultural identity exist. This is because people may attribute to themselves characteristics of several cultural groups (Benish-Weisman & Horenczyk, 2010). It is impossible to point at the precise differences between Bedouin, Palestinian and Muslim - and Israeli - cultures that are part

of Bashar's identity. Likewise, it is difficult to make a clear separation between Israeli and Jewish cultures, which are both part of my cultural identity.

It is clear that any friendship is affected by socio-economic factors (Allan, 1998). Looking at the cultural influences of social class makes things even more complicated (Howard & Tappan, 2009). I was raised on Western upper middle class values, while Bashar was raised on Middle-Eastern lower middle class values. Although my socio-economic status is lower than that of my parents, as compared to Israeli standards I believe I still would be considered upper middle class. Bashar moved up in socio-economic status, and in comparison with Palestinian society, he probably would be considered upper middle class as well. Nevertheless, his values and attitudes are likely to be more similar to those common in Israeli or Dutch working class, than to those common in the Israeli or Dutch upper middle class.

With little knowledge of another cultural group, it is easy to over generalize and to use stereotypes. In fact, much has been written about the stereotyping of the Orient by Western powers (Said, 1985; Varisco, 2007). It is therefore of great importance to realize the diversity within diverse groups (Jones, 2010). The Israeli and Dutch populations (and to lesser degree the Palestinian and Bedouin populations) consist of subcultures, all of which influence the dominant culture and those individuals living in these cultures. Moreover, within each religion there are subcultures, with rather divergent life styles. In sum, the cultural identities of each of us are composite. When analyzing an individual, it is likely to be an impossible venture to disentangle personal from cultural variables, since, there is a complex relationship between personal narratives of identity and the master narratives of our societies (Hammack, 2008).

We can see the importance of individual differences by looking at our brothers. Bashar once remarked on the difference between him and one of his brothers: "He is Dutch; for him, everything needs to be exact" (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication April 15, 2011). Another brother of his, Abu Omar, obviously has a more gentle character than Bashar has. I met him frequently and he will be mentioned in this study further on. Likewise, some of my brothers are more sociable than I am, while others take fewer risks in life than I do. When examining personal and cultural characteristics, we need to take into account the interactive effects between the individual and the culture. Not only do some cultures enhance certain personal characteristics, but also characteristics could be viewed differently depending on the cultural context. Thus, it is doubtful whether Bashar's "Dutch" brother, who in his culture is viewed as pedantic, would be perceived likewise in Dutch culture. As much as possible, I will try to emphasize in this study the cultural aspects, but obviously individual differences will play a role as well.

Furthermore, studies on culture may be performed by an outsider to the culture (the "outsider" position), or from within the culture (the "insider" position). Both perspectives have their advantages and disadvantages, and it may be valuable or even essential to make use of both (Jones, 2010; Maydell, 2010). In this study, it is somewhat difficult to differentiate between the two different perspectives. I did not come in to the Bedouin community in order to perform research and disappear, but have been actively involved from before my Doctoral studies and not just for the sake of research. My friend's friends became my friends and I spend a large part of my leisure time with them. I thus had many opportunities to experience a rich variety of intercultural encounters. Even so, I did not grow up as a Bedouin and I will never be "one of them". Therefore, it would be inappropriate to describe myself as either a complete "outsider" or an "insider"; I am somewhere in between, a situation that is expected to affect my findings (Breen, 2007;

Rogoff, 2003; Tillmann-Healy, 2003). Bashar's feedback on my findings will be a way to balance my views with insider information.

Last but not least, it needs to be clear that there are no objectively good or bad values or practices; so, the study of cultures emphasizes relative differences (Rogoff, 2003; Ward et al., 2001). These differences need to be seen in context. What may be unacceptable in one culture could be the norm in another. In this study a large number of situations will be described in which this is the case. Although I initially experienced as personally intolerable some of the cultural practices that I encountered, I tried to refrain from taking a judgmental stance, and hope I managed to do so.

Reliability, validity and the single-case design

One may question whether reliability is at all an issue in the present kind of research, since we relate here to my own subjective experience. Undoubtedly, a researcher is embedded in his own cultural context and worldview (Hofstede, 2001). Consequently, my worldview, shaped by the aforementioned environments, is expected to influence my perceptions and interpretations in this study. More than that, this study is based primarily on my own observations, both introspective and external, and I am likely to have blind spots. I will infrequently include historical observations that are recollected from memory and thus likely to be inexact. Having said that, we may consider that as an experienced clinical psychologist, I was highly trained in self-exploration and observation of others, and this – I hope – will enhance honest and accurate description. In those cases in which I will present facts, the accuracy of the observations will be checked with Bashar and/or others involved in order to maintain at least some level of reliability.

This study is a study based on one case only. Research studies based on one single case run the risk of indeterminacy because of more than one possible explanation, and of

incorrect inferences. Multiple observations may reduce this risk substantially (George & Bennett, 2005), but still it may be difficult to generalize from the findings. During the process of this study, I made an endless number of observations and could check their commonness. Even when in this study for a certain theme only one example is provided, it will be illustrative of many situations in which this same theme occurred. In some instances, I will add more, but less detailed, examples.

Language, communication and translation became methodological issues. As a means of validation, Bashar was asked to comment on the interpretation of my observations. Nonetheless, incorporating and integrating his voice in my writings was complicated, because we use language and communicate in different ways. To give an impression of his way of communication, I will present literally a couple of his responses to my ideas. Note that communication between Bashar and me is mostly in Hebrew, which for neither of us is a first language, and the presentation of this study is in English. Furthermore, difficulties in cultural translation (cf. Bhabha, 1994) within the friendship are likely to be existent too in the presentation of our friendship in this study.

As another measure of improving reliability and validity, draft versions of my texts, including the discussion of the observations, will be distributed to colleagues and others interested, and their comments will be integrated.

Selectivity of information and consent

Intercultural friendship is multifaceted and can be investigated from various perspectives. Even when investigating from the perspective of value orientations, there are many different aspects. The chapters to follow will focus on the differences in value orientation, as they express themselves within the friendship. Since there are so many ways in which these variations appear, a selection needed to be made. Furthermore, minimal attention will

be given to the many similarities between the aforementioned cultures and their influences on friendship. Each of the stories of friendship is dense with cultural themes. It is clear that it would have been possible to analyze these stories on cultural differences in a more thorough way, but this seemed unnecessary for the purpose of this study. The dominant Western culture (Caucasian, male and middle class) is much better known to the Western academic reader than Palestinian Bedouin culture. Throughout this study, I therefore will relate to Western cultures in less detail than to Palestinian Bedouin culture.

Ethics committees have at times imposed rigid procedures that do not fit well with friendship research. Friendship research requires particular sensitivity to relational concerns, and among these are the ethical aspects of disclosing information (Ellis, 2007; Tillmann-Healy, 2003). Blake, (2007), in his review on ethics and participatory action research, refers to the idea of "negotiated consent", implying the discussion with the subject(s) under investigation about the info to be or not be disclosed. That is what was achieved in our case; there was extensive discussion between Bashar and myself about what to include or not to include in my writings. Sharing my observations with Bashar was at times a delicate matter. I will get back to this point in more detail in the last part of this study.

The idea of negotiated consent touches on the notion of power difference between researcher and participant. Though researchers often are perceived as those in power, participants essentially have substantial power as well, among others through the selectivity of information they provide to the researcher (Dufty, 2010). Bashar was well aware of the intent of this study. He wanted his story to be told and initially declined the possibility of using a pseudonym. He agreed readily to contribute as an active participant and he has signed a form of consent. This form included additional clauses, such as a veto-right, apart from standard items. Veto-right concerning the publication of certain data was

one of his conditions for participating in the research. The reason for his request and my acceptance of it was that the stories of this friendship disclose his identity as well as mine, and are both very personal and in the public sphere. Furthermore, although not the direct topic of study, a range of people somehow became involved in the friendship between Bashar and me. Where possible, I asked these people for consent in using texts that related to them.

Throughout the process of writing this dissertation, it became apparent that some actions by people described might be considered as culturally or legally prohibited. Such a situation requires utmost protection of confidentiality. I could have dealt with this by drastically changing facts, which would have resulted in complete disguise. However, I recognized that radical concealment would harm both the authenticity and the possibility of verification of the research. I also believed that disconnecting it in from an identifiable reality would impair the possibility of using the end product for the cause of social activism; something I deemed unfortunate. I then decided to enhance the protection of confidentiality by using pseudonyms for all people involved, changing the names of only a few of the places and masking most identifying information. This leaves the texts in line with reality, with the result that the people described and those close to them are likely to recognize the persons mentioned. (The chance that those mentioned in the study will read it is slim, but existing.) Consequently, while taking into account that the friendship is an ongoing reality in a volatile and riskful socio-cultural and political environment, some relevant pieces of information needed to be omitted, in order to safeguard the personal, social and physical security of Bashar, his family and myself.

PART II:
CULTURE, FRIENDSHIP & THE BEDOUINS

In Part I, I provided an introduction and proposed the methodology for this study. In part II, I will present an overview of the professional literature on the two main components of this study, interculturality and friendship. The first chapter will provide a literature study on the intercultural encounter and the next chapter will deal with adult friendship. The chapter on friendship will include background information on the specific friendship to be studied. These chapters will be followed by a chapter on the Jahalin Bedouins, who provide a substantial piece of the cultural context of the friendship studied. Each chapter will begin with a story of friendship in order to introduce the reader to the matters to come and to the atmosphere of the friendship. In Part III, I will present an analysis of the four cultural dimensions studied, and Part IV will include conclusions and implications.

3.   Interculturality

There seems to be no coherent bulk of knowledge on interculturality. The intercultural encounter was studied in a variety of disciplines in a parallel way, like in management, international relations, communication, literature, education, psychology, sociology and anthropology. When relating to the intercultural encounter the various disciplines do not necessarily built on the same assumptions or use the same concepts (Ward et al., 2001). Taking a multi-disciplinary approach, as in the extensive work on culture's consequences (Hofstede, 2001), this overview will be an attempt to integrate information from divergent fields. After providing a description of an intercultural incident, I will start with a note on culture, large groups and social identity. This will be followed by a discussion on different cultural dimensions or value orientations. The chapter will continue with a discussion of the intercultural encounter, and relate in particular to the issues of honor, power, and aggression. It will end with a section on cultural and intercultural issues among the Dutch, the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Stories of friendship: The washing machine

A simple incident depicts how culturally different the rural Palestinian or Bedouin way of dealing is from what would be customary in dominant cultures in Western Europe or North America, and what happens in the interaction between the two cultures.

Anata, June 2011, at the garage. It was after midnight and for me rather late, when I intended to go home. Bashar and I had just finished going through what I had written on "uncertainty avoidance". Bashar suddenly raised the idea that I help him with my car by taking to his home a second hand washing machine he had appropriated. This is a drive of a little over twenty minutes to another village. We received assistance from one of the workers in getting the machine in the car and I wondered aloud how we would manage to

get it out of the car at his place. Bashar did not seem concerned. He took the steering wheel. He is a good driver, but I found it frightening when on the hilly road his driving speed was far above the legal limit. At his home, he asked me to help with moving inside the new sofas, he had become owner of through some deal. They had been standing outside for several days. He said that the sofas were not heavy, but I warned that they still might be too heavy for me. There was hardly any light and my eyesight in the dark is not as developed as his. In the move, one of the sofas was damaged – a little – since I was not able to lift it high enough. After that, we transferred the washing machine. I saw that its handle was broken and asked how he will open it. He replied that he would find a way. Initially, Bashar had said that he would stay at his home for the night, so I was surprised to see him locking the door after we finished getting everything inside. It turned out that in the meantime he had received a phone call that made him change plans. (I had heard him talking on the phone, but could not understand.) A family member was waiting for him in the garage and he wanted to go back. I brought him back to the garage, after which I went home.

Throughout this incident, Bashar remained relatively calm. For him, this had been nothing out of the ordinary. In contrast, I had many reasons for being anxious and concerned; not in the least about the damage to the sofa. This had been a heavy job for me; my muscles continued to hurt for days and my mind kept going back to this for me extraordinary incident.

3.1 Culture, large groups and social identity

Communities, societies, and nations are large groups. Pertaining to one or more of these large groups, which tend to have common values, provides us a "social identity". Large groups and culture are intertwined, and thus culture is essential in crystallizing our social

identity. Culture has been defined in many ways, but I will use the term throughout this study as "the rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms, and values prevalent among people in a society" (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001, p. 138). The effect of culture on our identity is mostly an unconscious process, since culture tends to be taken for granted. Like much of the impetus to our personal actions is unconscious, also what drives large or cultural groups remains mostly unconscious. Consequently, large groups are viewed as driven by a social unconscious (Weinberg, 2003). In the social unconscious of large groups, there are anxieties and defenses against these anxieties. It was suggested that in the interactions of large groups, 'otherness' is powerful and that "we can enjoy human diversity when we are not preoccupied with the pressures and anxieties associated with the repair and maintenance of our large-group identity" (Volkan, 2009; p. 4). Becoming more aware of these unconscious processes in the large group was suggested as enhancing the development of the individual on a personal as well as on interpersonal and social levels (Weinberg & Weishut, 2011).

Cultural diversity

Ecologies shape cultures and cultures influence the development of personalities, so that there are both universal and culture-specific aspects in variation of personality (Triandis & Suh, 2002). Furthermore, human development as a whole may be seen as a cultural process, and humans could be defined in terms of their cultural participation (Rogoff, 2003). Nevertheless, cultural participation is rather difficult to analyze. We may participate in a variety of cultures, in our own society or country, and even more if we travel abroad and immerse ourselves in other cultures. We also may incorporate in our identity aspects of one or more cultures or try to keep certain cultures as far away as possible. Moreover, cultural communities are dynamic; they change across generations. This is because individuals who participate in the cultural lives of their communities, both maintain and create new cultural ways (Rogoff, 2003). At the core of a culture are its values. Around

these values practices are built, which manifest themselves in rituals, heroes and symbols. Values are the most stable over time, while symbols are the most flexible. In our encounters with another culture we are inclined to learn its practices, but typically do not gain knowledge of its values (Hofstede, 2001). Actually, we may learn about a culture's values through its practices although they may be less immediately accessible.

Nowadays, there are few countries, which have homogeneous cultures. Most countries are culturally pluralistic, either unintentionally or by choice. Accordingly, cultural diversity is a "given", which was suggested as being highly desirable and a condition for the survival of humankind (Ward et al., 2001). Cultural diversity makes it complicated to discuss national culture, since this in fact is not just one culture. We may even argue that there is no national culture, but a dominant culture. The dominant culture is most often, but not always, the culture of the majority of the population. Next to the dominant culture, countries may have a range of cultural influences brought in by minority groups. In the West, these minorities are generally immigrants, at least by origin, but this is not necessarily true in other parts of the world. An alternative way to looking at the dominant culture of a country as the national culture, is making use of the average person. Thus, empirical studies, in their attempt to identify national cultures, have made use of extremely large samples and calculated mean or other indicators on cultural variables (Fischer & Schwartz, 2010; Hofstede, 2001). To some extent, the present study will make use of the notion of national culture. In those cases in which it will do so, it refers to the country's dominant culture; a stance that is in line with the position taken by most researchers in this field.

3.2   Value orientations

The concept of "values" is most basic in the discussion of interculturality. There is an abundance of research on personal values. Values are found to be universal (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004; Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 2006, n.d.; Weishut, 1989). However, different cultures tend to assign more or less importance to different sets of values (Akiba & Klug, 1999; Davidov et al., 2008; Hofstede, 2001; Laungani, 2002; Musil et al., 2009; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001; Schwartz & Sagie, 2000; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). National dissimilarities in value orientations were related to a variety of factors. Among others, they were found to influence the extent to which nations care about the well-being of current and future generations of children (Kasser, 2011). Furthermore, people of dual nationality were found to keep distinct value systems, each of which may be primed in different situations (Stelzl & Seligman, 2009).

We need to be careful not to over-generalize the effect of culture on individual's values, since within cultures large variances were found between individuals on the basis of factors like age (Roccas et al., 2002)), personality (Bilsky & Schwartz, 199; Sawyerr et al., 2005) and gender (Church, 2010; Sawyerr et al., 2005; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005; Struch et al., 2002). Socio-economic status was found to affect value structures as well; however, it needs to be noted that findings on value structures may be affected by sampling practices (Fischer et al., 2011). There has been a long history of the study of values among social scientists, yet we do not have a clear view of values (Bachika & Schulz, 2011). Many aspects, and specially the link between individual and national (country-level) values requires more investigation (Knafo et al., 2011; Schwartz, 2011).

Much of the behavior people find different – and hard to deal with - when meeting those from a foreign culture may be accounted for by their divergent value system. It was suggested that one needs preparation in order to prepare for the encounter with different

value systems (Ward et al., 2001). In order to understand the differences between cultures we need to look at different cultural patterns, also named value orientations, around the globe. There are several classifications of these cultural patterns or value orientations that can contribute to the understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the intercultural friendship (Samovar et al., 2009). After briefly reviewing four of the best-known classification systems (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck; Hall & Hall, Inglehart; and Schwartz), I will focus on Hofstede's classification and demonstrate how it will be applied to this study.

Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's classification

One of the earliest classifications of value orientations was developed in the fifties by the American anthropologist Florence Kluckhohn and the social psychologist Fred Strodtbeck (Samovar et al., 2009). They saw cultures as situated on five cultural dimensions. 1) Human nature was described as being evil, good and evil or bad. 2) The relationship between the person and nature was described as humans being subject to nature, in cooperation with nature or controlling nature. 3) Time orientation was described as toward the past, toward the present or toward the future. 4) Activity orientation was described as being, being-in-becoming, or doing. 5) Social relationships were described as authoritarian, group oriented, or individualistic. Later classifications incorporated parts of these dimensions.

We can find differences on all these dimensions between Bedouin, Dutch and Israeli cultures. Especially relevant for this study are the differences in social relationships, and orientation in time and activity. In line with the culture in which I was raised, my orientation is individualistic, and tends to the future and toward doing. As we will discuss later, my friend would emphasize collectivism, and be oriented toward being in the present.

Hall's classification

The American anthropologist Edward Hall has proposed several cultural dimensions (Hall, 1970). Two of these dimensions are most relevant in the studied friendship. The first is the differentiation between high-context and low-context cultures. In low-context cultures the meaning of provided information is in the information itself. In high-context cultures the meaning of the information is dependent on the context. The second differentiation concerns monochronic (M) time and polychronic (P) time. Hall (1970) writes:

> M-time emphasizes schedules, segmentation, and promptness. P-time systems are characterized by several things happening at once. Emphasis is on involvement of people and completion of transactions rather than adhering to preset schedules. P-time is treated as much less tangible than M-time (p. 222).

Twenty years later, Hall & Hall (1990) come with new insight:

> Monochronic people do one thing at a time, concentrate on the job, take time commitments (deadlines, schedules) seriously, are low context and need information, are committed to the job, adhere religiously to plans, are concerned about not disturbing others and follow rules of privacy and consideration, show great respect for private property and seldom borrow or lend, emphasize promptness and are accustomed to short-term relationships. Polychronic people do many things at once, are easily distracted and subject to interruption, consider time commitments an objective to be achieved, are high context and already have information, are committed to people and human relationships, change plans often and easily, are more concerned with people closely related (family, friends, close business associates) than with privacy, borrow and lend things often and easily, base promptness on the relationship, have strong tendency to build lifetime relationships (p. 15).

Dominant Euro-American cultures – my background - were described as being low-context and following monochronic time. In contrast, dominant Latin and Middle-Eastern cultures – the latter being my friend's background – were described as being high-context and following polychronic time.

Inglehart's classification

The American political scientist Ronald Inglehart studied cultures since the seventies. He is director of the World Values Survey, a global network of social scientists who have carried out representative national surveys of the populations of over 80 societies. Inglehart (2006, n.d.) mapped countries on two main dimensions, traditional values versus secular/rational values, and survival values versus self-expression values.

> The Traditional/Secular-rational values dimension reflects the contrast between societies in which religion is very important and those in which it is not. A wide range of other orientations are closely linked with this dimension. Societies near the traditional pole emphasize the importance of parent-child ties and deference to authority, along with absolute standards and traditional family values, and reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. These societies have high levels of national pride, and a nationalistic outlook. Societies with secular-rational values have the opposite preferences on all of these topics. The second major dimension of cross-cultural variation is linked with the transition from industrial society to post-industrial societies-which brings a polarization between Survival and Self-expression values (Inglehart, n.d.).

Inglehart (n.d.) found an increasing tendency in advanced societies toward values of self-expression, because of their growing wealth. Along these two cultural dimensions, eight cultural groups of countries were identified: Confucian, Ex-Communist, Catholic Europe, Protestant Europe, English Speaking, Latin America, South-Asia, and Africa. The Middle

East was not specifically mentioned in this study. According to the data, Egypt and Jordan grouped together with Africa, while Israel was situated between the ex-communist countries and catholic Europe.

When looking at the friendship in question, it becomes clear that my origin is in secular-rational culture with emphasis on self-expression, whereas my Palestinian Bedouin friend originates from a traditional culture with emphasis on survival.

Schwartz's classification

The Israeli social psychologist Shalom Schwartz has studied personal values since the eighties in over 70 countries. His work was incorporated in the European Social Survey. He initially was concerned with values on the individual level, and only in recent years started to study the country level (Schwartz, 2011). He first described ten types of universal values: achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition, and universalism (Schwartz, 1992). He then provided a map of values on the country-level that is dissimilar from the one he developed for the individual level, and more sophisticated than the one suggested by Inglehart (Schwartz, 2006). Measured with the widely used Schwartz Value Survey, value orientations showed substantial structural similarity across individual and country levels (Fischer et al., 2010).

In his map of country-level values, Schwartz (2011) depicts three cultural dimensions. The first dimension, autonomy versus embeddedness, refers to the relationship between the person and the group.

> In **autonomy** cultures, people are viewed as autonomous, bounded entities.
> They should cultivate and express their own preferences, feelings, ideas,
> and abilities, and find meaning in their own uniqueness. There are two
> types of autonomy: ***Intellectual autonomy*** encourages individuals to pursue

their own ideas and intellectual directions independently. […] *Affective autonomy* encourages individuals to pursue affectively positive experience for themselves. […] In cultures with an emphasis on **embeddedness**, people are viewed as entities embedded in the collectivity. Meaning in life comes largely through social relationships, through identifying with the group, participating in its shared way of life, and striving toward its shared goals (p. 140).

The second dimension, egalitarianism versus hierarchy, refers to how it is guaranteed that people behave in a responsible manner preserving the social fabric.

> Cultural **egalitarianism** seeks to induce people to recognize one another as moral equals who share basic interests as human beings. People are socialized to internalize a commitment to cooperate and to feel concern for everyone's welfare. They are expected to act for the benefit of others as a matter of choice. […] Cultural **hierarchy** relies on hierarchical systems of ascribed roles to insure responsible, productive behavior. It defines the unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources as legitimate. People are socialized to take the hierarchical distribution of roles for granted and to comply with the obligations and rules attached to their roles" (p. 140-141).

The third dimension, harmony versus mastery, relates to how people relate to their environment.

> **Harmony** emphasizes fitting into the world as it is, trying to understand and appreciate rather than to change, direct, or to exploit. […] **Mastery** […] encourages active self-assertion in order to master, direct, and change the natural and social environment to attain group or personal goals (p. 141).

The three dimensions were replicated in a study in which a different value survey (the Rokeach Value Survey) was used, which added a dimension of "self-fulfilled connectedness", referring to values that represent profound attachment to others as well as

attributes of self-fulfillment (Vauclair et al., 2011). It needs to be noted that there is substantial overlap between Inglehart's traditional/secular-rational dimension and Schwartz autonomy/embeddedness dimension and between Inglehart's survival/self-expression dimension and both Schwartz's autonomy/embeddedness and egalitarianism/hierarchy dimensions (Schwartz, 2006). According to this latter division, seven transnational cultural groupings were identified: West Europe, English-speaking, Latin America, East Europe, South Asia, Confucian influenced, and Africa & Middle East (Schwartz, 2006). Socioeconomic, political, and demographic factors were suggested that give rise to national differences on the cultural value dimensions. The country groupings as perceived by Schwartz are highly – but not fully - similar to those found by Inglehart.

The friendship, as will be discussed later, manifests these differences as follows. My friend views himself as embedded in his community, while I see myself as primarily autonomous. He looks at society in a hierarchical way, while I tend more to see people as equal. He is mostly involved with survival, while I am more concerned with self-expression.

Hofstede's classification

Probably the best known and the most used of the classification systems – and the one that will be applied in this study - is the one by the Dutch social psychologist and anthropologist Geert Hofstede. Hofstede (2001) compared over 70 countries and regions in a continuing analysis of personal values. The research started in the seventies and is based on surveys presented to IBM employees of all levels. In a later stage data from people with other backgrounds were added. Using several measures, Hofstede found four dimensions that differentiate among cultures: power distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. He viewed these dimensions as independent, which is different from the dimensions in the previously mentioned classifications. Hofstede ranked all investigated countries and regions for each of the dimensions and thus created four indices.

The dimensions may be described as follows. "Power distance" relates to the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. "Individualism" versus its opposite, collectivism, concerns the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. "Masculinity" versus its opposite, femininity, refers to the distribution of roles between the genders. Finally, "uncertainty avoidance" deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. Later, he added a fifth dimension of "long-term orientation", referring to values such as thrift and perseverance (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Recently, he added a sixth dimension "indulgence versus restraint", referring to the allowance or suppression of needs like enjoyment of life and having fun (Hofstede, n.d. b). However, both "long-term orientation" and "indulgence versus restrained" were studied only in part of the world and not in all cultures relevant in the present study. Therefore, I will expand in this study only on the original four dimensions.

Hofstede's work was replicated in many settings and his findings were used in many academic fields, mostly in quantitative research. He suggested that his work may be base for qualitative research as well, comparing value dimensions in two or more cases. He cited a host of research studies that used his indices and linked the dimensions to an immense number of variables. Among these variables are: attitudes toward a range of topics, satisfaction with personal or national issues, subjective well-being, emotional expression, conflict handling, and preference for certain pass-times (Hofstede, 2001).

One could compare the cultural dimensions as suggested by Hofstede with those suggested by Schwartz (on the country-level). Conceptually, we could postulate that Hofstede's dimension of individualism-collectivism is comparable with Schwartz's dimension of autonomy versus embeddedness. It seems that Hofstede's dimension of power distance is

comparable with Schwartz's dimension of egalitarianism versus hierarchy. Furthermore, Hofstede's dimension of uncertainty avoidance could be related to Schwartz's dimension of harmony versus mastery. Perhaps also Hofstede's dimension of masculinity-femininity is related to harmony versus mastery.

3.3 The intercultural encounter

People can meet others from different cultures and with different value orientations when leaving one's country, as do tourists, immigrants, refugees, international students and expatriates. People also may encounter divergent cultures within one's own country (Ward et al., 2001). In addition, there are increasingly more possibilities to virtual intercultural encounters both in work settings (Gibson & Manuel, 2003; Hardin et al., 2007) and for leisure (Seder & Oishi, 2009; Wimmer & Lewis, 2010). In some situations, intercultural contact may be fostered institutionally, while in others governmental institutions may try to limit this contact (Ward et al., 2001). The cultural difference in the interaction asks for the creation of new forms of meaning and strategies of identification, through processes of negotiation (Bhabha, 1994). The intercultural encounter is highly complex and can be explored from different perspectives. Here I will confine myself to the aspects of the encounter most relevant to this study. I will elaborate on intercultural communication and intercultural conflict.

Intercultural communication

A major issue in the intercultural encounter is communication. Ways of communication are highly influenced by culture. Language is the most clearly recognizable part of culture and most crucial in the intercultural encounter (Hofstede, 2001). What is perceived as polite communication depends on the specific culture. For instance, in the Netherlands

politeness in conversation would include not interrupting the other speaker, while in Latin cultures digression from the main issue would be seen as a form of politeness (Ulijn, 1995). This situation could create conflict. A study, using subjects from a series of countries, found that low-context (mostly Western) cultures tend to emphasize direct and explicit communication, while high-context (mostly Eastern) cultures have a preference for indirect and implicit communication (Adair & Brett, 2005). In contrast to most Western cultures, Arab culture emphasizes form over function, affect over accuracy, and image over meaning (Zaharna, 1995). Also, the tendency of individuals in different countries to agree or disagree was found to be related to a difference in individualism-collectivism (Smith, 2011). The importance of language and communication skills in order to bridge these cultural differences was documented widely (Samovar et al., 2009; Ward et al., 2001).

There is much dissimilarity in communication styles between individualistic cultures (mostly Western) and collectivistic cultures (mostly Eastern). In individualistic cultures people tend to rely on the use of words to convey meaning. In collectivistic cultures people do not rely on language alone for communication. Tone of voice, timing, facial expressions, and behaving in ways considered acceptable in the society are major means of expression (Anderson & Hiltz, 2001). Cultural value orientations exerted a stronger influence on nonverbal as compared to verbal expressions of emotion (Wong et al., 2008). Individualism was positively associated with higher expressivity norms in general, and for positive emotions in particular (Matsumoto & 60 others, 2008). For instance, consider a study comparing indigenous Dutch individualists with Surinamese and Turkish collectivists (Mesquita, 2001). The study found that "emotions in collectivist cultures (a) were more grounded in assessments of social worth and of shifts in relative social worth, (b) were to a large extent taken to reflect reality rather than the inner world of the

individual, and (c) belonged to the self-other relationship rather than being confined to the subjectivity of the self" (Mesquita, 2001, p. 68).

Cultures are divergent in their accepted ways of communication on (at least) two dimensions: directness and expression of emotions. Differences in directness refer to the idea of expressing verbally what one thinks in a direct and open way, and/or expressing oneself in an indirect way, like in one's posture or behavior. Dissimilarities in emotional expressiveness refer to the degree in which emotions are openly expressed (and perceived as relevant). A theoretical framework for understanding differences in conflict resolution styles was proposed based on high/low levels of directness and high/low levels of emotional expressiveness: (1) discussion style (direct & emotionally restrained), (2) engagement style (direct & emotionally expressive), (3) accommodation style (indirect & emotionally restrained) and (4) dynamic style (indirect and emotionally expressive) (Hammer, 2005).

These cultural differences in communication may produce misunderstandings and sometimes hardships. For example, in a conflict ridden Israeli-Palestinian encounter, it was found that in the Israeli group there was a predominance of an interruptive style of communication, while in the Palestinian group the communication style was non-interruptive. When Palestinians and Israelis met together, the Israeli interruptive style of communication domineered over the Palestinian non-interruptive style. Nevertheless, divergent communication styles underwent a process of change and Israelis became less interruptive and Palestinian interrupted more than when each group was by itself (Zupnik, 2000). It seems that some communication styles are more accepted in some cultures than in others and some communication styles may be more domineering than others.

Effective communication with people of other cultures requires "cultural intelligence", a combination of emotional/motivational aspects, culture specific knowledge and other cognitive aspects, and cross-cultural behavioral skills (Earley & Ang, 2003; Thomas et al., 2008). Programs were developed to improve intercultural competence in the fields of education (Penbek et al., 2009; Spajić-Vrkaš, 2009; Zhang & Merolla, 2007), social work (Gilin & Young, 2009; Tesoriero, 2006), counseling (Maoz, 2000b) and business (Antal & Friedman, 2008; Cheney, 2001). Many of these programs incorporate the idea of placing students temporarily in a foreign culture. There also is a series of studies on preparation of managers and others for living in another culture. Most of these are based on the principles of awareness of cultural difference, knowledge of the other culture and the acquirement of cultural coping skills (Hofstede, 2001; Ward et al., 2001).

Intercultural conflict

People from different cultures have met through the ages on an individual level, within societies and between nations. Since people take their own culture for granted and do not easily give up their own cultural identity, these encounters tend to create certain dynamics. Several researchers have depicted the encounter with another culture as a process in stages (Bennett, 1986; Bennett, 1993; Deane, 1991; Pedersen, 1995), whereas later research has described it as more complex (cf. Ward et al., 2001). The willingness to accommodate to other cultures - whether in one's own society or abroad - was discussed in terms of divergent approximation strategies. The literature relates to four different strategies. Assimilation refers to the adoption of the other culture, while relinquishing the culture of origin. Integration refers to adoption of aspects of the other culture while keeping aspects of one's culture of origin. Separation (or segregation) refers to the rejection of the other culture, while remaining with one's original culture. Marginalization refers to the rejection of both cultures. Most research refers to the strategy of integration as generally most adaptive from a psychological perspective. However, each of these coping strategies has

its advantages and may be appropriate in certain situations, depending on characteristics of both the original and the hosting culture and their interaction (Hofstede, 2001; Ward et al., 2001). For example, in wealthy European countries that are relatively gender equal integration was favored, whereas in poor European countries with higher emphasis on masculinity assimilation was preferred (Hofstede, 2001).

It is in human nature to differentiate between "us" and "them", while "defining "us" as a source of closeness and sharing, and "them" as different, negative, and a potential enemy (Berman et al., 2000; Volkan, 2009). People in particular tend to stereotype other cultural groups, viewing their own ethnic group as superior to others, a phenomenon known as "ethnocentrism" (Cottam et al., 2004; Hofstede, 2001; Rogoff, 2003; Samovar et al., 2009). Many research studies found that people react to other cultural groups more negatively and more intensely than to their own culture. Our images of other groups have been described pertaining to one of seven types: the ally, the diabolical enemy, the barbarian, the colonial, the imperial, the rogue and the degenerate (Cottam et al., 2004). It was suggested that we "are all inadvertently socialized to be racist, to take for granted the discriminatory practices of our society. The individual, however, is not destined to be a prisoner of the language and concepts within which he or she is trained to think and to experience" (Altman, 2000, p. 591). Conflicts between social groups tend to magnify the individual's awareness of the distinctive values of these groups. Consequently, in the case of a conflict between one's in-group and some out-group, like in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, attachment with the in-group and hostility to the other group can be expected to increase (Sagie et al., 2005).

With rising immigration in the West, tensions between native nationals and immigrants increase. Immigrants often encounter negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination in their new country (Chung et al., 2008; Roccas et al., 2000). Some cultures are more open

and inclusive to outsiders than others. Moral inclusiveness, the degree in which cultures are concerned with the welfare of those who are not part of their in-group and apply rules of fairness, was linked to the value orientations of cultural egalitarianism, cultural embeddedness, and level of democratization. Moral inclusiveness was found to influence attitudes toward immigrants from different racial or ethnic groups, and participation in activities that benefit the wider society (Schwartz, 2007). Interpersonal, intercultural conflicts become inevitable. Intercultural conflict was found to predict poor work-related and socio-cultural adaptation, and indirectly also poor psychological adaptation (Shupe, 2007; Ward et al., 2001). Not surprisingly, in Europe and the United States, where in recent years socio-demographics are rapidly changing, much attention is being paid to multiculturalism and to fostering intercultural dialogue.

The encounter with a different culture is inherently stressful (Ward et al., 2001). People may actually be shocked from the encounter with another culture. The term "culture shock" was coined in the early fifties of the 20th century as a malady, a clinical entity, occurring when we are immersed in another culture and lose all familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse (Oberg, 1954). The term underwent some transformations and in later years, it was used less as a clinical term. A more recent description is as follows:

> culture shock (1) is a process and not a single event, (2) may take place at many different levels simultaneously as the individual interacts with a complex environment, (3) becomes stronger or weaker as the individual learns to cope or fails to cope, (4) teaches the individual new coping strategies which contribute to future success, and (5) applies to any radical change presenting unfamiliar or unexpected circumstances. (Pedersen, 1995, p. vii).

The degree of experienced acculturation stress is influenced by a large variety of individual, cultural and situational factors. Variables prior to acculturation are for instance,

age, level of education, knowledge of language and personality. Cultural distance is another variable that is obviously linked to acculturation. A larger discrepancy on value orientations between two cultures is likely to create higher levels of acculturation stress. During the acculturation process itself we may add factors such as coping strategies, societal attitudes, and the availability of social support. Social support is of utmost importance for psychological well-being during acculturation, and needed from members of the original culture as well as from members of the other culture. A bulk of research demonstrates that the acculturation process has affective, behavioral and cognitive aspects. The affective aspects include those psychological processes involved in coping with cultural change, with the outcome of psychological adjustment. The behavioral aspects include processes involved in acquiring particular skills, with the outcome of socio-cultural adaptation. The cognitive aspects include the processes involved in developing, changing and maintaining identity, with the outcome of cultural identity and intergroup perceptions. These aspects are to some extent interdependent, with cognitions ultimately manifesting themselves in the affective and behavioral domains (Linley & Joseph, 2004).

Although the intercultural encounter may be a major challenge and highly stressful, its outcome is not necessarily negative. We know that personal growth can result from a variety of life crises and/or adverse situations (Schaefer & Moos, 1992; Ward et al., 2001) fr*om havi*ng a minority status (Ryff et al., 2003), or from other forms of intercultural encounters (Montuori & Fahim, 2004).

3.4 Honor and aggression

When referring to conflict it is inevitable to relate to issues of aggression, power and honor. The concept of honor is central in Arab culture and not obeying to rules of honor may result in aggressive reactions. Moreover, the aggressive atmosphere and large power differentials are blatant in the cultural context of the studied friendship. Issues of honor, power and aggression exist also within the friendship itself, as will be described later.

Face and honor

The literature refers to the concepts of face and honor separately, and chooses the use of one or the other depending on the culture(s) in discussion, with the use of the concept of face usually preserved for cultures in the Far East. However, the two concepts seem to be closely linked and sometimes even indistinguishable, and therefore they will be discussed here together. Although we may dispute this conception, face is considered more inclusive than honor, while honor could be viewed as a special kind of face that is claimed by certain groups in society. Furthermore, it was suggested that face-related issues are an inevitable component in human conflict (Ho, 1976).

We may define face as "the respectability and/or deference which a person can claim for himself from others, by virtue of the relative position he occupies in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned adequately in that position as well as acceptably in his general conduct" (Ho, 1976, p. 883). The concept of "face" has its origin in Asian cultures, but each person, culture and society has its face-saving practices, which in many Western cultures may be named tact, diplomacy or social skills. People may want to save their own face, but also that of others. Furthermore, in cultures with high emphasis on face one can expect to be sustained in a particular face, and feel that it is morally proper that this be so. Moreover, face is something that can be given to others (Goffman, 1955).

The importance of "face" was found to be related both to the individualism/collectivism distinction and to power distance. Communities with a higher level of collectivism and those higher on power distance tend to be more concerned with "face" (Oetzel et al., 2001).

Facework are "the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face" (Goffman, 1955, p. 12). Facework is performed to protect one's face from threat, possibly by avoidance or through corrective processes, and sometimes in aggressive ways (Goffman, 1955). Awareness to issues of face and facework were suggested as crucial in intercultural relations, and in specific in intercultural training (Imahori & Cupach, 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998).

Let us consider cultural differences as regarding face and facework. Before doing so, we need to be aware that there are also individual differences, since individuals vary in the extent to which they endorse or reject a culture's ideals. As regarding honor, face and dignity, only when we take into account both culture and individual factors we can meaningfully interpret behavior (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Findings from one study on students, asking how they would act in certain imaginary situations, showed that U.S. Americans report on more direct, competitive and hostile ways to protect their face than Syrians. Syrians tended more to cooperation and ritualistic actions to save face. The American facework strategies corresponded to individualistic, weak power distance, masculine and low uncertainty avoidance cultural dimensions while the Syrian way corresponded to collectivistic, high-power distance, moderately masculine and high uncertainty avoidance. As for communication with Arabs, it was suggested that the first rule is not to make them lose face, e.g. be less direct – and thus less offensive - in communication. Furthermore, it was suggested that Americans be aware of the importance for Syrians of social rituals and of nonverbal communication (Merkin & Ramadan, 2010).

A study on four different cultures concluded that despite the cultural differences as regarding face and facework, the association between face *concern* and facework is consistent over cultures (Oetzel et al., 2008).

I will now discuss more specifically the studies on honor. Honor was defined in many ways, the simplest definition being "reputation". Cultures of honor are common in places where there is a lack of resources, where the benefit of crime outweighs the risks, and where law enforcement is lacking. In cultures of honor, a man's reputation is key to his economic survival, and men want to be seen as strong and powerful. In these cultures, violence in response to an insult, in order to protect one's home and property or socialize children was found to be acceptable, and ideas about gender and masculinity were found to be related to acts of violence (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Honor was also found to be related to risk-taking, presumably because the latter provides social proof of strength and fearlessness (Barnes et al., 2011). However, adherence to honor codes may as well result in acts of heroism and generosity. It was suggested that one cannot understand these acts and the rituals that surround them without comprehension of the socio-cultural meaning systems that they spring from (Cohen et al., 1998).

A distinctive feature of honor cultures is the extent to which one's personal worth is determined interpersonally. A cross-cultural study on Spain and the Netherlands found that Spanish participants attach more importance than their Dutch counterparts to honor, family-related values and social recognition, while Dutch participants rate individualism-related values as more important (Mosquera et al., 2000). In honor cultures, one's own honor and the honor of intimate others are interdependent. In honor cultures as compared to other cultures, not only is one's own honor more vulnerable to humiliations and insults by intimates than by non-intimates, but also being offended by others in front of intimates may lead to more negative feelings, especially of shame. Moreover, it was suggested that if

one's honor is diminished, the honor of one's intimates also will be diminished (Mosquera et al., 2000).

Several studies referred to the relatively strong emotional reactions to insults by individuals from honor cultures. One study on men in the South of the United States, where norms of honor are adhered to, found that insulted men may react with aggressive or violent behavior (Cohen et al., 1996). A couple of studies compared individuals from Spain (more concerned with honor) and the Netherlands (less concerned with honor). In Spain, honor was found to be more closely related to family and social interdependence, whereas in the Netherlands honor was associated with self-achievement and autonomy (Mosquera et al., 2002b). Spanish participants responded especially intensely to insults – as compared to Dutch participants - when their family was involved (Mosquera et al., 2002a). Another Dutch study found insulted men adhering to norms of honor to be more angry, less joyful, less fearful, and less resigned (IJzerman et al., 2007). A study on Brazilians and Americans from different cultural backgrounds found that "(a) female infidelity damages a man's reputation, particularly in honor cultures; (b) this reputation can be partially restored through the use of violence; and (c) women in honor cultures are expected to remain loyal in the face of jealousy-related violence" (Vandello & Cohen, 2003, p. 997).

In the Arab world, where the family is the corner stone of society, honor is central. Moreover, among the Arabs honor is often perceived as being related to sexual purity (Dodd, 1973). Issues of honor may turn into long-lasting family disputes, which through escalation may become violent. The urge to protect the family's honor can take severe forms and in extreme cases lead to blood vengeance (also named "honor killing"), the obligation to kill in retribution for the death of a member of one's family or tribe, and a form of maintaining honor (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 1997).

Aggression and the use of power

As described previously, honor may lead to aggression. The concepts of culture, power and aggression seem to be interwoven. Issues of power are central in group relations, and will become evident in any large group (Cottam et al., 2004; Weinberg & Weishut, 2011). Power may be used in positive ways enhancing society, but may as well be used by the dominant group in coercive ways in order to subjugate other groups or individuals. It seems that no culture can do without power struggles, which may become obvious by the following definition of culture (Bond, 2004) as

> a set of affordances and constraints that channel the expression of coercive
> means of social control by self and others. All cultural systems represent
> solutions to the problems associated with distributing desired material and
> social resources among its group members while maintaining social order
> and harmony. Norms are developed surrounding the exercise of mutual
> influence in the process of resource allocation, favoring some and
> marginalizing others. Violations of these norms by resource competitors are
> conceptualized as "aggressive" behaviors and stimulate a process of
> justified counterattack, escalating the violence (p. 62).

Aggression is influenced by individual characteristic as well as by cultural factors (Cohen & Leung, 2010; Leung & Cohen, 2011). Aggression is valued differently in different cultures, and in some cultures may be justified as a way to solve interpersonal conflict, in particular in cultures that emphasize honor (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Cohen et al., 1996). Those in power regularly use a variety of measures to stay in power. Aggression is often used to maintain pressure on people or subgroups to conform to the norms of the majority (Hopper, 2003). Generally, men tend to be more aggressive than women are. Fear of losing status and respect in the eyes of fellow men was found to be the major concern that evokes their aggression (Fischer & Mosquera, 2002). Also, the threat to manhood was

found to activate physically aggressive thoughts (Vandello et al., 2008). Much of men's aggression is directed against women. Frequent use of aggression can create situations of inequality and injustice, particularly for women and within the family (Haj-Yahia, 2002; Herzog, 2004; Malik & Lindahl, 1998; Vandello & Cohen, 2003).

Justifying the use of power does not necessarily mean that people are themselves more aggressive. For example, an Israeli study found that Arab parents and teachers were more aggressive than their Jewish counterparts and Arab adolescents tended more to justify aggression Nonetheless, the Jewish adolescents were actually more aggressive and violent in their families, neighborhoods and schools than the Arab adolescents (Sherer & Karnieli-Miller, 2004). Cultural dissimilarities on the expression of aggression in the workplace were found also between Jewish and Arab Israeli employees. Jewish employees tended to express overt aggression toward their superiors, whereas Arab employees displayed a tendency to express covert aggression. This difference was linked to a divergence on individualism/collectivism (Galin & Avraham, 2009).

According to Anderson & Bushman (2002):

> Human aggression is any behavior directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm. In addition, the perpetrator must believe that the behavior will harm the target, and that the target is motivated to avoid the behavior (p. 28).

Interestingly, when it comes to evaluating perpetrators' aggression, there are cultural variations pertaining to the relative importance of intent of harm. For instance, Israeli Jews of European origin put more emphasis on the intent of a perpetrator and Israeli Arabs and Oriental Jews more on the extent of created harm (Lubel et al., 2001). Anderson & Bushman (2002) developed a General Aggression Model, in which they differentiated between two kinds of aggression: hostile and instrumental aggression. *Hostile aggression* refers to impulsive behavior intended to harm the other in response to a perceived

provocation, whereas *instrumental aggression* is the planned behavior - not necessarily in reaction to a provocation - intended not just to harm the other but also to reach some other goal.

3.5   The Palestinians, the Israelis and the Dutch

Much could be written here about interculturality when it comes to Israeli and Palestinian societies, which provide the context of this study. I will suffice in providing a few notes on each of these cultures, fully aware that this does injustice. A more extensive analysis of these cultures is beyond the scope of this study. After that, I will provide some data about interculturality in the Netherlands; Dutch culture is part of my personal background and therefore relevant in this study as well.

The Palestinian Arabs

Hofstede (2001) found that there are differences among the nations within the Arab world, but in general, cultural dimensions were found to be rather similar. The Arab world, which is predominantly Muslim, is highly rule-oriented while inequalities of power and wealth have been allowed to grow within the society. Leaders have virtually ultimate power and authority and there is an expectation and acceptance that leaders will separate themselves from the group. Arab societies do not readily accept change and are risk adverse. They are collectivistic which is manifested in a close long-term commitment to the member 'group', that being a family, extended family, clan, tribe or extended relationships. Loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount, and over-rides most other societal rules.

We may wonder though if the similarity found between the cultures in different Arab countries is not partially based on orientalism (Said, 1985; Varisco, 2007), a form of

ethnocentrism and lack of knowledge of the specific Arab cultures by Westerners[6]. For example, if we were to look into the issue of language, we would probably find that for many Europeans or Americans Arabic is perceived as just one language, despite the fact that there is enormous regional influence on word choice, syntax and pronunciation. Differences between sedentary and Bedouin (or rural) Arabic are to such an extent that people from different Arab countries may not understand one another (Varieties of Arabic, 2011). In fact, one study found that Arabs from the Gulf States were more collectivistic than those from Egypt, whereas both groups were more collectivistic than subjects from the United States (Buda & Elsayed-Elkhouly, 1998).

If we compare the Arab world with other cultural regions, we find that throughout the Arab world power distance is valued higher than in Europe or the United States, and so is collectivism. In the Arab world there is more uncertainty avoidance than in the United States, or in Western Europe, but less than within Mediterranean European countries (Hofstede, n.d. a). Throughout the Arab world there is a valuation of masculine traits over feminine traits (Al-Krenawi, 1999). The emphasis on masculinity is more than in Western Europe, comparable to the situation in Eastern Europe, and less than in the United States (Hofstede, n.d. a). However, within the Arab world there are differences between countries and changes over time. For example, one recent study found Syria to be more individualistic than as indicated in Hofstede's original rankings (Merkin & Ramadan, 2010).

As regarding forms of communication, Arabs were described as making use of expressive body language and relatively loud in their speaking. In business, they may tend to a

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[6] The main reason for Hofstede to group the Arab countries as a region was the loss of country-specific data from his database. He actually acknowledged that the Arab world is not homogenic (Hofstede, 2001).

coercive style of interaction with subordinates. Furthermore, Arabs allow for relatively much bodily contact between individuals of the same sex, whereas public contact between individuals of the opposite sex is in many Arab societies not well accepted. Although Arab gender roles are changing, men are generally viewed as superior, and women in need of protection and guidance (Samovar et al., 2009).

Let us now take a closer look at the Palestinians. Palestinian Arabs live for the most part in the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Israel, though substantial numbers live in Syria, Lebanon and other countries. In the context of the present study, I will refer only to those living in the Palestinian Authority. The population of the Palestinian Authority consists primarily of Muslims; Christians and others comprise less than two percent of the total population (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2009).[7] Palestinian culture is seen as an honor culture (Baxter, 2007; Robinson, 2008). The centrality of honor seems part of the Palestinian social unconscious. When honor is at stake, other options of experience, perceiving or coping may be overlooked.

For the Palestinian Arabs, enduring forms of violence, trauma and resistance became central aspects of daily life and culture. (Allen, 2008) wrote as follows about life in the Palestinian Authority:

> The second Palestinian intifada against Israeli occupation, which began in September 2000, saw Palestinian areas repeatedly invaded and shelled by Israeli forces. […] Commemorative cultural production and basic acts of physically getting around that became central to the spatial and social practices by which reorientation and adaptation to violence occurred in the occupied Palestinian territories. […] Memorialization that occurs in storytelling, in visual culture, in the naming of places and moving through

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[7] There is documentation also of Jewish Palestinian Arabs (Kujawsky, 2009).

spaces is one way in which this happens. The concept of "getting by"
captures the many spatial and commemorative forms by which Palestinians
manage everyday survival (p. 453).

Also Hammack (2010) described how contemporary Palestinian youth engage with a tragic narrative of loss supported by the social structure of ongoing intractable conflict and Israeli military occupation. Furthermore, he related to the current ideological divisions within Palestinian society between secular and religious nationalism. Some studies have tried to link the exposure of Palestinian youth to political violence with levels of aggression. While an earlier study did not find such a link (Barber, 1999), a later study did (Qouta et al., 2008).

There are several studies on Palestinian adolescents and students. Although some of these studies referred to students in Israel and others to those in the Palestinian Authority, findings seem similar. Family life is highly important for the Palestinians. A study in the mid-nineties found that Palestinian adolescents have expectations for traditional family roles, similar to those of their parents)Fronk et al., 1999). A couple of studies found that Palestinian students evaluated collectivistic values higher than did Jewish students (Sagie et al., 2005; Sagy et al., 2001). Palestinian Arab students were found to have strong identities, as concerning both their Arab and their Palestinian identity (Diab & Mi'ari, 2007). One study found that Palestinian students tend to distinguish between emotional and instrumental support and allocate sources of support accordingly; a tendency which is likely to have impact on friendships. Emotional support was sought within the social network and instrumental support was sought within the family (Ben-Ari, 2004).

I will expand on the relationships between Palestinians and Jews, and on a particular group of Palestinians, the Jahalin Bedouins, in later chapters.

The Israelis

The Israeli population is made up primarily of Jews (76%). Twenty percent are Arabs (most of which are Muslim), and 4% are of other ethnic groups. 63% of the Israeli population is either first or second-generation immigrants[8]. Furthermore, 37% of the Israeli population is of Euro-American origin, 15% of African origin and 12% of Asian origin (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The State of Israel exists since 1948 and in its early years, Israel needed to absorb large waves of immigrants. These immigrants brought with them a variety of cultures. In an attempt to accommodate to the different cultural groups the idea of a social "melting pot" was created, in which "the interactions between the different groups yield a new essence, social and cultural, while the groups lose their original cultural attributes or have them considerably weakened" (Yuchtman-Yaar, 2005, p. 93). Israel is often seen as a Western democracy, but its commitment to the value of cultural pluralism – which is central in most Western democracies - does not seem to be strong. It was argued that the national agenda leaves no room for Israeli Palestinians, favors the culture and traditions of Jews of European and American origin and is biased against the cultures and traditions of Jews of Asian and African origin (Yonah, 1994). In recent years, the absorption of Ethiopian Jews and large numbers of immigrants from the former Soviet Union became a major socio-cultural challenge. Moreover, the complex situation of second generation immigrants called for dealing with issues such as transnationalism and inequalities based on race, nationality, religion, and citizenship (Elias & Kemp, 2010). As a result of the diversity of Israeli cultures, it is possible to recognize in Israeli society as a whole a blend of individualistic and collectivistic values (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2007; Oyserman, 1993; Sagie et al., 2005).

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[8] First generation immigrants are defined as persons born outside Israel. Second generation immigrants are defined as persons born in Israel, having one's father born abroad (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010).

Hofstede (2001) described Israel as a country with a diversity of cultural groups, and suggested that over the years there may have been value changes in this country, that are not necessarily reflected in his findings. He mentioned the value differences within Israel between Jews of Western and those of North African origin and the Arab population, the latter groups being more inclined to collectivism. As regarding the role of women, he related among others to the pressure for dual careers. Traditionally masculine functions are open to Israeli women, but to a greater degree than common in the United States, they are expected to become mothers and take care of the children. He referred to the exceptionally low level of power distance in Israel, which is comparable to those of North European countries. Furthermore, he suggested a link between Israel's intense national conflict and its high level of uncertainty avoidance combined with a tendency to collectivism. This combination of value dimensions is comparable to that of several other countries in which there is relatively much internal conflict, like in Arabic speaking countries.

Within Israeli society there are several major conflicts. (Shimoni & Schwarzwald, 2003) described the situation as follows:

> The conflict between religious and secular Jews, which originated in differing ideological standpoints, has spilled over to include territorial and resource issues. The conflict between the Western and Eastern ethnic groups, which originates in feelings of discrimination, has developed into cultural struggle. The conflict between Jews and Arabs, which originated in territorial struggle, has developed into a comprehensive struggle (p. 549)

Trauma, and in particular the Holocaust, survival and glory, and in particular the establishment of the State of Israel and its defense are central in Israeli culture. It was suggested that despite major changes in Israeli Jewish society through the years, conflict-supporting beliefs and emotions of fear and hatred have remained dominant and continue to obstruct possible peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Bar-Tal et al.,

2010). Rightfully or not, the notion that the world is out to get the Jews seems to have become part of the Israeli social unconscious.

The Dutch

As regarding religion, 48% of the population of the Netherlands is Christian (of various denominations), 42% is non-religious, 6% is Muslim, and 4% adheres to another religion (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2009). In 2010, about 20% of the population of the Netherlands consisted of first or second generation immigrants[9], a little over half of these originating in non-Western countries (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2011). The percentage of immigrants in the Netherlands is expected to continue its slow rise (Verbond van Verzekeraars, 2010).

Hofstede (n.d. a) wrote as follows:

> The Netherlands is indicative of a society with more individualistic attitudes and relatively loose bonds with others. The populace is more self-reliant and looks out for themselves and their close family members. […] Privacy is considered the cultural norm and attempts at personal ingratiating may meet with rebuff. Due to the importance of the individual within the society, individual pride and respect are highly held values and degrading a person is not well received […]

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[9] First generation immigrants are defined as persons born outside the Netherlands having one or both parents who were also born outside the Netherlands. Second generation immigrants are defined as persons born in the Netherlands, having both parents born abroad (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2011). Note that according to this definition, I was an immigrant in the Netherlands (and not only in Israel).

Furthermore, Hofstede's findings on the Netherlands indicate a low level of differentiation and discrimination between genders, and a cultural tenancy to reduce the level of uncertainty by enacting rules to cover most situations.

The notion that one needs to conform to written rules seems to have become part of the Dutch social unconscious. For many a Dutch person, it seems difficult to understand that life could be lived differently. The relative importance of rules seems to be in conflict with the idea of tolerance of other cultural expressions. Gordijn (2010) described this as follows:

> The Dutch are famous for being, as they call it, 'tolerant' and they are also firmly convinced of having this positive quality. However, an important element of Dutch culture is a strong desire for conformity: if you want to be one of 'the' Dutch, you will have to become exactly like them. Those who do not conform to the values that are commonly accepted by the Dutch are being socially excluded. This contradiction between tolerance and desire for conformity is mainly a problem because of the lack of awareness of people about this part of the Dutch culture. Social practice is much more influenced by the above-mentioned sense of conformity than by this so-called 'tolerance' (p. 217).

The intercultural situation in the Netherlands is going through a process of rapid change. As Boomkens (2010) wrote:

> In the first decade of the twenty-first century, politics and everyday life in the Netherlands became polarized, under the influence of several conservative and populist movements that reflected a growing distrust of government and 'politics as usual', and a xenophobic and cultural conservative attitude towards migrants and migration, more specifically of Muslims and Islam (p. 307).

There is a range of studies on multiculturalism in the Netherlands, mostly on adolescents, investigating its complex relationship with variables like perceived threat and perceived social distance, knowledge and education, and contact with and prejudice toward immigrants. The Dutch were found to be slightly positive toward multiculturalism and this tendency remained stable in the first decade of this millennium, despite stricter regulations for immigration (Schalk-Soekar *et al.*, 2008)(Van de Vijver *et al.*, 2008). Taking a closer look, adolescents in the dominant culture expressed negative feelings towards Muslims, whereas stereotypes and symbolic threats, but not realistic threats, predicted their prejudice towards Muslims (Velasco Gonzalez et al., 2008). More contact with immigrants was related to less prejudice (Schalk-Soekar et al., 2008; Velasco Gonzalez et al., 2008). Individuals from the dominant culture also expected immigrants to adapt as much as possible, whereas immigrants (mostly Turkish and Moroccan) favored maintaining their culture (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002; Schalk-Soekar et al., 2008). Individualism was found to have a negative effect on multiculturalism for both groups (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006).

4.   Friendship

Friendships are found in all societies and manifest themselves in a rich variety of culturally dependent ways. Apart from satisfying basic human needs, they fulfill an important social role that is different from kinship and societal institutions. The expression of friendship varies as a function of value orientations and societal constraints, whereas overall almost no behavior can be excluded as an act of friendship (Krappmann, 1998). As human beings, we are cultural constructs and a friendship between two individuals is an encounter between two cultural identities. Actually, it was suggested that "friendship is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that must be studied in cultural and interdisciplinary context" (Keller, 2004, p. 10). Focusing on friendship in intercultural and interdisciplinary context is the objective of this dissertation.

Like culture, friendship has been defined in various ways. It seems that friendships are more difficult to define than other social relationships, such as kinship or working alliances. We could use a relatively long definition such as ''voluntary interdependence between two persons over time, that is intended to facilitate socio-emotional goals of the participants, and may involve varying types and degrees of companionship, intimacy, affection and mutual assistance'' (Hays, 1988, p.395). Even so, voluntariness may under some circumstances be more fictional than reality, like when the number of available people is limited or the social constraints governing friendship pattern rigid (Krappmann, 1998). For the present study, a short definition of friendship, like "a valuable, reciprocal, close relationship" (Devere, 2010, p. 25) suffices.

There is much less research on friendship than on culture and the existing studies are dispersed among various academic fields. I will now turn to the description of an instance

from the friendship, which will be followed by the discussion of selected studies on patterns of friendship and intercultural friendship.

Stories of friendship: "Garage of Peace"

By the end of 2011, I had stopped collecting stories, but I decided to make an exception for the following story, which provides more insight in Palestinian-Israeli relations, in the way in which honor, power and occupation intertwine, and in the societal gap that needed to be bridged in order to create this intercultural friendship. Bashar, owner of the "garage of peace", shared a rare instance in which a Jewish Israeli client touched his honor and triggered a wave of anger, which was expressed in the form of a political monologue. The reason for sharing the story conveyed not only Bashar's wish to be understood, but also his aspiration to be a good friend and contribute meaningfully to my success in my studies. In fact, the communication around this story turned out to be instrumental to the friendship. I will present the story as articulated, despite its wordiness, since I find it important to be loyal to the way it was told.

Almog, January 2012. We met at a petrol station with internet connection, since we had planned to buy online flight tickets for our next trip to Europe. Despite the urgency of our plans, Bashar found it more important to clarify to both my teacher and to me what honor meant for him and other Palestinian Bedouins. He dictated the following tale (in Hebrew, which I instantly translated to English).

"Once upon a time I was standing next to the garage. Then came someone Jewish. I worked on his car and he still had 200 NIS to pay. He did not have enough money with him, so I told him to come back the next day. The next day he came with his father. I had a good mood. His father was religious. So I finished the work and he did not give me the money. His father told me and asked: "what is 'garage of peace'?" I said: "that is a

garage in which Jews and Palestinians can meet together". He said "the peace you speak about is that you will not be in this country." I replied: "You think I open a garage in your home?" He: "No, this is a place for Jews. God gave this land to the Jews. You will only leave by force." I was so angry and said: "Listen, I know that I want to talk nonsense with you; so that's what I will do. Think that this is the opposite of what I believe. According to religion, you and we are from the same father. Now you have power, and we do not have power. Consider that we are the children of Hagar, the daughter of the Pharaoh, which he gave as a present to Abraham and from whom came Ismael. The story of the Arabs started that way. Let us see what you did and what we did.

We are by now 23 countries; the smallest is as least as big as Israel. We had the greatest emperor in the greatest time. We made a religion for more than a milliard of people. There are 56 Islam countries. During this time we talk about, where were you? Now you have one country, Israel. Let us think of this country. Israel has 51% desert, 22.5% occupied territories. In Israel, there are 5.5 million Jews and 5.5 million Arabs. More than half of the country's money goes to the army. Think what would have happened without American money; what would the army do? You think that God made all people in his shape, so that they can help the Jews, while you think they are not people – 'goyim'? Let us forget religion and talk about history. Everywhere you made problems. Everywhere they wanted to kill you; from Iran, to Nebuchadnezzar in Iraq, the Russians, the Germans and more and more. Did you not sit down once and think why this happens? There are now in the whole world 15 million Jews and the children of Hagar are 250 million.

As regarding the money, you think you have more money than the Arabs do. You forgot that the Arabs have below the desert money (petrol). There is enough to give all Arabs for 50 years $1000 or more, each month per person. You were strong when you stopped talking rubbish about religion. Therefore, you have a modern state. In the life of the

modern people, there is something you have not heard about, which is peace. Without that, we are like animals; everyone eats the other. If you think you are better than I am, and I think I am better than you there will be no peace. The garage of peace is part of my modern thinking and I think this is right – and I am a Bedouin." I then asked him to give me my money and not come back to the garage."

I was not sure how Bashar perceived his own attitude and asked for clarification. It turned out that Bashar was well aware of the one-sidedness of his words. He added: "For us, honor is so important that when someone touches your honor, you will go mad and you will talk nonsense like I did. That was the first and last time I spoke with someone Jewish like that, since I think it is not good (what I did). I wanted to tell him: Do not touch my honor even if I am not that strong. Our power stems from our honor." In the meantime, someone called and wanted to meet Bashar at the garage, so he had to leave. The flight tickets had to wait.

4.1   Patterns of friendship

Patterns or types of friendship were described in the literature already millennia ago. (Aristotle, 350 BC) differentiated between three types of friendship; the friendship of goodness, the friendship of pleasure, and the friendship of utility. More recent theorists have made diverse distinctions of friendships, like "instrumental and emotional" (Wolf, 1966/2004) or "inalienable, close, casual and expedient" (Paine, 1970), depending on the functions they fulfill. The functions of friendships, social institutions and family seem at times to overlap. It actually may be hard to differentiate between functions associated with friendship and those associated with kinship, since this may differ between cultures (Krappmann, 1998).

Friendship is a dynamic process and its patterns are related to a variety of variables. To start with, friendships are influenced by situational variables. Thus, residential stability enhances local friendships (Sampson, 1988), and life transitions lead to a lower number of friends, less contact with friends, and a lower likelihood of having a best friend (Flynn, 2007). Also individual characteristics, gender and culture influence friendships. It was proposed that "the social structural and psychological aspects of individual characteristics operate together to shape behavioral motifs which, in turn, influence friendship patterns" and that "the elements of this integrative framework and the relationships among them vary by structural and cultural context" (Adams & Blieszner, 1994, p. 163).

I will discuss some of the variables affecting friendships, giving special attention to the issues of challenges and opportunities in friendship, intimacy and attachment, and friendships between men.

Challenges and opportunities in friendship

Friendship may be described by their quality as well as by their conflict (Demir et al., 2007). Thus, maintenance behaviors of positivity, supportiveness, openness, and interaction were identified as key factors in maintaining friendship (Oswald et al., 2004). Nevertheless, many people maintain not only supportive, but also conflictual or ambivalent friendships. While supportive friendships are primarily maintained because of their positive aspects, ambivalent relationships were found to be primarily compelled by one's own internal demands, such as a feeling of commitment (Bushman & Holt-Lunstad, 2009).

Friendships are essential to human development and resilience and may have both positive and negative effects on mental and physical health (Bushman & Holt-Lunstad, 2009; Furman et al., 2009; Guroglu et al., 2008; Sias & Bartoo, 2007). Friendships were found to be an important source of happiness (Demir et al., 2007) and inversely related to the sense

of loneliness (Akhtar, 2009). Kernes & Kinnier (2008) studied psychologists and found that intimate relationships, family, and friendships brought the most personal meaning to their lives. Furthermore, friendships were found to diminish inter-group anxiety (Page-Gould et al., 2008).

The workplace is a field in which a friendship can be both a challenge and an opportunity. There are cultural differences pertaining to work performance. Individualists were found to perform better when working individually, while collectivists where found to perform better when in a group (Earley, 1993). Cultural differences were found to exist and create difficulties in communication also in virtual work tasks (Fujimoto et al., 2007; Staples & Zhao, 2006). One of these cultural differences pertains to the concept of time. Different perceptions of time are often an obstacle in intercultural business endeavors. Numerous studies on business negotiations relate to the difficulties in overcoming cultural differences in the perception of time (Adair & Brett, 2005; Alon & Brett, 2007; Brislin & Kim, 2003; Macduff, 2006).

As regarding business and friendship, it is commonplace in the West to think that they do not mix well and that one had better keep the two separated. However, many people in different societies make friends at work, and in recent years, this axiom has been questioned. Several studies pointed at the positive sides of business friendships (Ingram & Roberts, 2000; Spence, 2004). It was found that the importance of relationships and interdependence in collectivistic communities have direct impact on work values (Hartung et al., 2010), with those from a collectivistic culture expecting more socio-emotionally oriented relationships at work than those from a Western culture (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2000).

Intimacy and attachment

Since heterosexual marriage is losing its centrality in Western society, there is an increasing tendency of people to center their lives around friendship bonds and non-normative forms of intimacy and care (Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). Friendships vary in their degree of intimacy. Intimacy between same-sex friends was related to self-disclosure (Bowman, 2008). "Subjects high in intimacy motivation reported (a) more dyadic friendship episodes, (b) more self-disclosure among friends, (c) more listening, and (d) more concern for the well-being of friends than did those low in intimacy motivation" (McAdams et al., 1984, p. 828). Friendships though need to be mutual. Perceived partner responsiveness was found to mediate the relationships between self- disclosure and intimacy (Shelton et al., 2010).

In addition, general patterns of attachment influence friendships. Thus, secure attachment was found to enhance more intimacy in friendships (Bender, 1999; Grabill & Kerns, 2000). Securely attached friends rated each other as less hostile and anxious, approached potential conflicts more directly and felt closer to one another as a result of the conflict resolution process (Bender, 1999). Moreover, "individuals with fearful attachment styles showed significantly less hope, self-disclosure, and relationship satisfaction than individuals with secure, dismissing, or preoccupied attachment styles" (Welch & Houser, 2010, p. 351). Attachment is a universal phenomenon (Sagi, 1990), but still there appear to be differences in attachment styles across cultures (Reebye et al., n.d.; Schmitt, 2003).

Friendships between men

While women emphasize in their friendship talking and emotional sharing, men emphasize activities and doing things together (Caldwell & Peplau, 1982). The tendency of men to be relatively reluctant to engage in self-disclosure of personal information, as compared to

women, was documented widely (Bowman, 2008). Furthermore, sex role expectations appear to prohibit displays of emotional vulnerability among men. Males report less intimacy in same-sex friendship than do females, whereas femininity (among men) was positively associated with intimate friendship (Williams, 1985). Men who disclose more experienced their relationships with other men as closer (Bowman, 2008). It was found that "two masculine expectations: one behavioral (stoic), the other attitudinal (anti-feminine) influence different forms of intimacy between friends (instrumental, expressive)" (Migliaccio, 2009, p. 226). The most common explanation for this gender difference is that self-disclosure and intimacy may be seen as unmanly. One study showing indirect support for this idea found that emotional restraint and homophobia toward gay men provided the most explanatory power for gender effects on both intimacy and support in men's best (heterosexual) friendships (Bank & Hansford, 2000).

Men with high power motivation tend "to experience friendships in an agentic manner, understanding them in terms of opportunities to take on dominant, controlling, organizational roles" (McAdams et al., 1984, p. 835). This type of men was found to report more large-group interactions and less dyadic interactions than do men with low power motivation. Furthermore, power motivation among men was found to correlate with feelings of guilt and frustration within friendships (McAdams et al., 1984). As regarding tensions within same-sex friendships, it was suggested that tensions often associated with cross-sex friendships - such as jealousy, sexual attraction, variations in communication patterns, and attributions as to their "real" nature and purposes - occur in same-sex friendships as well (Arnold, 1995). In contrast, it was postulated that "strong emotional attachments between men could contribute not only to enriching men's emotional lives but also, and above all, to erasing sexism, racism, and homophobia from our societies" (Armengol-Carrera, 2009, p. 335). It thus seems that friendships among men could play a fundamental role in promoting greater social equality.

4.2 Intercultural friendship

Friendship were described as serving diverse individual and social purposes, and referred to as both interpersonal and cultural enactment (Rawlins, 1989). Although friendships in its various configurations link people and communities together in some sort of reciprocally beneficial association that forms societies (Devere, 2010), people have a tendency to look for "their own sort". For example, students in the United States were found to be racially homophilic and befriend people of the same race (Wimmer & Lewis, 2010). Close intercultural relationships are often perceived negatively and they receive significantly less social support. They are filled with contradictions, and they require giving up on individuality in order to bond into an entity and participate as such in society. Moreover, they involve ongoing dialectics between the personal and the societal aspects of the relationship, regarding the degree of openness both within the relationship and with the environment, and concerning autonomy as opposed to interdependency (Chen, 2002).

Following, I will relate to the development of intercultural friendship. This will be followed by a description of cultural differences pertaining to friendships, after which I will discuss specifically relationships between Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

The intercultural encounter is challenging on an emotional level, a cognitive level and a behavioral level (Ward et al., 2001). This seems true particularly when it comes to intercultural friendship. Nonetheless, if successful, intercultural friendship can play a beneficial social role. It was suggested that "nothing can be more helpful in changing misunderstandings and prejudices than building friendships with those viewed as 'other' " (Peterson, 2007, p. 81). Intercultural friendships were found to improve interracial and

intercultural attitudes (Aberson et al., 2004). For immigrants, intercultural friendships may actually become a bridge to acculturation (Akhtar, 2009).

Development of intercultural friendship

For a friendship to develop, some level of trust is required. There are cultural differences as regarding trust. Within a given culture there may be agreement on what or whom to trust, but as a result of different value systems both the meaning of trust and what and whom to trust varies as a function of culture (Choi & Kim, 2004), social group (Devos et al., 2002), and between democracies and non-democracies (Jamal, 2007). As a result, in intercultural relations there may be diverging expectations concerning intentions and behaviors, which are likely to reduce mutual trust (cf. Gibson & Manuel, 2003). Likewise, in intercultural friendship, building and keeping trust may be difficult.

A study on Japanese students in Australia found four factors that influenced the development of intercultural friendship: 1) frequent contact, 2) similarity of personal characteristics and age, 3) self-disclosure, and 4) receptivity of other nationals (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). Another study found four factors that influence the development of intercultural friendship, namely 1) targeted socializing, 2) cultural similarities, 3) cultural differences, and 4) prior intercultural experience. Additionally, it was found that issues of communication can both enable and hinder the development of intercultural friendships (Sias et al., 2008). It looks as if the factors found in both studies are partially complementary and partially overlapping.

Friendship between two people from different cultures is an encounter between two divergent value systems. For an intercultural friendship not only to develop but also to last, it will be required to somehow bridge these differences; something which needs to be an ongoing process throughout the friendship. This can happen – at least partly – through

value change. Values are difficult to change, but value change is possible and can be both automatic and effortful (Bardi & Goodwin, 2011).

In a study of 15 intercultural dyads of friends (Lee, 2008) three stages of intercultural friendship were found, with two transitional periods[10]. In the first stage, the *encounter*, the intercultural friends met for the first time. This was followed by a transitional period in which friends displayed various needs or interests motivating them to continue the friendship. In the second stage, friends tended to engage in frequent *interaction*. This was followed by a transitional period in which there was a turning point. The turning point marked the start of a third stage, of *involvement*. In this stage the emerging rules (e.g., confidentiality, mutuality) and roles (e.g., the peacemaker, the "lecturer") for both friends were much better understood in terms or what is appropriate or inappropriate to be done. The stages found in this study were similar to those found for friends of the same culture, but the transition periods were never studied among same culture friends. In an earlier study on these same intercultural friendship dyads "seven types of activities were identified: (1) positivities/providing assistance; (2) rituals, activities, rules, and roles; (3) self-disclosure; (4) networking; (5) exploring cultures and languages; (6) emphasizing similarities and exploring differences; and (7) conflict/conflict management" (Lee, 2006, p. 3)

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[10]   In this study, dyads of intercultural friends at a U.S. Midwestern University were interviewed. Interestingly, the researcher succeeded to attract nine same-gender female dyads, five cross-gender dyads and only one dyad of two males. It is unclear if this could be an indication that there are less intercultural friendships between men or if men are less willing to talk about their (intercultural) friendship with a stranger.

Cultural differences in friendship

There is much similarity in the notion of friendship in different cultures, but at the same time friendships are influenced by their socio-cultural context (Devere, 2010). "Collectivists were more likely than individualists to report both attachment anxiety and avoidance, and anxiety and avoidance were both related to basing self-esteem on appearance and social support" (Cheng & Kwan, 2008, p. 509). Furthermore, in individualistic countries appreciation of friendships is more readily expressed verbally, whereas in collectivistic countries this often happens primarily nonverbally (Bello et al., 2010).

There seem to be cultural differences pertaining to intimacy in friendship (Weinberg, 2003). Findings from a study on Arab Israeli adolescents suggested that traditional societies might foster specific characteristics of intimate friendship. Moreover, among these adolescents intimacy was found to be related to parenting styles (Sharabany et al., 2008). It seems that intimacy is not necessarily based on self-disclosure. Kaplan (2006) described emotions between Israeli men in the light of the nationalism present in Israeli culture, and referred to the central role of the Israeli army when it comes to creating friendships between men. He depicted two models of friendship among men. The first model is the "cool" relationship, underscoring sociability and adventure seeking, involving nonverbal modes of communication and physical support. The other model is the "intellectual" relationship, stressing the exchange of ideas and soul talk (Kaplan, 2007).

Though this may not always be true, friendships in the developed (Western) world tend to be associated with pleasure, and the idea that people enjoy each other's company. It was claimed that friendship based on utility, dependent on what each side can do for the other, may be more readily viewed as exploitation and not as friendship (Joubran & Schwartz, 2007). Instrumental friendship seems more common in Third World cultures. Friendships

of goodness, based on the idea of loving each other unconditionally and doing good to one another tends to be seen mostly as an ideal.

Let us now consider some of the dissimilarities found between specific national cultures, taking into account that comparing national cultures may do injustice to the variety of cultural differences we could find within each national culture. I will provide a few illustrations. One study found that Jewish Israeli adolescents tended to emphasize control of and conformity to friends less than Bedouin adolescents (Elbedour et al., 1997). In Ghana friendships were perceived to have a more practical base and friends tended to be more interdependent than is common in the United States (Adams & Plaut, 2003). An in-depth study on five German students in the United States found that all struggled with difficulties in friendships with Americans. Hardships were found especially in regard to the diverse interpretation of the word "friend" and divergent attitudes toward public and private spheres (Gareis, 2000). Another study found that Poles tended to experience their friendships as less intimate and less intense than North-Americans (Rybak & McAndrew, 2006). Generalizing in this respect across North-America may be hazardous, since there are variations in value orientations also between different parts of the country. Thus, one aspect affecting friendship is collectivism, and the tendency to collectivism was found to be stronger in the South of the Unites States than in other parts (Vandello & Cohen, 1999). Furthermore, in one study, which examined the association between racial/ethnic homogeneity and subjective well-being among American college students, researchers found that among American students of European origin homogeneity of friendship networks on Facebook was found to be related to subjective well-being, but this was not so for American students of other origin (Seder & Oishi, 2009).

Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs

Friendships are influenced by their political context, which in this study is a situation of oppression by the Israeli authorities of Palestinians. Oppression occurs within Israel, but much more in the Palestinian Authority. Most of the Israeli towns and villages are either Jewish or Arab, but there are some mixed towns. One study found that Jews and Arabs living door to door in the town of Acre had positive relationships, but retained some social distance and no acculturation between the two groups took place (Deutsch, 1985). This was in the early eighties. Since then times have changed. There was a first and a second Intifada, and tension between Jews and Arabs rose. Arabs and Jews within Israel are deeply divided and live segregated lives. Their relations seem to have worsened since 1995 and have become more violent (Smooha, 2011). Furthermore, stigmatization and racism became part of the public discourse in Israel and normative among Jews versus Palestinians (Herzog et al., 2008; Mizrachi & Herzog, 2011; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2004).

One major obstacle in the relationships between Jews and Palestinians is the mutual lack of trust. "Jewish Israelis tend to regard Palestinian Arabs, including those who are citizens of the state of Israel, as threatening and malicious" (Rabinowitz, 1992, p. 517). This threat may be perceived as one or more of the following: a permanent existential threat, the realistic threat from Palestinians, the threat to Jewish hegemony in the State of Israel, and/or the threat to the moral worth of the Jews' national identity (Sonnenschein et al., 2010). The Palestinian-Israeli conflict, originally a native-settler conflict, was described as one of the most durable and intractable conflicts since World War II (Mi'Ari, 1999). Apart from the realistic aspects of the conflict, also unconscious processes resulting from socio-political trauma seem to keep the different sides of the conflict apart (Brenner, 2009; Shalit, 1994; Weinberg & Weishut, 2011). Not surprisingly, friendships between Jewish Israelis and Arabs were described as particularly complicated and vulnerable (Baum, 2010), and even as "befriending the enemy" (Joubran & Schwartz, 2007).

Another obstacle in relationships between Israelis and Palestinians, albeit smaller, is the issue of language of communication. Hebrew is the dominant language in all domains of life in Israel. For Israeli Palestinians, Hebrew is a second language that is compulsory in the school curriculum. Lack of fluency in Hebrew makes it for Palestinians difficult to function effectively outside Palestinian towns and villages (Amara, 2007). By contrast, in the Palestinian Authority the dominant language is Arabic and Hebrew is not a compulsory language. For Palestinians, whether living in Israel or in the Palestinian Authority, working in Israel and learning Hebrew may be a form of empowerment, whereas resistance to speaking Hebrew may be a form of resistance to Israeli oppression (cf. Rahman, 2001).

There seems to be a social norm against deep connections between Israeli Jews and Arabs. Befriending Palestinians more than in a distant friendship is for many Israelis something unthinkable. This could be explained by general group dynamics. Groups expect from their members uniformity and loyalty to group norms. It is also expected that they attempt to protect their integrity and effectiveness when confronted with deviant behavior (Festinger, 1950). Becoming closely involved with and befriending people from another culture (an out-group) may be viewed as out of the ordinary, and it even could be considered as threatening the group identity. This may be especially so if the friendship is with "the enemy", as Palestinians are often viewed by Israelis and vice versa. Ways to restore the group equilibrium include putting pressure on the group member to restore conformity, through persuasion or even punishment. Another option to reduce group dissonance would be rejection of the deviate, either through not inviting him back to the group or through psychological isolation. A tough reaction is more likely to happen when the deviant person is of high status in the group and/or the deviant behavior interferes with central group goals (Wiggins et al., 1965). A third - and more hopeful - option would be that the deviant

behavior influences and creates a change in the group. Also this is more likely to happen when the deviate is of high status in the group (Maoz, 2000b).

The difficulties in creating dialogue between Arabs and Israeli Jews seem immense (Berman et al., 2000; Duek, 2009). In recent years a large number of studies was performed on projects enhancing Arab-Israeli dialogue (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Zelniker, 2004), many of these among adolescents (Hammack, 2011; Hammack, 2006; Maoz, 2000b; Moore, 1968; Morray & Liang, 2005) and students (Dessel & Ali, 2012; Hager *et al.*, 2011; Khuri, 2004; Oyserman, 1993; Sonnenschein et al., 2010). Despite motivation to participate in a Jewish Israeli -Palestinian coexistence program, narratives of Jewish youths were found to reproduce conditions of conflict (Hammack, 2009).

As described above, there is a large power differential between the Jews and the Palestinians and in intergroup encounters Jews are usually perceived as dominant. Difficulties in solving conflict were related to a combination of unfavorable attitudes, oppressive behavior and an institutional context that provides Israeli Jews with more rights than Israeli Arabs and Palestinians (Darweish, 2010). Nevertheless, one study on power relations found that Palestinians did assert minority influence on the dialogue (Maoz, 2000a). Another study of students found that "although social relations between Arab students and Jewish students are very limited, the readiness of Arab students for professional and social relations with Jewish students is greater than the perceived readiness of Jewish students for social relations with Arab students" (Diab & Mi'ari, 2007, p. 427). Even if there is a willingness to communicate, like in large group encounters at conferences, it remains highly difficult for both sides to listen to and understand one another (Weinberg & Weishut, 2011). There is one autobiographical study describing the friendship between a Palestinian Muslim woman and an Israeli Jewish man, which started at such a conference. It successfully attempted to reconcile individual friendship with the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and suggested that "friendships can have a practical application in changing social and political structures in an effort to resolve the underlying conflict" (Joubran & Schwartz, 2007, p. 340).

5. The Bedouins

We may expect readers of these lines to be relatively acquainted with Euro-American cultures, but much less with Bedouin life and culture. Bedouin culture provides part of the context of this friendship and Bashar's cultural background. Therefore, I will supply the reader with some insights in central aspects of Bedouin life and culture. This chapter will start with information on the demography of the Bedouins; in general, and specifically concerning the Bedouins in Israel. It will continue with a description of the Jahalin Bedouins, the Palestinian Bedouins living near Jerusalem. Since for the Bedouins, demography is tightly interwoven with geography, I will relate to issues concerning geography in both of these parts. The chapter will finish with a description of leadership within the Bedouin community, while referring to Bashar's position as sheikh in the Jahalin tribe. First, I have a story.

Stories of friendship: Settling a theft

I found it fascinating to listen to Bashar's stories about the many Bedouin sulha's (peacemaking practices) that he attended either as facilitator or as participant. My listening to stories became a substantial element in our friendship. I will include here an incident in which I had no part other than being a curious and attentive listener to its story. The story exemplifies many of the ideas that will be developed subsequently.

Anata, March 2009. I was supposed to visit Bashar, but during that day he repeatedly postponed our meeting to a later time. Afterward he explained and shared - for me - a thrilling experience. He had just finished a sulha over the theft of some bronze utensils by a member of one of the Bedouin families, from the local church that was taken care of by a Christian organization. This incident could have resulted in a longstanding dispute between the Bedouin community and the local Palestinians, but it was solved peacefully.

The sulha was the end of a process of negotiation, and attended by representatives from the organization and from the Bedouin families, including the whole council of families. Altogether, there were about sixty men. Bashar functioned as mediator. To add force behind the need to solve the issue, he had brought along his heavy-built friend and helper, Dahud. The different parties sat together and finalized the agreement. The representatives of the organization had threatened to go to the police, something perceived as particularly shameful for the Bedouin community. Therefore, the family was eager to return the utensils. Eventually, an agreement was signed in which a large sum of money would be given to the church in case a similar incident would repeat itself. They drank coffee and as part of the arrangement, the guests were served a feast, paid for by the alleged suspect.

5.1   Demography

The Bedouins are originally an ethnic group of Arab tribal nomads. Even so, the term "Bedouin" is changing from denoting a way of life in the past to marking an identity today. The Bedouins from Algeria to Saudi Arabia go through socioeconomic and sociopolitical change, which include colonial impacts, commercialization of pastoral production, occupational change, and settling (Cole, 2003).

The Bedouins have a culture that was often stereotyped, as being essentially nomadic, despite the fact that many Bedouins live sedentary lives. Throughout the years, attitudes toward Bedouins have been ambivalent. The Bedouins where at times idealized, with Arabic language and Arab identity having their roots in Bedouin life. At other times Bedouins were denigrated, because of the arduousness of their life, simplicity and roughness of character, and aspects of their religious and moral ideas (Leder, 2005). The Bedouins tend to live according to a traditional value pattern, with emphasis on survival; cf. value dimensions by Inglehart (2006). For the Bedouins, the individual seems to be

embedded in collectivity, with responsible behavior being achieved through hierarchy
(instead of egalitarianism), whereas in their relationship with the environment emphasis
seems to be on harmony (over mastery); cf. value dimensions by Schwartz (2011). For the
Bedouins, the honor code is central both in cultural ideology as for the individual (Abu-
Lughod, 1985). Among the Bedouins, as among many traditional cultures, the practice of
blood vengeance still exists, despite the fact that it is illegal in most countries of the world
(Al-Krenawi & Graham, 1997).

In many regions, there have been clashes between the Bedouins and the local authorities
over issues of land and resources. It was suggested that "only seldom can pastoral nomads
and state governments reach an agreement over land issues and resource utilization. While
governments attempt to impose their control over nomads, the latter wish to avoid it by all
means. The opposing forces stem from conflicting ideologies and opposing forms of space
production" (Meir, 1988, p. 251).

The Bedouins in Israel

Bedouins from various tribes came to the Negev desert (now Southern Israel) from the
Arabian Peninsula, and some of them arrived there before the expansion of Islam in the 7th
century (Abu-Rabia, 1994). In the late 1940's, there were about 100.000 Bedouins and 95
tribes in the Negev. (Bedouins also lived in the Galilee area in the north of Israel.) After
the establishment of the State of Israel, the Israeli authorities started to relocate the
Bedouins, leaving in the Negev only about 13.000 by 1955. During the following years the
Bedouins were forced to settle down in allocated towns and villages, which created major
changes in lifestyle (Falah, 1985). Still, many Bedouin families live from raising flock, a
practice found to be a cohesive factor in the Bedouin family (Samovar et al., 2009).

Bedouin society is a male dominated society. Several researchers described the hardships of the Bedouins in Israel, especially from a gender perspective, in the fields of health care (Al-Krenawi, 1996); Stavi et al., 2007), social work (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 1997) and education (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2007; Lyons, 2010; Pessate-Schubert, 2003. They all pointed at the highly delicate position of Bedouin women. Polygyny among Israeli Bedouins is common, while some families seem to cope better with this conflictual situation than others (Al-Krenawi & Slonim-Nevo, 2008); Slonim-Nevo & Al-Krenawi, 2006).

The struggle of the Israeli Bedouins lasts until the current times. Bedouins in Israel continue to be marginalized, by an inclination derived from nomadic social and political structure, by their positioning vis-à-vis the competing Jewish and Palestinian nationalities, and by their economic position (Jakubowska, 2000). "Bedouin resistance to Israeli land and settlement policies began to mark the Bedouin increasingly as a 'dangerous population'. As a result, the interest in preserving the Bedouins' cultural specificity gave way to a new emphasis on the need to modernize the Bedouins" (Belge, 2009), p. 82. "Bedouin identity" remains strong despite the changes in lifestyle, but it is slowly making place for two different identities, that of the Arab/Palestinian/Muslim and that of the Bedouin/Israeli (Dinero, 2004). The case of the unrecognized villages of the Bedouins in the Negev desert in Southern Israel has recently been in the news, because of forced eviction and recurring destruction of their property by Israeli Authorities (Amnesty International, 2010a).

5.2   The Jahalin tribe

In the early 1950's the Jahalin tribe ("jahal" the name in Arabic for a small child who does not know yet) was relocated from Tel Arad in Southern Israel to the West Bank, or more

specific, to the Judean desert, near Jerusalem. This area is now part of the Palestinian Authority, partially under Israeli control and partially under joined Israeli-Palestinian control. Many of the Jahalin Bedouins integrated in Palestinian villages and towns (such as AlEizariya), while others are dispersed in over thirty communities, the smallest of less than 60 persons and the biggest of up to 250 (See

Figure 4: West Bank Bedouin - Jerusalem Area (United Nations, 2007))[11]. Their total number is estimated to be around 22,000 (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, March 14, 2009).

After moving to the Jerusalem area, they initially continued to live in tents and tin buildings, but more and more Bedouins started to build houses. Therefore, it is possible to see next to each other villas and tents. Though mostly the conditions of living are relatively primitive, many adult men have cellular phones, many families have television, and some even have internet. They originally lived from farming, and raising sheep and goats, but during the years, many switched to other kinds of work.

A major reason for this change in way of living was the establishment of the Ma'ale Adummim settlement, which was founded in 1975 and expanded vastly since 1982 (Shalev, 2009). For the building of this major Israeli settlement some Bedouins were once more evacuated (and compensated so they could build houses) and others were limited in their mobility because of the separation wall. Throughout the last decades, the Israeli authorities have created several building plans for the area (named E-1) between Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adummim. Over two thousand of the Jahalin Bedouins remain in danger of being evacuated in order to make room for the realization of these plans (Shalev, 2009;

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[11]   The contours of the area and the names on the map may not be clear, but these are of less importance.

The intent of the map is to show the dispersion of these tiny villages (the differently sized black dots).

Amnesty International, 2012; United Nations, 2011a) (See Figure 5: Bedouin Relocation - Jerusalem Area (United Nations, 2011a)). There have been several court cases between the Jahalin Bedouins, supported by human rights organizations, and Israeli authorities in order to prevent their evacuation and demolition of their property. In recent years, one of the Jahalin primary schools has drawn international attention as result of the threats by Israeli authorities to demolish it (Amnesty International, 2010b; Greenberg, 2010; Hass, 2012; Pely, 2009).

Figure 4: West Bank Bedouin - Jerusalem Area (United Nations, 2007)

Figure 5: Bedouin Relocation - Jerusalem Area (United Nations, 2011a)

Tribal structure

Bedouin families are organized in a patriarchal and occasionally polygamous structure (Abu-Rabia, 1994). The extended family is central in Bedouin society; it affects all aspects of life. Families decide for individuals on what to do next and disputes between individuals are settled through their families. The elders of the extended family are highly honored and family stories are told from generation to generation. References to family life will be made throughout the discussion of the friendship between Bashar and me.

The Jahalin Bedouin tribe, to which Bashar belongs, is part of the tribal confederation Howeitat, and divided into three clans: Slamat, Abudahuck and Sraea. Each clan consists of several descent groups (See
Figure 6: Structure of the Jahalin Bedouin tribe) (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, March 1, 2011).
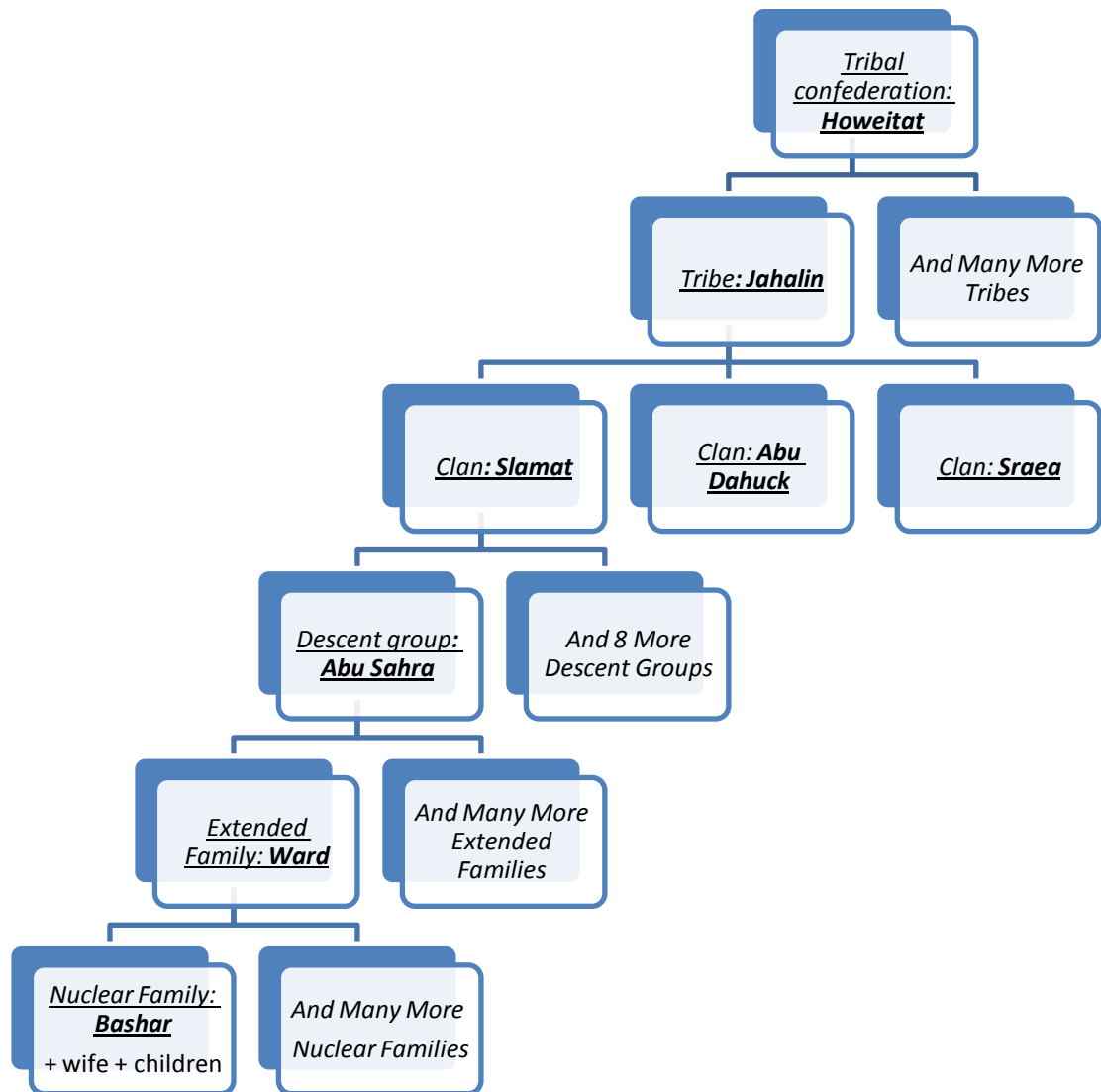
Figure 6: Structure of the Jahalin Bedouin tribe

5.3   Bedouin leadership

For over a millennium, the Bedouins follow their sheikhs. Sheikhs are the elderly, the wise men within the Bedouin tribes, and often the heads of the families. The sheikh takes a leadership role in the Jahalin community and his position is highly honored, not only by Bedouins but also by other Palestinians. The sheikh functions as counselor and advisor for individuals, and as judge, mediator and sometimes police officer in disputes between families and clans. Until recently, each clan could have several sheikhs and "sheikh" was not an official title.

From a governmental position, this situation was both inefficient and created tension between the families. Therefore, the Palestinian Authorities started a change toward democratization of the system. They created a position of "elected" sheikh. Apart from the previously mentioned functions, the elected sheikh became also the contact person for the Palestinian Authorities. In the present situation, the former type of sheikh continues to exist, next to the "new" sheikh. The sheikhs act in line with Bedouin law (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, March 14, 2009). Thus, in the Palestinian Authority three legal systems now operate side by side, which are the tribal (Bedouin) law, Islamic law, and statutory law (Welchman, 2009). Following, I will expand on the process of democratization in Bedouin society, after which I will describe in short the - in the Arab world widely used - conflict resolution process, named "sulha".

Democratization

In the Jahalin tribe in the Jerusalem area there are circa 3.000 Bedouins with voting rights; these are the men from the age of 18. Women are not allowed to participate in voting, nor can they be elected. The members of each of the descent groups in the Jahalin tribe elect a representative for the council of families. The two descent groups that are least strong (as

based on their property, wealth, level of education, size and other aspects of status) do not have their own representative, whereas the two strongest descent groups have two representatives each. The council then chooses among itself the next sheikh. The task of the council members is to support the sheikh and to solve issues that occur within their own family. The sheikh receives a modest salary from the Palestinian Authority, which is barely enough to cover the basic costs of living.

In the first Jahalin council elections, in 2008, about 1.200 men participated, who elected a council of 11. The sheikh and the council were supposed to stay in office for two years, but the Palestinian Authorities have not held elections since. The council nominated a woman, to consult on women-related affairs; a matter perceived as a progressive step in the community. For the sake of family honor, this woman cannot participate in the council's gatherings. Bashar is one of the two representatives of the strongest descent groups, Abu Sahra, which is one of the nine descent groups in the Slamat clan. This had put him in a good position to be elected sheikh. He also is one of the few representatives on the council who has an academic degree, speaks both Hebrew and some English, besides Arabic, and who is acquainted with the world of computers. The "vice-sheikh" is the other Abu Sahra representative. It needs to be noted that this system may be considered political, but that the Jahalin Bedouins affiliate ideologically neither with a certain nation, nor with a particular political party. They may support particular governments, parties or political moves for pragmatic reasons, which is principally in order to receive backing for their nomadic lifestyle. One of the tasks of the sheikh is to conduct the "sulha" (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, March 14, 2009).

The sulha

The sulha is a conflict resolution process between the respective families of a victim and a perpetrator, based on cooperation, negotiation and compromise (Lang, 2002). Sulha is the

traditional Middle-Eastern, inter- and intra-communal, dispute management-resolution process. The root of the name comes from "sulh" - Peacemaking in Arabic. The process predates Islam by about 400 years, and is practiced today, with variations, across the Middle East, in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Occupied Territories, the Arabian Peninsula, and in many other Muslim countries (Sulha Research Center, 2009). The sheikh who conducts the sulha needs to be from a family of standing, with a reputation as wise and respected, and someone who "has a say". At the sulha, each family has a representative (from the family or someone else) who speaks for the family. At the end of the sulha, an agreement is written (Bashar Abu Sahra, personal communication, May 27, 2011). Central in the sulha process is the concept of "honor" (Pely, 2010). In the formal process of the sulha only men participate, but women often have substantial informal influence behind the scene (Pely, 2011). The Palestinian sulha system is similar to the system in other countries in the region, but in the wake of the transformations in Palestinian reality, it developed some peculiarities (Fares et al., 2006). The sulha is a legal system, and sulha agreements are taken into account - at least to some extent - in situations in which a case reaches an Israeli court (Tsafrir, 2006). It was suggested that we may learn from the system of sulha to settle agreements not only in family conflict but also in other fields, including international negotiations (Gellman & Vuinovich, 2008)

PART III:
FOUR CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

In Part I, I explained the topical area, relevance and scope of the study. After that, I proposed the methodology for this study. In Part II, I presented a literature study on intercultural issues and friendship, and also provided background information on the life of the Jahalin Bedouins. Part III will continue with the discussion of Hofstede's four cultural dimensions: individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and power distance. Each of the dimensions will be dealt with in a separate chapter, whereas each chapter will relate to a series of topics exemplifying the cultural differences for this dimension. Each topic will include an illustration of an intercultural situation ("story of friendship"), a discussion of several of its aspects, and my personal experience of the topic. Each chapter will finish with a general discussion of my experience of the cultural dimension discussed in that chapter. Two of the four chapters will also include a story of friendship that summarizes the various topics discussed. Part IV will provide a conclusion on the challenges and opportunities in friendship across cultures, and refer to implications for personal growth and social justice.

Stories of friendship

The following chapters include about twenty more stories and provide in addition numerous examples of events that occurred throughout the friendship. Clearly, events do not occur according to chapters and cultural dimensions are interlinked. Therefore, in any illustration it will be possible to discern a variety of themes and topics. Many topics are related to more than one dimension. For instance, the topic "meals and table manners" was placed in the chapter "individualism versus collectivism", though it is much related also to

uncertainty avoidance. The opposite is true for the topic "mine and yours", which was placed in the chapter on "uncertainty avoidance" though from a content-analysis perspective it would belong in the field of individualism/collectivism. Furthermore, some of the stories of friendship could have easily been used as examples of other cultural dimensions. The choice concerning the placement of topics was based on the challenges and the opportunities as I experienced them within the realm of the friendship, more than on their anthropological content. Still, it is impossible to dissect a friendship into independent pieces and it thus is inevitable that there will be a recurrence of similar themes throughout the chapters to come.

6. Individualism versus Collectivism

> The high side of this dimension, called Individualism, can be defined as a
> preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are
> expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. Its
> opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework
> in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a
> particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning
> loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether
> people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "we." (Hofstede, n.d. b)

On the scale for individualism, a higher score indicates a country more inclined to

individualism. The Netherlands ranked 4/5 on this scale out of 53 countries and regions; to

say it is among those countries that value individualism most. Only the United States,

Australia and Great Britain ranked higher. Israel ranked 19, which is still above the world

average. The Arab countries ranked 26/27, somewhat below the world average, and

tending to collectivism (Hofstede, 2001). We may postulate that the Bedouins, living a

rural life tend more to collectivism than the average person in the Arab world does. It

needs to be noted that the difference on this scale between the Netherlands and the Arab

countries is very large (See Figure 7: Individualism scores, based on Hofstede (2001)).

Nevertheless, according to Hofstede the populations of many countries – especially Latin

American, African and Asian countries - are still more inclined to collectivism than

measured in the Arab countries.
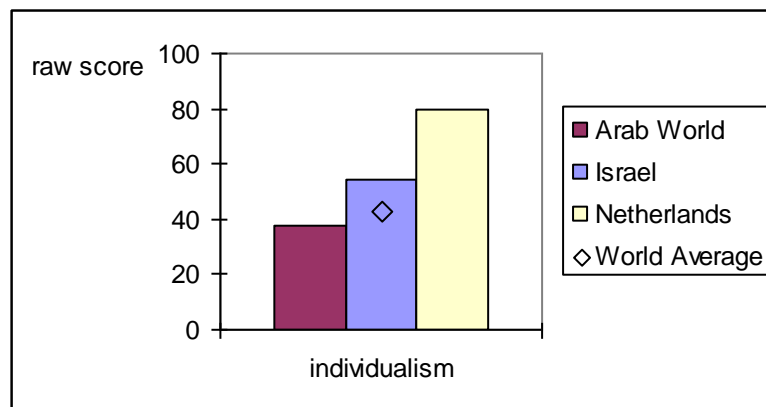
Figure 7: Individualism scores, based on Hofstede (2001)

The differences in value orientation as regarding individualism and collectivism may express themselves in many aspects of the friendship. Following, I will provide examples for four of these aspects, namely perceptions of the friendship itself, getting acquainted, meals and other celebrations, and work attitudes. After that, I will try to provide some insight in the socio-political (collective) context of our friendship.

6.1   Perceptions of friendship

The story below demonstrates in a nutshell many of the intercultural differences to be discussed later on. Specifically, we can see here the different cultural dimensions: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity/femininity. However, at this point I will only relate to the question of friendship in general, to the issue of togetherness, and to variations in perceptions of matters being either public or private.

Stories of friendship: The netstick [12]

Jerusalem, Friday night, December, 2010. At night, Bashar and I are supposed to meet so that he can give me a netstick. The next day my doctorate student cohort will have a workshop and the netstick will allow a student from Amsterdam to participate through Skype.

9.45 PM   I just finished my Shabbat dinner with my relatives, take off my yarmulke and call Bashar from my car. I want to make sure that we will meet and fix a meeting place. He tells me that he wants to come over to Jerusalem. I am very excited. It is the first time in about half a year that he will come and see me in Jerusalem. We have lots to talk about and are hardly ever in private. I am also highly fearful. I recall that he once came to me by surprise. When I opened the door, he was standing there with his shirt torn and covered with blood. He got stuck in the barbed wire while crossing the separation wall between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. I also recall that about a month ago someone was shot dead while traversing the wall nearby the place where he intends to cross. He wants to be sure that he will be able to cross the wall tonight and will call me back in about a quarter of an hour.

10.30 PM   Bashar calls and tells me that he and Akram, his partner in the garage, have crossed the wall and are waiting for me to come and fetch them. They have some things to do. I am highly upset. I thought that he wanted to come and see me. Furthermore, I was already arrested once for driving him in my car in Israel. I take a huge risk, which I was willing to take to be with him, but not necessarily for two people who want to do some errands. I wonder why he did not give me this information before, and withheld from me

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[12] A "netstick" is a portable device for the use of internet that can be plugged into any personal computer or laptop.

the opportunity to make up my mind freely. Now there is a sense of urgency. It is only minutes driving from where I live. I feel that I cannot just leave them standing there, and get in my car.

10.45 PM   In the car, Bashar tells me that Suleiman got himself into trouble with Bedouins in the town of Lod. (Suleiman is the brother of Abdalla, a mutual friend of us. Both Suleiman and Abdalla are refugees and fled to Israel from Sudan.) The incident created tension between the local Bedouin and Sudanese communities. Bashar is concerned and since he is both a good friend of Abdalla and a person of standing among the Bedouins, he wants to go there to try to settle the issue between the two communities. Jaffer, the taxi-driver, is supposed to come and fetch them from my place.

11.00 PM   We sit down in my living room and have something to drink. I make sure to get the netstick.

11.30 PM   After a few calls, it turns out that Jaffer did not know anything about the whole issue and is not available. Bashar gets up and says: "Get ready, we're going". I realize that for him a communal issue has higher prioritization than personal issues. I also know that he does not differentiate in the same way I do between day and night. Furthermore, I understand that it is obvious to him that I will take them to the neighboring town. It is not that far; the drive will be no more than three quarters of an hour. Again, there is the issue of risk. We could get arrested. Apart from that, this is usually not a time at which I go out; certainly not if I have a workshop on the morning of the next day. I say wait: "Let's discuss this". Nevertheless, things are rather obvious. I will take them.

00.10 AM   During my years of acquaintance with Bashar, I got accustomed to the idea that one can go to another town to meet someone without having an address. We ask

around, and I eventually drop them at the central bus station. Abdalla is supposed to live not far. They go and look for him by foot, with help of a cellular phone. They seemingly do not expect me to stay. I wonder if the reason is language, since they all speak Arabic, and my Arabic is not more than basic. Or, am I not masculine enough? There could be fighting. Do they want to protect me, or would I be experienced as a burden? Or, do they feel they are a burden on me? I say goodbye and beg them to be careful. They thank me for taking them to Lod.

After my workshop, the next day, I go back to fetch them. From what I understand, it looks as if Bashar more or less managed to settle the dispute. I return the netstick, which had been very helpful, and take them home.

Postscript: Bashar himself was upset with the way in which I wrote this story, leaving out many of the things that seemed important to him. Days later, he added the following information. He did not at all intend to bring Akram along. Akram was supposed to help him to get over the wall, but suddenly wanted to join. Bashar did not feel comfortable saying no. He truly intended to come and see me, but on his way, he received a call that forced him to change his plans. He realized at the time that I would be upset, but did not want to give me the new and disturbing info in advance, and preferred to tell me face to face. He did not have the time to figure out how to get to Lod. Although telling people what to do is his general attitude, Bashar thought it was self-evident that I could refuse to take them, if I did not agree. He did not rely on me taking them and if I had refused, he would have thought of another way. Nonetheless, knowing me, he expected that I would understand the situation and help. Arriving in Lod, he did not want to involve me in the situation, considering it may become dangerous and that there may be fighting.

Only about a month later, he told me that the incident that created the upheaval was that Suleiman, while being drunk, had approached a Bedouin girl and expressed obscenities. This was an issue of blood and honor for her family, and for Lod's Bedouin community as a whole. The Bedouins wanted revenge and Abdalla feared leaving his home. The Bedouins had beaten up Suleiman and injured him. Moreover, they kept him as hostage and threatened to kill him. Bashar believed that they would realize their threat in order to restore their honor. As a sheikh himself, he went to the sheikh of the Bedouins in Lod in the hope he could make him change the minds of Suleiman's captors. The sheikh had known Bashar's father. They drank coffee and Bashar asked the sheikh to intervene. Initially, he refused. Bashar went back and forth between the different parties. In an attempt to get Suleiman out of the hands of his captors, he suggested that they hand over Suleiman to the Sudanese and that his brother, Abdalla, will kill him by himself, but this was refused. They were willing to put Suleiman on a plane back to Sudan. Abdalla had to make a very difficult and painful decision, whether to return Suleiman to Sudan. They had fled their home country almost a decade before. Leaving Suleiman in the hands of his captors was a huge risk, so he had no real choice. The Bedouins bought a ticket and brought Suleiman to the airport, after which his whereabouts were lost. Over a year later, I learned that he had opened a tire-shop somewhere in Sudan.

Who is a friend?

I would consider a friend the person, who will lend a listening ear, is emotionally available for me and with whom I enjoy spending my free time. Having been raised in an individualistic environment, self-disclosure is for me an essential part of close relationships, (cf. Chen, 2002). I need people around me with whom I feel intimate and with whom I can share my life experiences, both the pleasant ones and the unpleasant ones. Otherwise, I am rather self-sufficient. I do usually not expect from friends to assist me in concrete ways or do me favors. For instance, if I needed money, I would go to the

bank; if I needed to move apartments, I would rent a moving company. In Bedouin life, the friend is the person on whom you can count that he will be there to support you instrumentally, be it financially, or otherwise. For instance, Bashar would become personally involved – possibly interfering in the situation - when someone had done injustice to a friend of his, or he would send cash money with a messenger to a friend in Jordan to help the latter pay for his wedding. For the Palestinian Bedouins instrumental assistance is often critical, since life is a battle for resources and full of dangers.

The friendship with Bashar is in my view an asymmetric one. I consider him a significant other in the sense that he has great importance to my life and well-being. I find it important to share with him things that affect me, hear about his life and assist where I can. Bashar considers me a very good friend; he is concerned about me and involves me in his life more than he does with any other friend. As he puts it, we are opposites: like black and white in the Chinese symbol – taijitu - of yin and yang. We see things differently and complement each other. He is closer to nature and simple life, whereas I am more into the modern world. Bashar rarely initiates talking about his life and hardly feels the need to share events he goes through. Regularly I would find out about essential things in his life, either by incident or through my questions. He does rely on me for a range of instrumental issues, like checking out or buying things through the internet, doing errands in Israel, and reminding him of things to be done. He also assures that he will be there for me in case of need, as he was for our friend Abdalla, in the event described above. On that day, he left in the middle what he was doing, crossed the border and took personal physical risks to come and assist, thus proving his friendship, something I believe relatively few Euro-American men would be willing to do for their friends.

Togetherness

In Bedouin life, relationships with family and friends are of utmost importance. Bashar experiences life in a community or group spirit. He much enjoys the togetherness of being in a group and is hardly ever alone. Much of his life is lived outside and friends are considered those who surround him, many of them being members of his extended family. He tends to meet friends on the street, at his brother's gas station or recently in the garage. He meets them unplanned, spontaneously, and often more than one person at a time – who happens to be there. He will spend an extensive amount of time if there is something to examine and solve together (some kind of business deal or a matter requesting a solution), but he will usually not spend much time in case the relationship goes smoothly, if there is no issue to work on, or with friends who are out of sight. He has no problem aggravating his friends, but he will invest much time and energy if this caused trouble in the relationship. His investment in relationships is an issue to which I will return later, since it affects many parts of life.

I am very different from Bashar when it comes to togetherness in friendship. I consider myself a "not-that-social" person; though I have become more social during the years, I much enjoy being on my own. I have many friends, but am more selective than Bashar with whom to consider a friend. I tend to meet my friends in private, one-on-one or with partners, at their homes or sometimes in a restaurant. My meetings with friends are usually planned and for limited periods. I invest in relationships with both close and distant friends on an ongoing base, but largely virtually, through email, Facebook or Skype. More than Bashar, I try to be considerate in relationships and not to aggravate people, in order to prevent any problems.

There is also a great difference between the two of us as far as it concerns the togetherness of our respective original families. Bashar tries to keep his nine siblings on a "safe"

distance, because he does not like their scrutiny and interference in his life. Nonetheless, several of them live in adjacent houses and are quite aware of his actions and engaged. Abu Omar, one of his brothers, is involved in his life more than the others are. They are in touch almost daily. His mother as well lives next-door, and may bring food or help with cleaning. His father died many years ago. I find the way his family functions attractive because of its ongoing supportiveness, though I can see how this closeness also could smother. I love visiting Bashar's home and family and do so frequently. I feel connected to his family in such a way that it is noticeable. For example, Abu Omar and one of the workers in the garage both commented about me being like part of the Abu Sahra family.

By contrast, I meet my original family face-to-face once a year in the Netherlands. I speak with my four brothers through Skype on birthdays and occasionally in between. Like Bashar, with some brothers I have more contact than with others. The conversations with my brothers are usually frank. I have contact that is more frequent with my parents; about once a month. Neither my parents nor my brothers have nowadays much influence on my life. In Jewish life, togetherness may be expressed in the traditional Friday night (Sabbath) supper, as in the event described in the story above. This was customary in my original family as well. Many Israeli Jewish families make an attempt for family members to be together on Friday night. This is especially so for religious families, who will follow certain Jewish ceremonies during Sabbath dinner, but also for many secular families. As for Bashar, he enjoys the openness of my family, but finds the way my family functions cold and strange.

Whether it is friends or family, Bashar has a lesser need to meet people alone than I have. Moreover, with his more collectivistic orientation he would not turn away someone who would like to join a social interaction. With some exceptions, he would not succumb to my pressure to be with him alone in case the arrival of others prevented that. This is actually

what happened in the tale described above, in which his partner in the garage suddenly joined our meeting. By contrast, I would have no problem turning down someone who would like to join, by telling him or her that I would like to spend some time with someone else. Although Bashar prefers group-life, sometimes he feels that being continuously with people is too much for him as well. In this respect, we both accommodated. We mostly meet in the presence of others and occasionally he makes time to be only with me.

Privacy

Another issue on which there is major difference between us concerns the question whether something is a public or a private matter. At some point, I told Bashar I had received a letter for him from a company. He asked me what is in the letter and was surprised that I did not know. If it was up to him, I could open his letters or check his emails without asking. For me it was obvious that I would not do so without his consent. This is in contrast with the discussion of personal issues. Although there are personal matters that I would prefer not to discuss in public, I tend to be much less private than he is. He would not discuss personal issues in the presence of others. Especially the public discussion of family related issues is taboo. Keeping things private, he sees as a form of security, a way to prevent creating troubles within one's own family, between families, with friends or with the State. He would not appreciate being asked about these issues. He actually sees talking about one's life as something for women. This is in sharp contrast with my attitude. I find it important to share emotions, events and developments pertaining to the friendship with my other friends. Bashar did not understand the need of mine to reveal personal information and occasionally felt uncomfortable with the fact that I shared things about him or about the friendship

When I asked more about this emphasis on keeping things private, Bashar shared that he was taught to be private from his earliest years. He recalled a story told to him by his

mother in his childhood in which a boy from his family in Gaza was given a ride home on a donkey. The person giving the boy a ride tried to find out more about him, but throughout the ride, the child kept silent and did not share a thing about himself or his family. The story was told as a good example that one should not disclose personal information even if under pressure. It seems that Bashar experiences fewer issues personal than I do, but what is personal for him is also private. This – from my perspective, enhanced – emphasis on privacy may be a logical result of being continuously in groups. In the last four years, Bashar has become less private, since he realized that people – like me - expect him to share more, but I still experience him as a relatively "closed" person.

We may see the dissimilarities between us on the issue of privacy in our respective attitudes to the event described above. In Bashar's understanding, the whole incident was something to be kept private. He did not share with me what actually had happened until weeks later, after I read to him an initial version of the story. Perhaps men do not share that much, but I was socialized in the Netherlands in which differences between the behaviors of men and women are not that large, and afterwards among psychologists, for whom sharing is essential. From my point of view, it would be obvious to share details of an ongoing crisis immediately. Again, from my point of view, the story as a whole was so interesting that it was highly tempting to share it with my friends and make it public. More points of cultural difference that can be learned from this story will be discussed later.

My experience of "perceptions of friendship"

The challenges for me in this field were primarily emotional and cognitive, and to lesser extent behavioral. It took me quite some time to adjust to this different idea of friendship, the expectations to help instrumentally, the lower emphasis on emotional support, and the lack of privacy. In particular, in the beginning of our acquaintance things related to the dissimilar perception of friendship would surprise and often upset me. I would be

frustrated when Bashar was not there for me emotionally, but also when he would not share with me important and/or emotional events in his life. At the same time, my instrumental support to him and his family were at times essential and a way for me to feel significant. In later stages, I would sometimes still be disappointed, like when I would visit him and had expected to be with him alone, but found him to be in the presence of other acquaintances.

For me, the feeling of "togetherness" in a friendship is at least partially based on being just with the particular friend. When I would confront Bashar with my frustration, he freed time to talk with me personally. At these occasions, he would usually be highly sensitive to my needs and say exactly the kind of things that I would like to hear at that specific moment. This ability I experienced as crucial in keeping us together as friends. Although I find being continuously in a group overwhelming, I came to enjoy the kind of togetherness felt in Bedouin life, which is so different from the individualism on which I was raised. Thus, I experienced it as heartwarming when people I hardly knew would invite me for coffee or tea. At some points, I even felt envy as an outsider and upset for not being invited to certain social events. The different attitude between us regarding privacy was not that obvious and at times confusing. This is especially so, since I may consider more things personal, but even if personal I may discuss them in the presence of others. At the same time, I expect that these others will respect my privacy and keep for themselves what I told them. This may be realistic to expect in an individualistic environment, but not necessarily appropriate in Bedouin life, in which rumors spread easily and information that leaked out of the private sphere becomes public property.

6.2   Getting acquainted

The process of becoming acquainted varies among cultures. I will relate here to the topics of "names" and "greeting behavior". First, let us get back to the gas station.

Stories of friendship: Bashar, who?

Anata, a Palestinian village just outside Jerusalem, December 2010. I passed by at Abu Omar's gas station and asked one of the workers about Bashar. The workers, several of them children between 12 and 15, mostly belong to the Abu Sahra family. The response was "Bashar? Which Bashar? You mean Abu Omar's brother, Abu Ward? He is not around, but come and have a seat." [13]

Names

From names we can learn something about the importance of family life in both cultures. My full name is Daniel John Nicholas Weishut. Among Muslims, Christians and Jews it is common to name children after figures from the holy scripts. Daniel is the name of a prophet. In Hebrew it means "God is my judge" (Daniel, 2011). In most situations, Daniel is the name that identifies me. John is also my father's second name, and that of my parental grandfather. It was the first name of one of my ancestors. In Jewish tradition, I was named after a deceased family member. Naming children after one's ancestors is also common in Dutch culture, as in Bedouin culture. Nicholas was someone in my extended family who died at a young age not long before I was born. Weishut, which means "white hat" in German, was probably the name given to my family at the time of Napoleon, referring to my family being involved in a profession in which a white hat was customary.

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[13]   This is an English translation of a conversation, which took place in Arabic.

Bashar's full name is Bashar Mahmood Ward Abu Sahra. Bashar means "bringer of good news" (Bashar, 2012). Mahmood is the name of his grandfather from father's side. Among the Palestinians there are many recurrent names, such as Ahmad, Mohammad and Mahmood, and as a consequence it is by and large not possible to identify someone by his first name only. Since in official Palestinian documents identification is often needed, one adds the grandfather's name as a second name to solve the issue. Ward (the Arabic word for flower) is the name of his extended family. Abu Sahra is the name of his descent group, but is used in practice as the family name (See Figure 6: Structure of the Jahalin Bedouin tribe). Commonly, Palestinian parents will be nicknamed after their first child. So Bashar, is infrequently called Abu Nimmer ("abu" means "father of", and "Nimmer" is the name of his eldest son). His wife is Um Nimmer ("mother of Nimmer"). Nonetheless, Bashar goes mostly by the nickname of Abu Ward ("father of the Ward-family"), a name given to him in his childhood. Bashar explains that nicknaming a child "Abu 'something' " is an indication of his relatively grownup behavior for his young age.

Upon meeting, Bedouins will not necessarily ask for one's name. Among themselves they tend to be more interested in the name of one's extended family than in one's private name. The name of a foreigner is of less importance; he will be indicated in most cases in terms as "the friend of", "the Dutch one" or - if unknown - "the foreigner".

Greeting behavior

Greeting behavior is highly dependent on culture. For example, in the Netherlands in close encounters one regularly greets complete strangers (Hofstede, 2001), while in Israel and in the Palestinian Authority this seems to be highly uncommon. When meeting with Bedouins one needs to get into the habit of certain aspects of the encounter that may seem

strange to the Westerner. First, as a man, one only has access to Bedouin men and not to women. I will expand later on issues related specifically to women and men, and to the relations between them. Then, in Western Europe Caucasian male academics tend to shake hands when they meet, and say their name. Not presenting yourself with your name would be perceived as unmannered. When meeting a group of Bedouins, one usually greets those present with a "salaam aleikum", Arabic for "peace upon you", and shakes hands with all. Names are mostly left unmentioned.

In the West, men may hug friends, with possibly some patting on the back. Kisses are reserved for encounters with women or now and then male family members. The number of expected kisses varies between countries. Israelis tend to kiss twice; the Dutch tend to three kisses. For Bedouin men it is customary to kiss four times when meeting after a substantial separation; kisses are mostly cheek-to-cheek. In contrast, with women (except for one's mother, wife, daughters or nieces), no physical contact is allowed. Bashar anyway is not so much into bodily contact; he seems to kiss and touch his friends less than many other Bedouins or Palestinians I met. When we meet, we usually shake hands, as he does with many others. With other Bedouins or Palestinians, I shake hands or sometimes kiss (the Bedouin style).

After the entrance, a Westerner may immediately start with direct questions about the other's life. Two of the first questions are likely to be what the other person does in life, referring to either work or studies, and whether one is married and has children. For Bedouins both these questions are too direct. They will ask you to come and sit with them and have a coffee or tea. After some time they may ask where you come from; if this is from a town they know, they will ask exactly from which part of the town. Questions about work will be asked at a later stage of the acquaintance, though possibly still in the first encounter. One assumes men over 25 years of age to be married, though a question

about one's family status may be raised in a subsequent meeting. Most often, there will be no more questions about one's nuclear family. Bashar added that historically, Bedouins are not supposed to ask their guest for his name, where he came from or where he goes, at least for three days. After that, they can ask. He sees this tradition as an issue of both privacy and security.

<u>*My experience of "getting acquainted"*</u>

The different attitude among the Bedouins toward names was not so much an obstacle, as something to become accustomed to, and as a result, the challenge was mostly behavioral. Although at first I thought that the lack of interest in my name was out of lack of interest in me, soon it became apparent that this was not the case. One's private name is simply not that important for Bedouins, and about my family name, they could not care less. I had to get used to Bedouin style introductions. The questions one asks when meeting someone for the first time become an automatic part of getting acquainted. It was at times difficult to stop this automatism, and stay aware that in this culture certain – to me standard - questions are not appreciated, at least not at an early stage of the acquaintance. Although at times I would have wished this was not the case, on acquaintance among the Bedouins I was always perceived as an outsider, a foreigner, by my outstanding physique - lighter skin color and greater length. Other Palestinians would consider also the option that I am Israeli, or infrequently think I am "one of them" (or at least approach me in Arabic).

6.3   Meals and other celebrations

Celebrations are another entry to a different culture. They indicate what is important in life. I will first relate to meals, and afterward to birthdays and weddings.

Stories of friendship: First birthday at 34

At my parents' home, Amsterdam, August 2009. Before Bashar woke up, I had bought a lemon cake for his 34's birthday and had put some garlands around the room and there was a present. Things looked very modest (by Dutch measures). He was surprised, and said it was the first time he had a birthday celebration. Later that night we went out for dinner to celebrate. I had ordered a place in a fancy restaurant, knowing that on that particular day they had a relatively cheap offer. It turned out that on that day they actually had one menu only, with several courses. It was French cuisine, within the first course a small but delicately prepared piece of food. We received detailed explanation about its preparation, but Bashar had a hard time finding it on his plate. The main course was a miniscule fish, which also came with explanation. Bashar looked at me and I was so embarrassed. Explanations – even if well intended - are not edible. How could I give my "desert friend" this fish as birthday dinner? We ordered bread, so that he at least got some substance. Afterwards, I took him to a snack bar and got him a croquette from a machine; something I knew he liked.

Meals

Meals are a kind of daily celebrations. Bashar had many meals with my family and I had many meals together with his family or with his friends. I like to eat with them. Since both food and table manners are highly dissimilar in our cultures, we needed to learn anew how to eat (in each other's cultures).

Snack bars, from which both Bashar and I liked to eat as described above, were introduced in the Netherlands long before the concept of "fast food" infested the Western world. Many Dutch snack-bars have walls of heated coin-operated hatches, with goodies, croquettes being among the most popular (White & Boucke, 2006). No snack bars in

Bedouin culture. Food is homemade and always excessive. One of my favorite dishes is "maqluba", a Palestinian upside-down rice and eggplant casserole, hence the name which is literally translated as "upside-down". It is sometimes made with fried cauliflower instead of eggplant and usually includes meat, often braised lamb (Maqluba, 2011). No meal is served without bread. Bread is so central, that Bashar, like many a Bedouin, would feel that if at a meal there was no bread, something crucial was lacking. This could be compared with the experience of people from other cultures as regarding the centrality of certain ingredients in a meal, such as salt, spices, or rice.

Among the Palestinian Bedouins, hot meals are eaten between noon and midnight. Food is often served on an enormous platter. Everyone present is invited. This could also be the neighbor or the client in the garage, if the workers happen to eat at that time. There are no fixed seats and anything that can function as a table for the food will work out. For large groups, food platters may be placed on the floor. One not necessarily starts or finishes the meal at the same time. People eat from the main platter and diners usually do not have their own plate. People mostly take the food with their hands, though they may have a fork or a spoon. They use pieces of pita bread in a manner in which Europeans or Northern Americans would use a fork. Knives are rarely utilized. Food is usually served in one course. At the end of a meal, there may be large quantities of food left. After dinner hand brewed Bedouin coffee and/or tea will be offered

Israel has many subcultures that may relate in various ways to food and table manners, but generally, hot meals are eaten with fork and knife. Everyone has an individual plate and pots or large dishes, from which the food is served, are usually put in the middle of the table. There typically is a surplus of food. Dinner times are flexible, and coffee and tea are served afterwards.

In comparison with Bedouin meals and to some degree with Israeli meals, in the Netherlands, for the dominant culture, meals are much more regulated. Like in my family of origin, tables are set in a strict way with specific places for each of the eating utensils. In families, there are often predetermined seats for the various family members, and a guest too will be assigned a certain seat. During dinner, there is a strict behavioral code. For example, people take the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right; one does not put one's hands or individual eating utensils in the main pot. The quantity of food is measured according to the number of invited diners, and with hot meals, no bread is served. In most homes, hot meals are eaten only at night, traditionally (and in my home) at 6 PM, but with women taking a large part of the work force, nowadays this would be closer to 6.30 or 7 PM. Meals tend to have two or three courses. People start and end their meal together. One expects all food is to be finished by the end of the meal. After dinner, coffee – usually from a percolator -and/or tea will be offered.

Birthdays

The birth of a child is a great event in most cultures, and I had the opportunity to experience this in Jewish Israeli, Dutch and Bedouin cultures. Among the Bedouins when a boy is born, there is a festive meal for the extended family, served on huge platters. The traditional dish is mansaf, made of lamb cooked in a sauce of fermented dried yogurt and served with rice or groats (Mansaf, 2011). Afterwards there is Bedouin coffee. It is uncommon to bring presents. I attended the party for the birth of Bashar's youngest son, for which he himself had slaughtered the sheep. Among Israeli Jews, when a boy is born there usually is a large ceremonial party at which the boy is circumcised and presents are given. Among Dutch Jews, the party is usually more private. Nowadays parties are sometimes held for Jewish baby girls as well. In the dominant culture in the Netherlands, it is customary to visit the parents and give presents when a child is born, but there usually is no big party.

In the Netherlands, it would be out of the ordinary to skip subsequent birthdays. Birthdays tend to be celebrated from the first until the last. Even without a party, presents and birthday cards are always there. "Round" birthdays (20, 30, 40 etc.) receive more attention and often go with bigger parties. In the Netherlands, the individual is central. In contrast, for the Bedouins the birth of a person is significant for society, but the individual is of less importance and so is time. For them, there is no incentive to celebrate birthdays. Nonetheless, times do change, also for the Bedouins. Nowadays birthday celebrations become more common. I was present at the third birthday of Bashar's eldest, with family and other children, cakes, small fireworks and many presents.

My own birthday party some years ago with a small group of mostly Bedouin friends was one of the finest I had, somewhere on a hill in the desert between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. Until a few hours before the party, I did not know whether it would materialize or not. Bashar took care that there would be two chickens; luckily, I did not see the slaughtering. Then we went to have a haircut. Most of my Israeli friends would probably shudder of the idea that a Palestinian would put a knife on their neck - even if it were the hairdresser - but I felt rather comfortable. In fact, I invited Fouad the hairdresser, a Bedouin of Jordanian origin, to join our party. We had a barbecue under the stars and my friends put a big cake on the bonnet of my car with a huge improvised candle. In striking contrast, I received tens of Facebook messages, numerous Skype notifications, emails and mobile text messages, and a series of old-fashioned calls and messages on my answering machine from my - non-Bedouin - friends from all over the world, which was heartwarming as well.

Weddings

Weddings are another story. I attended many weddings of Israeli friends and family and several of Western (mainly Dutch) family and friends. I also attended a few weddings of

Palestinians and Bedouins, like the one of Abu Omar's daughter. The cultural differences are blatant. Although from an anthropological point of view I could fill a chapter on weddings, I will relate to this point here only shortly, since their effect on our friendship was not that large. In the Netherlands, two individuals who decide to marry usually had a long time – sometimes years – to get acquainted; they learned to get along and probably love each other. Not all people marry and if they do so this will often not be before one's late twenties. Dutch weddings are usually planned many months ahead. For Dutch standards, my family has relatively big weddings, influenced by Jewish customs. Dutch weddings may take several days with a series of activities for various groups of invitees, including a reception, an official ceremony, if it is a Jewish wedding also a religious ceremony, a meal and dancing in couples. Weddings, like other Dutch celebrations, stand on ceremony and etiquette.

In contrast, in Bedouin life, marriages are often arranged; they are a matter of the community as much as they are a choice between a man and a woman. Bedouin wedding ceremonies and festivities are usually planned not more than a few weeks ahead and they will last for several days. Before the actual wedding, both the bride and the groom will have a bachelor party, according to traditional customs. A party for the whole community is held in the open; more exactly, for the men in the community. Mansaf and Bedouin coffee will be served to all. At night there will be ritualized dancing, in large circles. The women will have a separate party. An official ceremony at which a nuptial agreement is signed will take place within the circle of the close family.

Bedouin men tend to marry their first wife by age 20. Polygamy is common practice in the Bedouin community. Bedouin men may marry up to four women, but nowadays having more than one wife seems to occur less than in previous generations. According to Bashar, the restriction of marrying not more than four women is one imposed by religion, whereas

the dwindling of polygamy has to do with more democratization and limited financial resources among the Bedouins. Bedouin men do occasionally marry outside the Bedouin community, but it is rare for Bedouin women to marry a non-Bedouin. Divorces are scarce, and thus women remain protected by their families. 19-year old Ibrahim is one of the sons of the second wife of Bashar's brother, Abu Ya'akub. Unlike many of his cousins who grew up in the Palestinian Authority, Ibrahim was raised in Israel (in an Arab neighborhood of Jerusalem). Also through his eyes, polygamy is recommended. On the first occasion in which I had any significant interaction with him – I gave him a ride – he shared that he is about to have his driving test and asked if I have a job for him. However, he was mostly concerned with marrying. He stated that he really wants to marry soon, but does not know yet whom to marry. (I suggested that he would wait some more and offered some reasons for postponing marriage.) He also informed about my marital status and mentioned that he believes that it is time for his uncle Bashar to marry a second wife. As we discussed the idea of marrying, it became clear that Ibrahim was clearly aware of other options of relationships between men and women, but he preferred the traditional attitude.

The situation in Israel as regarding the particulars of weddings rather depends on the specific socio-cultural environment. In most social circles in Israel, a marriage is something primarily between two individuals; though in the ultra-orthodox community it is often arranged. Israeli weddings tend to have a few hundred guests, usually at one large happening. Jewish Israeli weddings in almost all circles include a religious ceremony, an abundance of food, and dancing.

My experience of "meals and other celebrations"

I needed to learn how to eat in the Bedouin way with one's hands, while using bread to "catch" other pieces of food. This in the beginning felt weird, but the food itself I much appreciated. As for celebrations, I greatly enjoyed the collective Bedouin style. I would

look forward to attending the next festivity, and participate in many of its activities, including Bedouin style dancing. Neither Bashar, nor his Bedouin friends, would think of birthdays; not even their own. Therefore, I would remind them. I was much aware of Bashar's lack of ease with Western ways of conduct around meals and celebrations, with Western etiquette. When other Europeans, Northern Americans or Israelis were involved, this put me at times in an uncomfortable position, feeling myself responsible to solve the discrepancies.

6.4   Work attitudes

There is a large difference between Bedouin culture on one side, and North America and Western Europe on the other side, when it comes to work attitudes. I will share my thoughts on three aspects: the issue of combining intercultural friendship with business, differences in attitudes toward work and leisure, and the topic of child labor.

Stories of friendship: At the garage

Anata, a Palestinian village just outside Jerusalem, January 2011. While Bashar and I were in the garage office, Fawaz, one of the mechanics, came in with his small boy (about 2 yrs). He was angry. He wanted his salary. Bashar explained to Fawaz that he already received more money than he earned. Bashar showed him from the notes he wrote in his diary how much he brought in (quite little). The discussion took at least a quarter of an hour. Bashar then got angry at Fawaz and raised his voice.

Not having understood much from the discussion, I asked Bashar what had happened[14]. He then informed me that two days before police came to the garage with the intention to arrest Fawaz and Bashar paid NIS 4000 (about $1000) to get him free. The conversation continued as follows:

Daniel: [frowning] Did you take the money from the garage?

Bashar: Did you think from my family? You really are a European! You would not have paid?!?

Daniel: You could have told me about this; I am your partner in the garage.

Bashar: Do you not see how busy I am? If I tell you about everything that happens, it will take me an hour every day.

Daniel: So tell me in five minutes.

Bashar: [angry] Perhaps go home!

Daniel: [insulted and upset] I intended to, but before, you told me to stay.

Bashar: [changing to a soothing tone of voice] Do not take everything so exactly. Stay!

Things calmed down between us and ten minutes later I saw Bashar and Fawaz talk in a friendly way, as if nothing had happened.

Mixing friendship with business

In Bedouin community, much business is done with friends. Thus, Bashar and I started Jahalin Tours, a small project to make people aware of Bedouin life (Weishut, n.d. a). Although our perspectives and work attitudes were dissimilar, we managed to organize a series of tours. I did the organizing; he provided the content. Later, I became involved in Bashar's garage, financially, organizationally, and emotionally. When starting the garage, I

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[14]   The discussion between Bashar and Fawaz was in Arabic. The conversation between Bashar and me took place in Hebrew.

had known him for many years, and was well aware of many of the dissimilarities in how we deal with life. I also had a background in Business Administration. I invested many weeks in planning, preparing excel sheets and trying to teach one of the workers how to fill them.

I was acquainted with a Euro-American way of doing business, emphasizing efficiency and planning. I also was accustomed to the notion that time is money. Furthermore, in Dutch culture decisions are typically made by consensus, which is based on values like individual autonomy and cooperation (De Bony, 2005). I had expected a similar way of decision-making from Bashar, but he preferred to manage things otherwise. He once clarified that "relationships are more important than money" and that "the program of the garage is to take care of relationships". For him, the workers are like family and the clients like friends. The garage thus functioned as a family business, with Bashar as the authoritative head of the family taking care of the workers' needs. He could spend hours in conversations with workers, suppliers or clients; something he perceived as part of his job. People would come in and come to consult on all kinds of issues, not merely related to their car. He was very committed to his work and would invest enormous efforts to fix cars, even if it would cost more than he would earn. The question of who owes what was often more related to the type of relationship than to the exact costs or to what was agreed. His way of dealing with things took much more time than I considered appropriate. On hindsight, I realize that it should have been obvious that running a business with an emphasis on people takes more time than running it with an emphasis on money.

Within several months it became evident that the differences between us were too large to bridge and that we would not be able to manage the business effectively together. Although I could appreciate his investment in people, I found it hard to accept working without a budget, written plans, set opening times, and safety measures, to name a few.

The garage was in constant flux and it was too much uncertainty for me. Bashar would make major decisions, like hiring and firing people or major expenses, without consulting with me or even informing me (or anyone else). I experienced these surprises as disturbing. Since then I stopped my active involvement, but continue to visit regularly. I did not withdraw my financial investment, but only my expectation to make money out of it. One more thing that remained some time from the period in which I was actively involved was the registration of the cars and the income; on a paper notebook, despite the fact that they have a fully equipped computer. [15]

Work and leisure

Cultures have different perspectives vis-à-vis the work/leisure division (Manrai & Manrai, 1995). In the West, for most men waking hours are divided in a rather rigid way between work - or studies - and leisure time. (One may consider time for volunteering – which I do quite often - as a separate category, or include it in either category.) In the Netherlands, most people work according to fixed working hours and finish their job at a fixed time. The notion is that at work one works, and during leisure time one does not work. At least in my upbringing this division was strict. For instance, I recall my father's reaction when I called him once from my office in order to get from him some information. He said: "Are you not at work?", implying that it is inappropriate to call him when I am supposed to work. Israelis tend to be more flexible in this respect. Many Israelis will make private phone calls or errands during working hours. In the Arab world there is no clear differentiation between work and leisure time (Samovar et al., 2009).

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[15]   Later Bashar decided to rent out the garage to Fawaz, the main mechanic, and he stopped the registration of the cars.

As compared to work attitudes common in the dominant North-Western European and American cultures, with the Bedouins the pace of work seems slower and is interrupted with frequent breaks for a variety of reasons. Bashar explained: "Work should not be too stressful". As a Bedouin one may take a break, sit with a visitor, do private errands or sleep, at any hour of the day, also during work. This flexibility of work and leisure time had direct impact on a friendship. I would enjoy the flexibility of coming to visit him at work – like many other friends of his. By contrast, he had difficulties with the notion that my working hours – which are mostly seeing clients – are inflexible and that I cannot leave my work in the middle, as he sometimes would do. Infrequently, I would wake him in the middle of the morning, and he would wake me late at night, because we did not expect the other to be asleep.

I found working days among the Palestinians to be much longer than common in the West. The garage functions seven days a week and Bashar remains most of his spare time - including nights and weekends - at the garage with the workers. He will leave a social event or get out of bed in the middle of the night in order to accommodate to people's work-related expectations. Differently said, any social activity can be interrupted for work related issues. Therefore, on many occasions my encounters with Bashar – private visits, outside barbecue, or otherwise – ended abruptly, long before what I had expected, because work had to be done. He is never completely free. Bashar considers himself in this respect as extreme more than other Bedouins are; he believes that other Bedouins would take more time off than he does. Still, my impression was that in general the Bedouins stay more hours at their work than would be common in either Israel or the Netherlands.

Child labor

Child labor was not directly a problem for the friendship, but it did conflict with my Western value system according to which children are not supposed to work. In the

dominant culture of the Netherlands, there is an unambiguous division between what children are supposed to do and what is done by adults. Children are excluded from many social and work-related activities. To put it – perhaps overly – simply: they learn at school and afterwards are free to play. Children may be asked to set the table, throw out the garbage, or - when they are older - look after younger children when parents are an evening out, but generally, requests from children to contribute to family life are limited. In Israel, the distinction between the lives of children and adults seems to be comparable to the Netherlands in most situations, but less strict when it comes to social events. It seems that in Israel children can participate in many social activities – like social visits or dinner parties - from which they would be excluded in the Netherlands.

By contrast, with children in Western Europe and North America, Bedouin children are socialized in playing a part in family and community life as much as they are able. Bedouin children are present in adult activities. Bashar would occasionally take along on errands and to his work one of his children, mostly Nimmer (the oldest), from the age of two. At the garage too the mechanics would now and then bring their small boys. The children observe and later imitate the adults. Bashar said: "This creates a feeling of togetherness of the family. They are not requested to behave like that. They do it voluntarily, because they enjoy it. Furthermore, we want our boys to become men, and this is how they learn it. It gives honor to the family to see your son behave like a man". Small girls and boys are expected to help in the house. They may look after their younger siblings, take part in the daily care taking of the house, and serve the men. At a later age, girls will remain at home to assist their mothers, while boys will go out to work at a young age. A few examples: Bashar took care of the goats from age five. His son, Nimmer, does not work, but he would bring on request things from another room at age two, and started to show signs of looking after his baby brother at age three, the same age at which Bashar began taking him along to his place of work. I was there one night when Bashar's wife,

Um Nimmer, got upset with Nimmer, since she had sent him to the shop – in the center of the village – to buy a light bulb and he had come back without. Nimmer then was a little over four years old. His cousin, Amir, works from age eight at his father's gas station, the one I mentioned before, filling gas and taking care of payments. At age ten, Amir learned to drive a car.

It seems that Bedouin children have many more responsibilities than would be common in the West and are gradually socialized into the workforce. In contrast, I could not imagine my Dutch nephews – who are at a similar age – or other Dutch or Israeli children taking so much responsibility. I had associated child labor with child abuse and children working for long hours in terrible conditions. This may be true in some societies, but I never encountered Bedouin children forced into work. My observations indicated that most Bedouins are fond and rather protective of their children. At the same time, child labor – after school hours - is common and accepted, and as far as I could see, the children seem happy to participate in the lives of the grownups.

My experience of "work attitudes"

The challenge here was mainly cognitive. The idea that relations between people are more important than money was hard to grasp. Furthermore, at first I found it difficult to accommodate to the flexibility of work and leisure time, but after a while I habituated. I could see the advantages of this style of living. Though it was annoying to see how all my work in the garage was lost, this was a learning experience. The most striking thing for me was than many issues that I had considered as self-evident and not worthy discussing – like a consultative way of decision-making, payment to workers as a function of their work and not as a function of what they need, registration of income and expenses - were considered by Bashar as either problematic or unacceptable.

I experienced issues like child labor initially as strange and confusing. The human rights organization in which I am active for many years, Amnesty International, subscribes to the International Labour Organization Conventions of Child Labour (United Nations, 1973) and the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), which put strict limits on the economic exploitation of children. My encounter with seemingly happy Bedouin children at work did not coincide with what I had believed. Child labor is an example of how the intercultural encounter, "threatened" my value system, and made me feel less secure about what is "right" and what is "wrong". It also made me more aware that even (my) basic assumptions about society are no truths, but can be challenged.

6.5   Friendship and politics

One of the major difficulties in our friendship is without doubt its political context, which burdens the friendship in many ways. For an Israeli, the social toll of friendship with a Palestinian can be very high. For a Palestinian Bedouin to befriend an Israeli is highly complicated as well. I will discuss here my side only. It took me many months to recuperate from the following incident, which for many Palestinians would not be anything out of the ordinary. After that I will expand on issues related to cognitive dissonance and deviations from social norms.

Stories of friendship: Crossing the border

Israeli/Palestinian border, October 2008. I gave Bashar, a ride, so that he would get in time for his driving test. The ride was between two Arab villages, one of which is considered by the Israeli authorities as Israeli and the other as Palestinian. The car was stopped at a checkpoint between the two villages. Both of us were detained, Bashar for being in Israel without a valid permit, and me for giving a ride to someone without a

permit. We were taken to a nearby military police base. I found it hard to believe that this was real, and not a movie. I always thought of myself as a law-obeying citizen. It was a shock to be suddenly behind bars, considered a criminal. What had happened to me? Bashar was interrogated, and after about half an hour I was interrogated as well. Bashar was released without condition, since he was considered "clean" by the security forces. My fingerprints were taken and my car was confiscated for a month. I was released on grounds of bail and informed that I will be charged in court.

Cognitive dissonance

I believe that most friends in Western Europe or North America do not consider the relationship between their friendship and politics, even if such a relationship may exist. In Israel, national politics are more in the foreground and may create heated discussions on divergent points of view, over which friendships could fall apart. Politics are inescapable when the friendship concerns an Israeli and a Palestinian, even if the national politics are not discussed within friendship, as in our case. This could already be learned from the story about the netstick, but it never became as clear as in the story I just described.

In recent years, in many parts in the center and north of Israel one may succeed to live one's daily life relatively undisturbed –consciously - by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but when living in Jerusalem (or in the south of Israel, near Gaza) this conflict cannot be ignored. In the last years – since the building of the separation wall - things seem calmer, but even today the threat of death is always there. There were years that I feared driving behind buses, wary that they would explode by means of a suicide bomber. Once on my way to university, I had the scary experience of arriving at a bus stop at which a few hours before a bomb had exploded. Furthermore, I had friends and clients killed in terrorist attacks. In French Hill, the neighborhood I live in now, there were several terrorist attacks. From my home I can hear at nights loud noises from the adjacent Palestinian village, but I

cannot always identify whether these are from fireworks at weddings or from shooting by soldiers to disperse a riot. In order to keep one's peace of mind, one has to repress this kind of thing.

The separation wall I described in the first incident in this chapter plays a central role in our friendship; it is both a physical and symbolic way of separating between us. There are checkpoints in order to pass to the Palestinian Authority, and throughout its territory. Therefore, going regularly to the Palestinian Authority, this was not the first time I was stopped at a checkpoint. However, it was the first time I was detained. In fact, it was the first time in my life that I felt threatened by the law. From my naïve point of view, the notion that giving my friend a ride brought me to the "wrong" side of society was difficult to digest. The shock came in waves. First, there was the arrest, which by itself was humiliating. Then, there was the painful understanding that I am paying a high price for my friendship, now having a police record and facing trial. In subsequent months, dynamics of cognitive dissonance created substantial psychological discomfort (cf. Festinger, 1957) and required that I revise my self-image, the image of my friends and the image of the country I had been living in for almost thirty years. The cognitions I had of myself as an appreciated member of society, and of my environment as relatively fair and supportive, just did not fit together with what I experienced around the incident.

Deviations from the norm and social support

I will focus now on what happened in my social environment; a development that took me by surprise. I shared the story of the incident with my closer circles of friends and found that it united opinions and affected my relationships. Reactions were dependent on the attribution of the cause of the event as either internal (dispositional) or external (situational) (Heider, 1958). In other words, locus of control over the event played an important role in the evaluation of the situation (Rotter, 1975). My Palestinian friends

perceived the situation as something beyond my control (external locus of control) and did not consider the event something exceptional. Arrests are part of life for Palestinian Bedouin men, and I got the impression that few were never arrested. In contrast, most of my Israeli friends perceived the situation as one that I had invited (internal locus of control). Suddenly, it was possible to discern the collectivistic views of my Israeli friends. I had broken "their rules".

The tense situation between Israelis and Palestinians creates a great deal of mistrust. More than a few of my acquaintances would admit to the notion that Arabs are not to be trusted. Many of my Jewish friends were concerned about my actions and me; some of them expressing mistrust toward Palestinians in more subtle ways. Some of these friends condemned my behavior and some even considered the incident a rightful punishment of my behavior. They hoped it taught me a lesson of being more careful, and choosing my friends among Jews. They pointed at the complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict and could not appreciate my friendship with a Palestinian, which in their view was too dangerous. Furthermore, as one Jewish friend said, she felt that in some way I am being (ab)used by Bashar. As a result, neither my Palestinian friends, nor most of my Jewish friends were particularly supportive, but for different reasons. In fact, my continuing involvement in the friendship with Bashar even after this incident put strain on and changed the relationships with some of my best Jewish friends. It needs to be noted that Bashar experienced pressure on him for befriending a Jewish Israeli as well, but to a lower degree. He explained that Bedouins, being a nomadic people, do not so much identify nationally. They would judge a person by other measures than his nationality, like by his personality.

Social support in intercultural encounters is of utmost importance Ward et al. (2001) and luckily, not all of my Israeli friends reacted in the same negative manner. Some Jewish friends did support me during this period. Particularly striking was that my Israeli friends

who originally came from the former Soviet Union were more supportive than other friends were. This compares with the finding from a study that showed that as compared to veteran Israelis, Arabs and immigrants from the former Soviet Union attributed procedural justice to law-enforcement authorities to a lesser degree. In general, immigrants from the Soviet Union felt less obliged to comply with the law, believed more strongly in the supremacy of other laws over state laws, and were more willing to take the law into their own hands when their interests seemed threatened (Yagil & Rattner, 2005). I will get back to the issue of dealing with the law in the chapter on power distance.

For Bashar it was difficult to understand why I made such a fuss about the event and shared the story with others. This was not only because he related to the event as something ordinary, but also because it involved an issue of privacy and public image. He believes that one should not share bad things about oneself, not even when one was the victim of something bad. As in the story about the netstick and our trip to Lod, in his view the incident was something to be kept private, since one's name being associated with something bad could harm one's public image. I will get back to this when describing the issue of honor. In my world, social scrutiny is lower than in his, and until this incident I was less aware of social scrutiny in my personal life. Therefore, I could usually share major events with others in my life, while taking in account only marginally the effect of such a disclosure on my social image—but not this time.

My experience of "friendship and politics"

The incident and its consequences were a shocking confrontation with how divergent perceptions can be. I felt quite deserted by several of my friends, and realized how much I was risking in this friendship - not only my social status, but also my freedom. In fact, my perception was quite divergent from that of my friends. The separation wall and the many checkpoints often gave me "recollections" of the Holocaust, in which Jews – like my

parents and grandparents – were stigmatized, and had to hide, while others took part in the resistance. Despite the highly different circumstances, I experienced situations within the realm of the friendship as if I am the one taking part in the resistance, providing assistance to those Bedouins and other Palestinians in need. Whatever perspective I chose, through the incident I learned to face that as much as I try to accommodate and support the Palestinian or Bedouin way of dealing with life, ultimately I am responsible for my own behavior.

Throughout the friendship, I occasionally faced reluctance by Palestinians to become closer out of fear I would be some kind of Israeli infiltrator. I experienced the arrest as a kind of initiation ceremony, providing me greater access to Palestinians and Palestinian life. "Being arrested" felt as being more like a Palestinian. It gave me a feeling of entitlement to be accepted, with thoughts like "see what I am willing to do in order to be friends with a Palestinian". Nonetheless, I believe that this notion of an initiation ceremony was more in my mind than in reality, and not experienced by Bashar as such.

At the time, the incident caused major tension between Bashar and me, chiefly because I experienced him too as providing little support, for reasons explained before. With such a pressure on the friendship to dissolve, I had to fight with myself and with my social environment to keep us together. As a result, the incident became a turning point in our relationship and - paradoxically - brought us closer. Not long after, we decided to travel abroad together. Organizing this trip was a difficult endeavor for social reasons as well as for administrative reasons, but still more feasible than meeting in Israel. I will expand on the impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the friendship in the chapter about power distance.

6.6   Conclusion: Individualism versus collectivism

Differences in the friendship between Bashar and me on the dimension of individualism/collectivism displayed a similar pattern to Hofstede's findings on Dutch, Israeli and Arab cultures. In line with the cultures in which we grew up, in most situations I tended to an individualistic stance, while Bashar tended to a collective stance (see also Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, in Samovar et al., 2009). For a Dutch person, the centrality in society of the individual is so obvious, that it is hard to imagine anything else. For the Palestinian Bedouin the situation is the reverse; the community is central and the individual is of lesser importance. To some extent, it is an issue of priorities, revealing what element in society is perceived as more important, the individual or the community.

In the encounter with a different culture, one has to engage in cultural learning. The challenges were first of all in the cognitive realm. Understanding the social dynamics helped me in attuning my expectations. It took me years to fully understand and appreciate a collectivistic attitude to life, but eventually I was able to adapt and see its many positive sides. In the meantime, I learned different customs. The immersion in Bedouin community life felt as a fantastic opportunity. Learning the customs was for me more an intriguing task than a hardship, and many of the collective events in which I participated were like adventures.

Then, one somehow needs to cope with one's disturbing emotions. When events do not develop according to one's expectations, this can be upsetting. Since I was participating in "Bashar's culture", he expected me to do most of the accommodation, which at times felt unfair. Nevertheless, he also adjusted, for example, to the notion that I want and need personal attention. The dissimilarities on this value orientation created mutual frustration in many situations over a long period. My cognitive understanding would help me to cope

emotionally and eventually, I started to enjoy community life. At times, I even felt jealous of his always being surrounded by friends, while he envied my privacy.

Furthermore, one needs to adjust one's behavior. Mainly in the beginning of our friendship, I felt uncertain about how to behave, something to which I will return extensively in the next chapter. In many situations, I arrived unprepared. I then would observe the other people around, look for cues and try to imitate. This worked out mostly in a good enough way. Sometimes I asked what to do. The required behavioral changes in the field of individualism/collectivism were of less difficulty than the cognitive and emotional challenges.

It seems possible to integrate the individualistic and the collectivistic point of view. It is an issue of looking at the social situation from two different perspectives. Although cultures as a whole may tend to either perspective, individualism and collectivism are complementary, and as an individual, one may be able to provide attention to both the individual and the community aspects. Initially, without being much aware of this process, I began to change my own attitudes and behavior in contexts that were unrelated to my Bedouin friends. In dealings with Westerners, I found myself doing - or proposing to do - things in a more collectivistic manner, though not necessarily in a Bedouin way. Thus, in a team within the human rights organization in which I volunteered, with members from all continents, I tried to listen more carefully to and involve several of its relatively silent members. I introduced the notion of cultural aspects of communication. Email communication had created an - in my view - Western dominance within the team. Therefore, I proposed to share more of our thoughts in conversation, which is a more collectivistic way of communication.

I would like to add a last comment here on politics and the issue of in- and out-groups. A development that took me by surprise was that my friendship with Palestinian Bedouins accentuated my deviation from the accepted social norms in my other groups of friends. What I had seen as an individual choice unrelated to my belonging to other social groups became a collective issue. This is a sign that even in relatively individualistic cultures a collective spirit is aroused when there is a threat of severe deviance to norms. It is something to be aware of in intercultural friendships. Not everyone in one's social environment will be content when one befriends people from a culture that is significantly different, and negative reactions to such a friendship are to be expected. The level of encountered negativity in one's environment of course depends on a variety of factors, and particularly on the openness in your social environment and the general attitude toward the specific social group to which one's friend belongs.

7.   Uncertainty Avoidance

The uncertainty avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. The fundamental issue here is how a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen? Countries exhibiting strong UAI [Uncertainty Avoidance Index] maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. Weak UAI societies maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles (Hofstede, n.d. b).

On the Uncertainty Avoidance Index, a higher score indicates more avoidance of uncertainty (or differently said: the higher the score, the more certainty is requested). On this scale, Israel ranked 19 out of 53 countries and regions, indicating a tendency to avoid uncertainty which is higher than the world average. The Arab countries ranked 27, which is about average. We may postulate that the Bedouins, because of their way of life, are less avoidant of uncertainty than the general attitude in the Arab world. The Netherlands ranked 35, which is below the world average, and thus tending less to avoidance of uncertainty (Hofstede, 2001). It needs to be noted that the difference on this scale between Israel and the Netherlands is large (See

Figure 8: Uncertainty avoidance scores, based on Hofstede (2001)). Still, populations of many countries are more inclined toward certainty than measured in Israel, and the populations of many countries are less inclined to certainty than measured in the Netherlands.
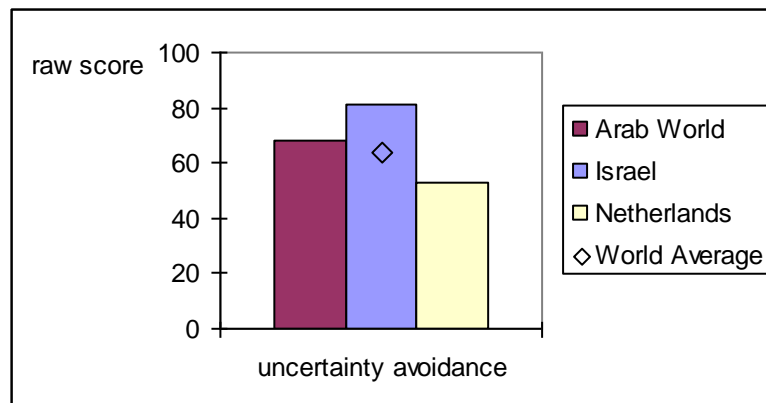
Figure 8: Uncertainty avoidance scores, based on Hofstede (2001)

Variations in our ways of dealing with uncertainty can be seen in many aspects of the friendship, as could be learned through the stories of friendship above and specifically through the story on the netstick (See 6.1 Perceptions of friendship - Stories of friendship: The netstick). Below I will give examples and discuss in particular five aspects of this dimension, namely the use of language and communication, the issue of possessions, the flexibility of time and place, the notion of planning and the extent in which people take risks. Although Israel appears to be higher on "uncertainty avoidance" than both the Netherlands and the Arab world, my experience is that on this dimension there are large differences within Israeli society because of various cultural backgrounds. Therefore, in most of the discussions in this chapter, I will limit myself to the comparison of Bedouin and Dutch cultures and to how this difference affects the relationship.

7.1   Language and communication

Part of the problem in intercultural communication is the difference in national languages. Not less challenging is that words - even if we understand them literally - have different meanings in different cultures. Below I will discuss the issue of spoken and nonverbal

communication. Afterward I will expand on cultural differences regarding written language and the notion of a foreign language. There are also cultural variations concerning the communication of emotions; I will refer to this topic in the next chapter, when discussing manhood.

Stories of friendship: Just words

Anata, June 2009. I went over to see Bashar at his brother's gas station. In the meantime, it was about 11 PM. When I arrived, Bashar was not there, even though he had told me that he would be working that night. Instead, I found his brother, Abu Omar. I called Bashar to see if he would be coming, but he replied that he is sorry but has some other things to do. I tried to hide my disappointment. A few days earlier, I had noticed that on the newly acquired pump there was no sign whatsoever. I had had a short conversation about this with Abu Omar, in which I had said that I would print the words "petrol" and "diesel", in order to stick them on the pump. I now took the opportunity to show Abu Omar the signs I had made. I had worked on them quite a lot, to get them in the right size and in three languages (Arabic, Hebrew and English). He thanked me, but had already bought some signs from a shop.

<u>Spoken and unspoken communication</u>

There are great cultural variations between the Dutch and the Bedouins on written, spoken and nonverbal communication. In Dutch culture, communication is open and direct; it is commonplace to tell the person exactly what you think. Dutch people tend to say "yes" or "no" on questions that could be responded to with such an answer. Since "honesty" is also valued highly in Dutch culture, Dutch people tend to express their honest thoughts in a direct way also in situations in which in other cultures this would be perceived as rude. They will say if they appreciate something, but also if they dislike things. This is

sometimes done in a harsh manner, which brought about the expression of "Dutch uncle, a person who issues frank, harsh, and severe comments and criticism to educate, encourage, or admonish someone" (Dutch uncle, 2011). I, like many Westerners, will also expect to receive verbal feedback in interactions, and be told in words whether my presence or something I did is appreciated.

Bashar and many Bedouins have a tendency for indirect communication. They tend to be expressive and pleasantly warm in their communications. However, they may be vague in their response to a seemingly straightforward question, and offer a long and tangential response. They also will leave many things unsaid, in order to keep social harmony. Especially, they will evade unpleasant answers; thus, they will not say "no" since this is neither polite, nor respectful, and may choose to say what you would like to hear. For example, when I left my car in the garage and would call later to ask if it was fixed, I either would get no answer on the phone or would be told that it is ready. Time after time, I found out on arrival at the garage that it was not yet repaired. I regularly had to wait for hours or was told to come back the next day; often forgetting that in Bedouin terms "tomorrow" means some point in the future.

One is supposed to understand from the circumstances. I once asked Bashar about money he was supposed to return to me. He got annoyed. He had expected me to understand that he is bothered by something else, and that this is not the moment to talk about money. He added that I also had raised the issue in a too direct way. He said that in case he would want to speak with someone about money, he would say: "Perhaps we have coffee together". In the incident described above, I had turned the ambiguous situation into something unequivocal. I had interpreted Abu Omar's reaction to my suggestion to create signs for the pump as positive, assuming that if he had had any objection or other idea he would have told me. I had related to our little conversation about this issue as a promise

from my side, and a kind of agreement. From his response, it seems obvious that he had interpreted my words otherwise. I will write more about agreements in the section on planning.

There is an enormous difference between how both cultures relate to words. For the Dutch, words are almost holy. They are like facts. Not being exact, is being untruthful. For instance, I recall my Dutch client who corrected me when I greeted him with "good morning". The time was just after noon. How could I be so inaccurate? For the Palestinian, words are ideas that need not to be taken exactly. When Bashar would tell me that he would like to meet me on a certain night, it meant nothing more than that at that moment he had the thought of saying this to me, either since he really thought he would enjoy meeting me that night or in order to please me. This difference between us in the use of words created great tensions. As much as I was aware of his use of communication, I would remain frustrated when at the specific night he did not appear. Likewise, there is a difference in handling important personal developments. I expect from my good friends that they will share with me important info about their lives, whether positive or negative. Bashar would tend *not* to share info that he considers negative. This is related to matters being considered private, public image and his wish not to confront the other with unpleasant information. He would expect me to read the context (cf. Hall, 1970). The result of this kind of behavior from his side may be contrary to the intent, since it could be interpreted as deceptive. Thus, I often had the feeling that I cannot count on Bashar, that I am being told stories and that he is not serious. Once, in an attempt to help Bashar understand how I see the use of words, I told him that in "my" culture we have respect for words; we take words seriously. I asked him to be more attentive to this idea in order to prevent for me unpleasant situations. He responded that he is aware of this difference between us and does his best to provide me with clear information when he has it. Only

after understanding the different use of words on a cognitive level, I was able to interpret better what was said (or not said).

Sometimes, there actually is an issue of conscious deception. As Bashar explained to me once, according to Arab culture lying is not seen as positive, but there are three exceptional situations in which Arab men are allowed (and recommended) to lie: a) when your wife is asking too many questions; b) to make or keep peace between friends; c) to one's enemy. This was more than merely a saying. On several occasions, I was requested to participate in lying for one of the aforementioned reasons. With these three exceptions in mind, lying was made easier. Thus, I lied to prevent upheaval in a few situations; examples of which are respectively: a) to Bashar's wife, about his whereabouts; b) to Bashar and one of his friends, about what negative things they had said about each other; c) to Israeli soldiers, about my Jewish/Israeli identity[16]. Even though this concerned minor and non-harmful ("white") lies, with my Dutch upbringing and understanding of the value of honesty, I found it incredibly hard to participate. At some point, I decided to speak with Bashar about the issue and in particular about his wife. Initially, Bashar stopped the conversation, because he felt that I insinuated that he is a liar. However, when I made clear that this was neither my intention, nor the reason for raising the point, we could continue the conversation. When he understood my difficulty in blurring the facts, he suggested that I would tell his wife instead that he had asked me to refrain from telling her all the time where he is.

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[16] One may question why as an Israeli army officer I consider Israeli soldiers as "enemy". The issue was that when on the road in Palestinian territory and stopped at a checkpoint, these soldiers could prevent the continuation of my journey. Moreover, being among Palestinians did at times make me feel - like them - that these soldiers are the enemy.

Bashar is much more than I attuned to intonation and nonverbal messages. In fact, he repeatedly would be aware of my nonverbal communication before I was aware myself[17]. Thus, he would notice and interpret my sleepy red eyes, my disappointed gaze, or my light touch of the ear (the latter possibly indicating some discomfort with the conversation). This for me was often a positive surprise, and gave the feeling of being understood without saying a word. Likewise, he expected me to understand him without clarifying matters verbally. However, I am not that skilled in reading his behavior and body language (though I am getting better in it). In many situations, I failed to understand the situation without verbal explanation.

Written language

For many people in North America or Western Europe writing is central and technology is making this easier. We use writing for agreements, notes, invitations, reminders, messages of friendship, etc. We communicate regularly by letter, fax, email, chat, or text message (SMS). In contrast, there is hardly any writing in Bedouin life. Among the Bedouins, there is a clear preference to meet and see the other person's face and if this is not possible, they will communicate through their cellular phones. Although there are exceptions, many of the matters a Westerner would write down seem among the Bedouins to be remembered and dealt with orally; agreements, calculations, and history in general. Even the sheikh's office does not have written documents.

When Bashar does need to write something, like an email, he will invest much more time and effort than I would in a similar situation. This is not simply because of his limited knowledge of English, but primarily because he will consider every word, trying – in his

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[17]   Bashar also would communicate vocally with animals. On more than one occasion, I saw him in interaction with birds, with the latter responding to his whistles.

words – "to reach the other's heart". Therefore, he will be more concerned about the style of his writing and the impression his email will make on the receiver than about the facts. Originality is of less importance. We could compare this with the preference of many Palestinians on social networks, like Facebook or Hi5, for copying and forwarding eloquent quotes over writing original text[18]. It seems that at least in this aspect Palestinians prefer not to deal with the uncertainty of originality. This preference by Palestinians for quoting over creating could be explained as well by their lower emphasis on individualism than on collectivism.

A foreign language

Arabic is the native language of the Bedouins. Many adult Bedouins, in particular those who in former years were more oriented toward Israel and worked there, speak some Hebrew. However, in the present political context Palestinians are reluctant to speak Hebrew. The more educated Bedouins may know some basic English, but this is the exception. Bashar speaks several forms – or in his words "several languages" – of Arabic, and some Hebrew and English, the latter two languages we have in common. Because of the political climate, also he would not always feel comfortable talking with me in Hebrew.

In order to communicate effectively I had to learn Arabic. Despite my trials to grasp the language (through a university course and some private lessons), my understanding and speaking of Arabic remained at a low level. Therefore, we usually speak Hebrew together.

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[18] One of my – partly - Bedouin friends, Ra'ed, in his forties, told me "the Bedouins shun technology", but asked if I could possibly teach him how to use a computer. The reluctance to the use of technology seems to be changing. For example, in recent years I saw more and more Bedouin youngsters using the internet for social networking (several of them with my encouragement).

Even when I try to speak basic Hebrew, Bashar and I have frequent misunderstandings. These misunderstandings are partly based on the use of the language itself and partly based on Bashar's (cultural) tendency to give the impression that he understood or agreed in order to save face, an issue to which I will return later. Like in the story above, the interpretation of what is said is culturally dependent, and even if we use the same words, we may understand things differently.

My involvement in Arab culture, made me now and then think in Arabic (despite my feeble command of the language). Some words became actually more readily available to me in Arabic than in other languages, and would come out unintended, like "mabrook" (= blessed, congratulations). This was no problem in the realm of the friendship, but in my work with clients, I had to be careful not to turn accidentally to Arabic.

Through the years expectations about my level of Arabic rose and people increasingly tried to converse with me in Arabic, expecting me to understand more than I actually did. When one-on-one with a Bedouin, the use of Hebrew would be possible from time to time, but encounters are rarely one-on-one. Sometimes Bashar or others would try to give me an idea of the subject of conversation or of what is happening, but this was more the exception than the rule. As a result, I felt at loss in many situations in which the language of conversation was Arabic. Often Bashar would forget that I could not follow what is going on and would be surprised that I missed important pieces of information. My poor knowledge of Arabic remains one of the things that keep me an outsider.

My experience is that for Israelis, in combination with foreigners, the situation would be similar to the situation among the Bedouins, but not as extreme. The Israelis would occasionally translate for the foreigners, but would continue their conversation in Hebrew. Nevertheless, the Israelis themselves would expect to receive translation. Thus, several of

my Israeli friends expressed surprise about my attitude, which leaves me regularly in situations in which I do hardly understand a word. They told me that they would have felt too uncomfortable to stay in a situation where they could not understand what was being said. A similar situation with foreigners could happen in the Netherlands as well, since not that many people speak Dutch. However, my experience indicates that in the Netherlands the tendency would be to turn to English (or sometimes German or French) if a foreigner were present. Alternatively, the Dutch would provide translation.

It is to be expected that differences in the knowledge of languages contribute to these different attitudes. In the Netherlands, the knowledge of foreign languages and English in particular, is apparently of a higher level than the knowledge of English among many of the Israelis, whereas most Palestinian Bedouins do not speak English at all. Furthermore, we may postulate that the reason for Bedouins to speak Arabic has an ideological base as well, as speaking Hebrew has for many Israelis. In addition, both Bedouins and Israelis may find it difficult to grasp that someone cannot follow a conversation and how that makes this person feel. Nevertheless, it seems that a major reason for the cultural difference in this aspect is based on a difference of value orientations, and mainly on two dimensions. First, there is a different emphasis on individualism/collectivism. The Dutch are focused on the individual, whereas the Bedouins are focused on the group. Second, there is a different attitude toward uncertainty. The Dutch will find it important that each person present will be able to understand. For the Bedouins the "being" is more important than the exact text of what is spoken. They will take care that you – as foreigner often before others - get coffee or tea, and perhaps something to eat. The Dutch may be less concerned with the atmosphere or food, but - more than the Bedouins - need to feel in control. Understanding the language would be part of being in control.

Culturally ingrained variations in the use of language are sometimes subtle and may go almost unnoticed. For example, it took me years until I became aware that the understanding of what is called "working" is different for Bashar than for me. Bashar would essentially equate "working" with "making money", whereas I would refer to "working" as something requiring a certain amount of effort. When I would be busy with volunteer work or reading a professional article, I would consider this "working"; Bashar would not consider it as such. Furthermore, if he would invest money in something, he would relate to it as if he or his money is "working". In contrast, I would neither consider an ongoing investment as work nor consider that my money could be "working". Until I realized the difference between us in the use of the term "working", this caused confusion. The variation in the use of this term could be based on a difference between Arabic and English or Hebrew. However, I tend to think that it is related to a difference in the cultural attitude toward the term, something that would transcend a certain language.

Furthermore, since Bashar's command of Hebrew and English is not as advanced as mine is, I needed to simplify my use of language so that he would understand. Over time, this became an automatism. Interestingly, I started saying things in his way. An example is that he would refer (in Hebrew) to a meal as "a meal of food", thus adding the – in Hebrew, like in English, unnecessary - words "of food". While talking with him, I would occasionally use this same expression - unintended.

My experience of "language and communication"

The challenges in this field were cognitive, behavioral and emotional. I needed to learn a new language, not only the words, but also their cultural interpretation. I succeeded in doing so to some degree. I can create a simple conversation in Arabic and can do my shopping without using other languages. I every so often catch myself thinking in Arabic when I am alone. My experience is that acquiring a different language comes with the

development of a new part in my identity. It is as if I am a little different when I think in different languages. Still, my knowledge of the language is insufficient for many social situations. I found it disheartening to interpret Bashar's ambiguous behavioral responses, and often erred in reading the context. Sometimes these situations substantially raised my level of anxiety. For example, I would make some kind of effort and did not know whether he appreciated it or was annoyed. As much as I can understand Bashar's intention not to hurt my feelings, I usually became irritated for not being plainly told "no" when appropriate (in my culture), because it put me unnecessarily in the position of waiting for or expecting something. During the years, I improved in communicating with my Bedouin friends, and also Bashar became somewhat more direct with me, but until these days it remains a challenge. I feel never certain that I understand rightly and am never sure that I am understood in the way I want to be understood.

7.2   Mine and yours

The difference between "mine" and "yours" may be self-evident for the Westerner. For the Bedouin most things are "ours"; at least among friends. Although this topic is something that conceptually may seem more related to the dimension of individualism/collectivism, its challenge was in the field of "uncertainty". I will describe here issues regarding finances, favors and possessions.

Stories of friendship: Who pays the bill?

Jerusalem, October 2000. Our first intercultural difficulty happened a few months after we got acquainted, on my 40th birthday. I had invited a large number of friends to a party at a local bar. I had also invited a performer and some light snacks were offered. We had a good time. At the end of the evening, the owner of the bar came to me and said that they

have one unpaid bill. Later I realized that the bill was that of Jaffer and Bashar. I felt highly uncomfortable about the situation, but eventually decided to confront them. As it had not occurred to me that guests would order from the menu and then not pay their bills, it had not occurred to them that they were expected to pay for themselves.

Finances and favors

I do not recall how we settled the issue described in this incident, but this situation clearly revealed a difference between Dutch, Israeli and Palestinian norms. A humoristic guidebook on Dutch culture (White & Boucke, 2006) describes the Dutch as the stingiest in Europe, having a hard time departing from their money. It explains that this has several origins, like their Calvinistic history and their wish not to waste anything. Thus, a common way when going out to a restaurant in the Netherlands is called "going Dutch"; everyone pays for him- or herself. In the case one's expenses were paid for, one returns the favor as soon as possible. Similarly, presents in the Netherlands tend to be substantially smaller than is common in Israel, thus reducing feelings of obligation or debt toward others. For the Dutch, the notion is "I will not burden you and you will not burden me". In this way I was raised; one does not spend money if it is not necessary.

In Israel, it would be ordinary for friends to bring food and drinks to private parties, whereas also costly presents are common. There would be no clear guidelines concerning events as the one described above. In an attempt to verify my intuition, I asked both Israelis and Dutch people (all Jewish), including some who were present at the party. Almost all replied that they would have verified in advance who will pay, before ordering from the menu. They would have wanted things to be clear from the start. Palestinians Bedouins do not tend to bring presents, but in their culture if people come to visit your party, all costs are on you.

Having credits or debts of all kinds in relation to friends and family members is part of the Palestinian Bedouin social system. Thus, Bashar would go out of his way to assist someone financially, as he did in the occasion in which he helped financing the wedding of a friend. One can see the flexibility as regarding finances also in the workplace. Payments to the garage are often dependent on the financial possibilities or relationship with the client, and not necessarily timely. Moreover, payments are not always in money. Occasionally, clients pay for the repair of their car in goods, like a cellular phone, or a watch. For the Palestinian or Bedouin, the understandings around sharing of finances are in sharp contrast with those in the Netherlands: "I will do you a favor, and when time comes, you'll return it". This understanding is so much part of the culture, that Bedouins may take affront when you would not allow them to go through great pains for you. Comparable to the Western notion of favors, also among the Bedouins favors tend to come with strings attached, which is the main reason for me to dislike being done favors. Moreover, this notion of favors is transferable between people. For instance, in the garage Bashar (or one of his workers) could go through great efforts – financial or time-wise - for a friend of mine. Such an effort then would be considered a personal favor for *me*.

What makes the issue of financing even more complicated in a friendship is the difference in resources. Among the Bedouins, the richer person is often expected to pay for the poorer person. A foreigner is by definition perceived as rich. I believe I actually was the richer individual in many social situations. Nevertheless, there were more than a few situations in which Palestinians attended who were well to do and possibly wealthier than me. As a foreigner, I was perceived as affluent, and the expectations were likewise so that people occasionally asked me for money. In these cases, I needed to decide how much money to give, if at all, while it was often unclear to me whether I would get the money back or not.

Possessions

There is a large dissimilarity in how both cultures relate to possessions. For the Dutch, there is a clear distinction between what is yours and what is mine, and whether you have or do not have. Furthermore, in my upbringing I was taught to cherish possessions; one does not throw away anything unless that is necessary. A loss is a loss, whether it is money, time, or something material. Moreover, if you caused the loss, you are the one to blame. In addition, you will take care that you have enough reserves, pay in time, and do your utmost not to borrow from others.

For the Palestinian Bedouin, it is a fact that material things, including money, come and go. At one point, you may have something, at another point it will be gone. One day my friend could have a pile of banknotes in his pocket, and the next day he could be without money to buy food. The idea is that it is no use to be upset for losses and there is no need to blame someone for causing the loss; of course, this has its limits. In any case, one pays when one has the money. The Palestinian Bedouin takes an attitude of what one has, one shares with others. More than that, Bashar would expect that at his friend's home he could behave as in his own home (as long as no women are present) and vice versa. He therefore would see it self-evident that he could fetch from my refrigerator whatever he fancied, use my towel, take compact discs from my car or – on our visit to the Netherlands – wear my father's sweater. Not that I (or my father) would have objected to any of these, but in the culture I come from, this kind of things are not done without asking permission, even among friends. One respects that the property belongs to the other. Bashar realizes the dissimilarity between us in this respect; instead of me taking things from him – as he does – he from time to time simply offers me to take things from him, like clothes or food.

My experience of "mine and yours"

The issue of money and other possessions was for me anxiety-ridden. The problem was not so much the amount of money that I was about to lose, which usually was not very large, but the feeling of uncertainty. I felt I never knew whether I am expected to pay or not; if I am okay, stingy or being used. Do I give the money as a gift or as a loan? I much would have preferred to know exactly where I stand. As for possessions, the questions in my head would be like: What happened to [the specific object]? Did he borrow it? Will he give it back? When? This was especially bothering when larger sums of money, or objects I cared for or other Westerners – who might be less understanding - were involved. Likewise, favors Bashar did for friends of mine, at times put me in an uncomfortable position and/or created tension between us, since I would not necessarily have done the same for either his or for my friend. Moreover, I would not expect from a friend of mine to do the same for me or to do anything at all in return for something I did, or someone else did on behalf of me.

I adjusted, but even after many years, I did not yet succeed in coping well in this field. I tried to live up to expectations, but could not fully grasp what the expectations were. I kept getting upset (though less than previously). On some occasions, I did say something about my feeling uncomfortable. However, I often kept silent, trying to avoid additional tension. My reasoning was that Bashar does not see importance in talking about emotions; an issue to be discussed in the next chapter. Furthermore, if he would have asked me for the object in advance or clarify whether something to him seems my reasonable financial contribution or a loan, I probably would have given it readily.

7.3   Time and place

There is a huge discrepancy between the Dutch and the Palestinian when it comes to relating to time and place, as the following incident shows. Below I will relate separately to flexibility of time and flexibility of place.

Stories of friendship: An urban desert

Trip with Bashar to visit my family, Amsterdam, July, 2010. I went with my father to visit my 101-year-old grandmother. When I returned home in the late afternoon, my mother told me that Bashar had gone out for a walk. At 6 P.M. the table was set but Bashar had not yet returned. We waited for some time and then had dinner. My parents were getting worried; at 8 P.M. they suggested that we call the police, believing that something could have happened to him. I realized that Bashar was not aware of the strict Dutch dinnertime and that in his own environment he may return in the middle of the night without prior notice. I also knew that he had left without his phone and that he was not familiar with either the name of the street or the house number. While coping with my own worry and anger, I attempted to calm my parents, telling them that - knowing Bashar – he will be fine. At night I tried to sleep. Finally, Bashar entered soaking wet from the rain and deadly tired, at 6 A.M. He had gone downtown and met some people he never met before. He stayed with them for a few hours and enjoyed himself. He knows extremely well to navigate in the desert, but trying to find his way back in the rather similar streets and along the canals of Amsterdam, he got lost. He walked the streets for hours to find the address. In the meantime, rain had started, and on his way a gypsy woman had given him a sweater to wear. Upon his return, he simply went to sleep. He was not aware of any upheaval he had caused, and I – too happy that he was okay – could not be angry anymore.

Flexibility of place

Hospitality in Dutch and Bedouin culture is understood in highly different terms. Although I did prepare both Bashar and my parents for the encounter, I should have done a better job in clarifying cultural differences and expectations. The different expectations about hospitality, locality and informing others about one's whereabouts as they come about in the incident described above are striking. In the dominant Dutch culture, visits are planned – often long in advance – and the guest adapts to the plans of the host. One does not simply appear at a friend's door, or - if invited - one is not supposed to stay overnight unplanned. When being a guest at someone's place for several days, one is expected to say goodbye upon going out and to make known in advance about what time one will be back. By contrast, among the Bedouins visits are unplanned and Bedouin hosts will adapt their own plans to accommodate visitors. According to Bedouin tradition, one does not ask a guest for his name, not where he comes from, nor where he goes, at least for three days.

As for separating, most Bedouins and Palestinians I met say goodbye and shake hands when leaving, in a similar way to what is customary in North America and Europe, but it is also common to leave without any sign. I was more than once in situations in which Bedouins would simply disappear from the scene, sometimes returning later. Bashar and I usually shake hands when we separate, but he could disappear as well. Sometimes he would return after hours, or after a day, not informing anyone where he is. This did not seem to bother others, but at times it did bother me. Being aware that I would react badly if he disappeared, he occasionally provides me with some minimal information concerning his depart or whereabouts. I will return to this point in the last part of this study, when I describe the process of creating the dissertation.

The difference between us pertaining to flexibility of place is much less obvious than the difference regarding flexibility of time, but is still highly evident. In the way I was raised I

relate to places as having an address, like a phone number. For example, in my perception a person lives in building number X on street Y and has phone number Z. In Dutch dominant culture, the person who wants to go somewhere, will probably ask for the address; meaning, for the name of the street, the number of the building and the number of the apartment. She may try to find the address on "Google", look on a map or use a GPS. To make sure that nothing will go wrong, she will take the phone number of the place to go to with her. As we have seen already in the story about our trip to the town Lod (See 6.1 Perceptions of friendship - Stories of friendship: The netstick), but also in the story above, for Bashar this is different. Movement is central in his life, like it is central in Bedouin nomad life, and directions are not so much planned in advance as they are adjusted on the way. He would drive to another city without the address of the place to go and ask complete strangers on the way "Where is the garage of Abu Laban?" or "Where lives Mr. such and such?" Once we were in a suburb of the Palestinian town Ramallah, and Bashar decided to pay a visit to one of his university teachers. He asked the owner of a kiosk about the address, mentioning only the name of his teacher and describing his appearance. Then a small boy came out and took us to the right address. The teacher - who had not expected us - was happy to invite us in. Bashar would neither know nor care about names of streets. On numerous occasions at which we intended to meet or when he wanted me to go somewhere the directions I received were – from my perspective – extremely vague. They were something like "I will be in neighborhood X", or "I will be on the main road" or "in the street of the Post Office there is a hotel with steep stairs inside…"

Flexibility of time

Cultures are extremely diverse in how they refer to punctuality, with Latin-American, Middle-Eastern and African cultures being much more lenient in time than European and Northern-American cultures (Samovar et al., 2009). In fact, the Dutch will be precise and strict. Monday is Monday and 8 PM is not the same as 8.30 PM. Arriving late by more

than a quarter of an hour is out of the question. Meetings have not only a time to start, but usually also a fixed time to end. The Palestinian is much more flexible. For the Palestinian, 8 PM means sometime at night. Monday is around Monday, God willing, if things will work out. Arriving at the exact hour is out of the question. Meetings usually do not have an ending time and may continue for many hours. A Palestinian saying "I will be with you in a moment" does not necessarily mean that he is already on his way to you; it may still take an hour or more until arrival. The Bedouins seem to be even more flexible with time. It is as if they only differentiate between past, present and future; as if they are "time-blind", hardly distinguishing between different points in either the past or the future. Taken into account their flexibility with words as well, one understands that an expression such as the one before from the mouth of a Bedouin is not even a promise that eventually he will appear. Many things may interfere in his way. One therefore may wonder how Bashar or other Bedouins cope in their encounters with institutions, and actually, these encounters can be problematic. Bashar found it difficult to adapt to the relatively strict hours of offices or even his university classes.

The disparity between Bashar and me in the notion of time – as could be learned from both our work in the garage and our visit to Amsterdam - was a burden on the friendship especially in the first years. My use of time was like that of money. I take care of it, spend it carefully, and plan it, but every so often I found myself waiting for Bashar hour after hour. From my perspective, in my encounters with him often many hours were lost without good reason. This was even more annoying when it forced me to reschedule or give up on other plans. Over the years, I got used more to the idea of flexibility of time. I now realize that in my encounters with him – or with other Bedouins - anything could take much longer than I find reasonable, hours, days, or weeks. I attempt to adjust my expectations likewise. In the last year, Bashar has been wearing a watch irregularly. Recently, I directed his attention to the fact that his watch displayed the wrong hour, assuming that he did not

adjust it several weeks before, when Daylight Saving Time started. Nevertheless, I was not surprised to find out that he did not care to adjust it. He would not bother about an hour earlier or later. The metaphor "time is money" is – like other metaphors - a cultural construct according to which we live in the West (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). It seems that time is like money for Bashar as well; it comes and goes and you spend it when you have it. However, this is just my perspective; when asking Bashar about it, I found out that he does not see much of a relationship between the two concepts.

My experience of "time and place"

The issue of place required substantial cognitive and behavioral adjustment. I adjusted to the understanding that I will not obtain an address before I go somewhere. Moreover, I learned to check in advance of a meeting with Bashar whether he was in the place I thought he would be or perhaps in a very different location. When estimating the time span of *his* actions, I would often rely more on my own than on his calculations. The issue of time required emotional adjustment as well. The understanding that he could leave any minute and not necessarily come back was disturbing. I recall a situation in which I was waiting for him somewhere outside; while he told me he would be back in a minute. In the coming hour I called him several times to ask what happened and got evasive answers. Only after an hour and becoming rather irritated, I found out that he was far away - handling some issue - and that it will take him much longer. This could make me both upset and outraged. Over the years, we both accommodated. He may tell me in advance if something will take a lot of time, and I do not expect anymore that he will be in the place and at the time he said he would be. I know that I will meet him only when I see him.

7.4   Planning

Although the topic of "planning" is intrinsically related to the topic of "time and place", it seems appropriate to address it in a separate section, in which I will discuss cultural differences in making plans and reaching agreements. Following is another description of a small incident related to separations, leading to intercultural difficulties around the issue of planning.

Stories of friendship: Goodbyes

Jerusalem/Anata, Wednesday morning, November 2010. Bashar's wife and children have been living with him in the village in the Palestinian Authority for the past year. In a few days, they will go back to the United States, where they will remain for about half a year, at which time his wife will give birth. Bashar will not be able to join them

during this period because he has hardships in obtaining a visa to the United States. This departure - on which they decided months ago - is a difficult event in the life of the family. They will fly from Amman (Jordan) and travel there via the Allenby Bridge, a trip of several hours (They cannot fly from the relatively nearby airport in Tel Aviv, because many Palestinians cannot enter Israel freely.) I wanted to come and say goodbye. Bashar's wife and children are usually at home and awake until midnight, but this kind of a visit needs to be planned, since - for cultural reasons - she cannot receive male guests without the presence of a male family member. I called Bashar on the phone, and following is an excerpt of our conversation[19].

Daniel: When can I come and say goodbye to your family?
Bashar: Come on Friday or Saturday.

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[19]   Conversations transliterated in this study were conducted in Hebrew, unless stated differently.

Daniel: But is the flight on Friday night?!?!

Bashar: My wife knows that kind of things. So, then you can come today or tomorrow, and take them to the Allenby Bridge on Friday.

Daniel: That is fine, but if you want me to help we need to plan that, so that I will be free. Anyway, you said before that the bridge closes at 10.00 in the morning.

Bashar: Yes, so perhaps I will go there tomorrow to get them a number, because in the morning it will be very busy.

Daniel: I did not know one needs a number. By the way, did not you say that you want to join them into Jordan?

Bashar: Yes, I will.

Daniel: You realize that they will have lots of luggage and that I cannot take all. My car is small. Perhaps there need to be two cars.

Bashar: Yes, you are right.

Daniel: About meeting... I can make it later this morning, or tonight or tomorrow night, but in both cases only late at night.

Bashar: Ok, so let's talk later.

Daniel: Ok

Making a plan

Cultures vary widely in time orientation, the respective values they place on the past, the present and the future (Samovar *et al.*, 2009). My personal experience is that Bedouins are mostly oriented toward the present, taking the past heavily into account. Israelis as well tend to emphasize the present, but for them as well the past has significance. Bedouins much more than Israelis give importance to "being in the moment". Western-Europeans and Northern Americans will tend to relate to the past much less. They will take into account the present, but will be oriented toward the future, and will try to forecast and control it (cf. Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, in Samovar et al., 2009). This orientation toward

the future requires planning. For Westerners, the idea of planning is an obvious part of life. The Dutch like to leave little uncertainty about what is to come. Events need to be controlled and – as much as possible - every detail is taken care of. Among the Bedouins, planning is done in a very different way. I have indirectly written about this topic in the section on "work attitudes", but I will expand on it here.

Bashar described Bedouin planning as follows: "There are differences among the Bedouins, with some being more organized than others. However, if a Dutch person would like 90% of life to be planned, the Bedouin would plan for about 20%. We may plan to pray or to eat; we also may have plans for the future. I have plans for each of the workers in the garage and for the future of my family and myself. I have no written plans, but I have plans in my head. Because they are in my head, plans are not so exact, and sometimes I forget things, or I may change them. I do not stick to what is written. We are not like the Europeans, who have had generations of planning. We dwelled in the desert, and were subject to a hot and dry climate; this much influenced our ways of planning." On another occasion he explained how planning can be guided by nature: "We moved around according to the availability of food for the goats, and the sun guided us in when to get up or go to sleep. This changed only when we started to settle down."

In Western style, travel arrangements – such as those described above - and probably goodbyes would be organized long before. People involved would know – at least more or less – what is going to happen, when and where. For the Bedouins, there is much more space for spontaneity. Things will remain open until they happen. In some respect, one could compare it with a pendulum, which sways back and forth until it stops. Circular or contradicting movement can be observed, seemingly without purposeful direction. Seeing Bashar move in a certain direction, made me join him and continue on that path in a direct line. When moments or days later he changed directions, I still would be in the previous

course of action, not realizing that he turned. Likewise, he would not understand why I continued building on a previous idea. This often led to clashes between us. In other situations, not a lot will seem to take place until some factors converge and tip the balance toward action; then action may be immediate and without much additional consideration. For the outsider this may seem a rather impulsive way of dealing with things, which is unlikely to be successful. My reaction would often be to suggest waiting and talking things over, to which he regularly responded in amazement with a "so what did we do until now?"

As for the Goodbye-story above, I believe that for many a Westerner it is hard to remain calm in an interaction like the one described, even though also in Bedouin style things will mostly work out fine. In this case, everything was arranged (only) on the morning of departure. Bashar took the luggage to the border before dawn, and I came to say goodbye a little later and consecutively took the whole family in my car to the bridge. Another short dialogue with Bashar will clarify better how he relates to planning: Bashar called me at half past eleven at night (I was already in bed). We did not manage to meet that day. I asked if he would possibly have some free time during the following morning. He replied in surprise: "You ask me about tomorrow? You think I know what I will do in the next hour?"

Reaching agreement

There is an enormous difference between how both cultures relate to agreements. One of the things that took time to understand was that Bedouins would not use the word "no". If they are in disagreement, they will respond in an evasive manner or simply say "yes" in the understanding – for them – that the context will explain that it actually is a "no". I will get back to this idea when I discuss the issue of "honor". By contrast, the Westerner, accustomed to being told if one does not agree, may find this incredibly confusing - if not

highly frustrating. For the Westerner, a non-response is often assumed to be an expression of agreement, and a "let's talk about this later" is assumed to be a concrete suggestion, while for the Bedouins both are polite ways of turning someone down. For instance, on several occasions I would expect something from Bashar while he actually did not have the opportunity to fulfill my expectation. In other instances, the intention to fulfill the expectation was there, but lack of planned action prevented fulfillment. In both types of situations, Bashar would feel uncomfortable telling me to my face that he could not do it and I would feel uncomfortable asking him. Thus, an unpleasant tension around certain open issues could stay for weeks or months.

Even if both sides agreed on some idea, there still may be confusion. For the Dutch, when you talk with someone about what you are going to do, you expect exactly that to happen, or otherwise you will notify each other as if there were an official agreement. Thus, one may agree on appointments at a fixed day and time many months in advance. If needed, one changes the appointment in advance. One expects to be told facts, unless some degree of uncertainty will be stated. In case of disagreement one determines who is right and who is wrong by checking the facts. For the Palestinian, plans are intentions. Intentions may change according to the circumstances and actions can turn out very different from stated intentions. There is no need to notify on changes in action, since what was said in advance was never meant to be a fact. You plan not more than a few days ahead, and you are expected to check before your appointment whether it is still standing, even if you agreed on meeting that same day. In case of disagreement, the eventual decision is primarily based on questions like what is the power differential, and how retain the relationship.

My experience of "planning"

I found it extremely challenging not to take it personally and not to feel insulted when a friend does not appear for an appointment or tells me that he will do something (like

calling back, or taking care of something), and he just does not do it. It was just slightly easier to realize in advance that it is likely he will not do what he said he would do. In addition, I struggled with the understanding that for the Bedouins decisions on courses of action neither are a linear consequence of planning, nor are they necessarily based on facts. I had to remind myself repeatedly that this way of perceiving the notion of a plan is different from mine. Still, I found it highly difficult not to be judgmental about this kind of situations and relate to them merely as cultural differences. Had he been a Westerner, I would have asked myself what kind of friend is that, who makes a promise and does not keep it. In the dominant culture in Western Europe and North America, at some point one probably would confront the friend. What if the person is a Bedouin? This is his style of living, his culture. If one confronts him, he will lose face, something that is likely to increase the difficulties and not solve them. On many occasions I thought that Bashar and I had agreed on something, which turned out not to be the case. Actually, Bashar realized how hard this issue was for me. He learned to say "no" occasionally, which even if at times disappointing, was much less disturbing than not knowing where I stand as the result of an evasive or ambiguous answer.

7.5   Taking risks

Hofstede (2001) warned against confusing uncertainty avoidance with risk avoidance[20]. Nevertheless, the two concepts are related and variance in attitude toward risk-taking is relevant when it comes to intercultural friendship. Dutch life can be considered rather

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[20]   Hofstede (2001) suggested that uncertainty is to risk as anxiety is to fear, with the former being general and the latter being specific. He postulated that since uncertainty avoidant people try to escape ambiguity, they may do so – paradoxically – by getting involved in risky behavior. The discussion of this issue is relevant but beyond the scope of this study.

calm. Israeli life seems often more challenging. Life for the Bedouins is full of physical and other risks; without taking risks – sometimes big risks - one cannot live.

Stories of friendship: The traffic jam

AlEizariya, November 2009. Bill (my American teacher), Bashar and I got stuck in a traffic jam somewhere in this small Palestinian town, probably because of a car accident. I suppose that Palestinian traffic laws exist, but no one around seemed to care[21]. Cars were all over, and people were driving in whatever direction they thought appropriate, irrespective of the side of the road on which they were driving. In my perception we had no way to go. However, Bashar had a different perception. He was not interested in having us wait until the traffic jam would dissolve and decided to make my car jump the barrier between both traffic lanes. Although in my eyes it was clear that it was impossible to do so, without severely damaging the car, he succeeded. The car only made a strange squeak. Then, he took us in the dark downhill through an unpaved bypass with huge gaps in the road. I was highly concerned, because of not only the situation, but also my teacher's possible discomfort and negative impressions. This could easily go wrong, but it did not. We did have to leave the car a few times in order to lower its weight and get over the bumps, but eventually we got back to the main road and made it home safely.

<u>Physical and other risks</u>

The event described previously provides some indication that Palestinians may take more risks and cope easier with certain kinds of physical danger than Westerners. Moreover, my

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[21]   Two years later, Bashar's brother, Abu Omar, explained that since AlEizariya is in the border zone between Israel and the Palestinian Authority it does have neither Israeli nor Palestinian police; thus for about two decades no governmental authority enforces the law.

impression is that for many a Westerner physical integrity and life itself are of utmost value, while among the Bedouins they may be risked more easily for ulterior values, such as honor. It seems beyond doubt that in the illustration described above many Westerners would have perceived the situation as too risky and would have refrained from getting involved. Actually, in the present political atmosphere, many Westerners (and Israelis even more) would perceive merely being at the place we were – an alley of a small Palestinian town - as too risky. In contrast, in AlEizariya it looked like a normal part of life. On our way, we met many people and they all seemed friendly and rather calm, at least, as compared to Middle Eastern or Mediterranean cultures, in which people tend to be emotionally less inhibited than in the global North-West[22], especially when it comes to the expression of frustration and anger. The calmness in our environment had a reassuring effect on us. People seemed accustomed to the cars driving against the supposed direction of the traffic. No one looked surprised by our small group going down such a bad road. Even the truck in front of us that tilted to such a point that it was about to hit another truck did not cause any upheaval.

We can relate to this situation in terms of comfort zones: "a behavioural state within which a person operates in an anxiety-neutral condition, using a limited set of behaviours to deliver a steady level of performance, usually without a sense of risk" (Comfort zone, 2010). It seems that when it comes to physical danger, for many Palestinians the comfort zone is larger than for Westerners. They would be comfortable in many situations in which Westerners may feel insecure. Generalizing – perhaps overly, Westerners would be less willing to give up physical security; for the Dutch relatively little physical insecurity will be experienced as dangerous.

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[22]   It seems that difference in emotionality among members of different cultures/societies could have a neuropsychological cause; this will need to be discussed elsewhere.

Sometimes with Bashar and his family, I found it difficult to keep my calm, because I felt that the physical risks were too large. In contrast, he more than once became upset with my – in his view – overreaction to small events, such as his wife using a large knife to open a can, or his not yet two-year old son climbing over the wall of the veranda. Bashar is in the habit of saying that he does not know fear, which therefore makes him extreme in his risk taking. He would take risks easily, whereas I would feel tension, being constantly aware that things could go wrong. The people in his environment seemed not to be bothered by his risk taking, even when his behavior could affect them. I found myself often the only person questioning his actions. Examples of these are: not checking the deadlines of things to be done, going to an office without knowing the opening hours, driving on the last drops of petrol and arriving last minute to a flight. The downside of comfortably taking risks is that more often things go wrong, and in this sense it makes one vulnerable. With some kinds of risks, I became more like Bashar and distinctly different from members of my family. For example, health wise, on a visit to my family when Bashar was slightly bitten by a horse, my father wanted to take him to a doctor to make sure that he is okay. On the same occasion, my sisters-in-law were worried that the hedgehog Bashar had brought to show their children would transmit diseases. In both cases, neither Bashar nor I saw a reason for concern.

Something about the Dutch and the need for security is evident in the fact that in 2008 the Dutch were among the most insured in the world, with only the British paying more insurance as percentage of their Gross Domestic Product (Verbond van Verzekeraars, 2010). I personally am insured for my health, my profession as a psychologist, my pension, my apartment and my car. The expenses for my insurances accumulate to large sums, but they are stable. As far as I could observe, the idea of insurance via an insurance company seems not part of Bedouin life. Bashar does not have the burden of insurance

expenses. On several occasions, he lost large amounts of money and assets, because something went wrong at the garage or with his car. There was no insurance to cover the costs, but as he once commented "my family is my insurance" and on another occasion "for your brother you'll forget the world". He would rely on his family in case of need. This kind of reliance on family support would be extraordinary in Western individualistic countries, where people may prefer counting on banks and authorities to relying on their family.

Trust

The friendship as a whole and its consequences were filled with uncertainty and experienced by me as both an emotional and a physical risk. Palestinian existence is risky in general, and I obviously would have enjoyed more objective safeguards, but if I wanted to be more than a distant friend, I had to give up on part of my security. Bashar was often unaware how exceptional his actions were for me, and how much I experienced them as risky. An example of this is the trip in the mountains, during which he asked me to jump off a four-meter high cliff, something I had never done before. His presence gave me – rightfully or not – some sense of security. I somehow dared to make the jump, which boosted my self-confidence.

Several of my Jewish friends warned me that I endanger my life and, although from the outside things may look more dangerous than from the inside, in some ways they were right. Bashar lives in a violent and anti-Israeli environment. To give one more example, once in a Palestinian village, on my way back from a visit and only minutes driving from my home, I had some frightening moments. I found myself in my car in the midst of a demonstration of hooded Palestinian youngsters with clubs. They did not pay attention to me, but I assume they had not realized that I was Israeli. Of course, if I had known about

this event ahead of time, I would have taken another route, but Palestinian demonstrations in small villages are not published in advance.

I was not just afraid that I might be killed for being an Israeli Jew. There were more sources of concern. I believed that people could harm me in order to put pressure on Bashar. Not all of his relations go smoothly, and in Bedouin life conflicts may be settled with violence. Taking justice in one's own hands and retaliation through attacks on those close to a target person is something common in Bedouin society, as will be described in the following chapters. Thus, those upset with Bashar could possibly take this out on me. In addition, the more I became involved with Palestinians, the more I risked alienating my Jewish friends. After the incident described in the previous chapter in which I was arrested, I realized that I risk losing Jewish friends.

Trust is a delicate issue in intercultural friendships and it seems that the greater the cultural distance the harder it is to trust. Giving one's trust to someone who one finds difficult to understand and acts not according to one's expectations can be experienced as risky. Trust was important not just to enhance the depth of the friendship, but also because of our little supportive environment. In general, Bashar and I had to trust and rely on each other for protection from those with less positive intentions toward us, whether Israeli or Palestinian, individuals or authorities. With highly different personalities and socio-cultural backgrounds, this mutual trust did not come easily. Our divergent life styles especially in the field of uncertainty occasionally made either of us doubt the trustworthiness of the other as a friend. As the result of our relatively frequent misunderstandings caused by dissimilar interpretations of words or situations, and my difficulty in predicting his actions, I found it challenging to rely on Bashar. Moreover, I sometimes wondered to what extent he will be at my side in case of need. I occasionally doubted how good of a friend he is to me and how he perceives me as his friend. At times I

felt in doubt about the friendship as a whole; whether it will last, perhaps for life, or end abruptly. He felt similarly.

Our general level of trust toward each other remained relatively high. Despite our different perceptions and frequent miscommunications, we felt that the other cares. This explains why Bashar was willing to introduce me in his home and family, something which in his world is out of the ordinary, and why I was willing to be with him in places and situations that were considered by my friends as tremendously risky. The mutual trust also enabled us to travel abroad together. However, we found trust to be like a seismograph, with each of us over time experiencing varying feelings of trust in the other. Trust remained a challenge for both of us. Until today, I find it difficult to cope with so much uncertainty in the friendship, and when now and then the uncertainty in the friendship seems too much to bear, I try to relate to it as a lesson in living differently.

My experience of "taking risks"

I experienced the friendship and its consequences as risky in many ways, inducing at times high levels of anxiety, excessive worry and fear. Nevertheless, I also experienced it as a way for me to conquer my apprehension and become progressively more self-secure. I took more risks in the company of Bashar than I used to take before we were acquainted. I took these risks because not only he is my friend and expected me to do so, but also because it seemed that was the thing one does in his culture. In general, some level of apprehension regarding Palestinians was always there. Moreover, the political context required me to question how safe I am wandering around in Palestinian villages, in general, and specifically as an Israeli Jew. I also began to feel some fear of Israeli authorities – which until that moment I had perceived as being on my side, since my actions and their reactions could complicate my life.

7.6   Conclusion: Uncertainty avoidance

Hofstede (2001) found the Israelis to be relatively avoidant of uncertainty, the Arabs just above the world average and the Dutch just below. My observations suggest that as regarding uncertainty avoidance Dutch and Bedouin cultures are worlds apart, but in a way that may considered opposite of what would be expected based on Hofstede's findings. (I will leave out of the discussion the situation in Israeli culture, because of its complexity because of the numerous subcultures stemming from national origin, religion and religiousness.)

The following citation from Hofstede's website refers to all three cultures (Dutch, Israeli and Arab). This description seems to depict accurately life among the Bedouins, but less so between the Dutch.
Countries exhibiting high uncertainty avoidance maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas (Hofstede, n.d. b).

The continuation of the same text, still referring to all three cultures, may accurately describe Dutch culture, but is in striking contradiction with what I encountered in Bedouin culture.

In these cultures there is an emotional need for rules (even if the rules never seem to work) time is money, people have an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, innovation may be resisted, security is an important element in individual motivation (Hofstede, n.d. b); emphasis mine).

A possible explanation for this reversal could be that Hofstede used three distinctively work-related questions for the creation of the Uncertainty Avoidance Index. The questions refer to how often one feels nervous or tense at work (stress), how long one intends to

continue working for the company (employment stability) and to one's attitude toward breaking the company's rules (rule orientation). It may be postulated that one can only partially infer from work-related uncertainty avoidance to uncertainty avoidance in other fields. Actually, Hofstede (2001) writes: "It is possible that other and perhaps better survey indicators of national levels of uncertainty avoidance can be developed" (p. 148).

My understanding is that my Dutch upbringing encouraged me to develop my own independent thoughts, but made me highly wary of any uncertainty as regarding daily life, or putting it otherwise, inclined toward a life of stability. I was taught to speak and act in clearly defined ways with an emphasis on both directness and control. In my thinking, writing and actions I may be creative, but I tend to go straight from one point to another heading toward a certain predetermined goal (cf. Ulijn, 1995). I found myself vulnerable in situations that were ambiguous or unplanned, and looking for rules. Actually, a guidebook on Dutch culture suggested that for a seemingly liberal country, the Netherlands knows a multitude of rules, which to foreigners may seem repressive (White & Boucke, 2006). In contrast, Bashar was socialized in a different way, leaving much more space for flexibility. He would move - whether in his mind or in his actions – from one point to another in a digressive way, while accustoming throughout to changing circumstances.

The use of the term "uncertainty avoidance" as a value dimension appeared problematic. The field is broad and ill defined and the term is confusing both in its content and in its phrasing (a double negation). In my view, we could divide this cultural dimension in two parts, namely tradition and discipline. In some cultures, these value orientations may be interlinked, while in others they may be less related[23].

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[23]   Schwartz (2006) proposed a cultural dimension of "embeddedness", in his theory of values on the country-level which is comparable with that for "uncertainty avoidance" as proposed by Hofstede (2001). It

Uncertainty avoidance in the sense of adherence to tradition seems comparable to the basic value of tradition in the value classification proposed by Schwartz (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995) for individual value differences, which was defined as: "Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self" (p. 95). Among the Jahalin Bedouins there is high emphasis on tradition. Therefore, there seems to be less flexibility than common in either Israel or the Netherlands, when it comes to the freedom of belief, ideas or general way of living. For example, the idea that someone would not believe in God is unheard of, as is the notion that a person would choose not to marry. Thus, one is expected to believe in God, to marry and to make children. Among the Bedouins, the "big things in life", are dealt with according to tradition, variance is less accepted than in the West; ways of living that are different from the norm and less certain are frowned upon and avoided. Although Dutch culture does have its traditions, it seems less concerned with tradition overall. If we relate to "uncertainty avoidance" in the sense of adherence to tradition, the direction of the differences between Bedouin and Western dominant cultures is in line with the direction proposed by Hofstede.

A major aspect of tradition is religion, a topic. We both live in environments that rely heavily on religion; for Bashar a Muslim environment, and for me a Jewish environment. At the same time, both of us are relatively independent thinkers and take a rather pragmatic stance toward religion. We now and then spoke about the existence or non-

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seems Schwartz struggles with the same broadness of this concept. Interestingly, on the individual-level he separated this group of values in two clusters, namely "tradition" and "conformity". I will not go into the discussion whether or not individual-level and country-level value structures are essentially different. For a discussion of this issue, see Fischer *et al.* (2010).

existence of God, and about our respective religions and their practices. When the subject arose, it was apparent that we have dissimilar views and practices. Therefore, it could have been expected that religion and/or religiousness be topics of conflict within the friendship, especially when taking into account the socio-political context. However, we found these differences easily bridgeable, and neither religion nor religiousness became important issues within the friendship. The conflict on the personal level of being Muslim versus being Jewish seemed to have been overshadowed by the national difference between us, being respectively Palestinian and Israeli, and to a lesser extent by our cultural differences at large.

The difference in adherence to tradition was neither what affected the friendship most nor a major source of conflict. It was our different valuation of discipline, and specifically self-discipline, which created most cultural tension. Discipline as a value orientation may be defined as the extent to which value is put on the ability to go without instant and immediate gratification and pleasure[24]. The "small things in life" are those that confront with discipline. The notion of uncertainty avoidance in the sense of discipline seems to be partly overlapping with the basic value of conformity as described by Schwartz (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). Conformity as a basic value was defined as: "Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms" (p. 95). Conformity was found to be close but different from the basic value of tradition and to a large extent culturally dependent (Fischer & Schwartz, 2010). I found that uncertainty avoidance in the sense of adherence to discipline is displayed within the realm of the friendship in ways opposite of that postulated by Hofstede, with the Dutch

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[24]   The reason for not using the term "conformity" is based on the notion that conformity can be to tradition as well, and in this sense conformity and tradition appear to be confounding terms. Alternatively, we could refer to this value orientation as strictness, the conscientious attention to rules and details.

being more avoidant of uncertainty - or putting it differently, more adhering to discipline - than the Bedouins.

The value orientation of discipline matches the classification described by Hall (1970; Hall & Hall, 1990) as regarding monochromic and polychromic cultures. Dutch dominant culture emphasizes monochromic time; people value privacy, personal property and doing one thing at a time. Moreover, the Dutch will value high levels of planning and control. They will tend to be strict in their interpretation of words and rules, and be goal-oriented and committed. They will leave little room for risk or error. In contrast, Jahalin Bedouin culture emphasizes polychromic time; people value relationships, sharing of personal property, and doing many things together. Moreover, they will value staying in the moment and be comfortable with unclear, ambiguous, or unexpected situations, and changes of plans. They will favor indirect communication.

Consequently, the Bedouin will flow with the stream of events, whereas the Dutch will try to direct them. To some extent we may relate this difference to a disparity in the perception of locus of control. The Dutch seem to perceive the individual as being in control of his or her life (internal locus of control), whereas the Bedouins seem to view the individual as controlled primarily by socio-political and environmental forces (external locus of control). As long as the cultures do not mix, things will flow perfectly. However, when one meets the other, a frustrating confrontation for both sides is inevitable, unless the legitimacy of each coping style is given attention. Both ways of coping with life can be very effective, but restrictions in each culture could limit possibilities in achieving change. Thus, Bedouin culture appears fit for coping with situations that require flexibility. Dutch culture seems better equipped for dealing with situations that require efficiency. Therefore, learning from both cultures could create an optimal setting for change.

Having clarified the difficulties in the concept of "uncertainty avoidance", let us now turn briefly to the challenges and opportunities in this field. Of the four value dimensions discussed in this study, undoubtedly those related to uncertainty avoidance were most difficult for me to grasp and to cope with emotionally. However, the challenges were in all three realms - emotional, cognitive and behavioral, and especially in the field of discipline. The required adjustment for the dimension of "discipline" was enormous. It was as if both of us had read the work of Hall (1970; Hall & Hall, 1990) on monochronic and polychronic time people and tried to stick to the book[25] (See 3.2 - Value orientations). I grew up with the notion that things need to be precise, a time, a word, a fact. This became ingrained in my mind. Life in Israel made me realize that other cultures do not necessarily have a similar worldview. My life with the Bedouins took this to the extreme. Adapting to this way of accepting the world as being inherently uncertain took me years; much longer than my adaptation on other cultural dimensions. Moreover, the risks in, and because of, the friendship I experienced as a burden.

The cultural difference regarding discipline became more of a stressor when others were involved, in particular when they were Westerners. From time to time, I would bring along other non-Palestinians, friends, relatives or others, taking part in our organized trips to the Bedouins or in human rights activities. On those occasions I would feel responsible for making both sides of the encounter content and tried my best in preparing both sides, but the visitors in particular. I would relate to differences on all dimensions, but principally to those in the field of discipline, and on time and planning in particular. However, consider a Dutchman, acquainted with life styles that are more predictable and concerned with the

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[25] If I actually had read Hall's work on monochronic and polychronic people in an earlier stage of the friendship, this probably would have saved me considerable frustration and pain, because it describes one by one many of the cultural differences I experienced.

exact hour at which we will meet Bashar. It is not an easy task to explain to him that whatever time we fix, Bashar may not be there at all; a possibility in which the average Dutchman is likely to take affront.

The encounter was highly difficult on this dimension also for Bashar. He often felt pressured by my expectations for clarity, structure and going according to the rules. He was well aware that he could not give me the certainty I requested, but often did not understand why it was so difficult for me to cope with ambiguity. He tended to see my attitude as some kind of deficit, though gradually he gained knowledge of its culture aspects. In fact, most of the fights we had arose around issues related to certainty/uncertainty. During the years, he has accommodated to some extent in this respect.

8. Masculinity and Femininity

The masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented (Hofstede, n.d. b).

On the scale for masculinity, a higher score indicates a greater tendency to masculinity. The Arab countries ranked 23 on this scale out of 53 countries and regions. This is slightly above the world average, indicating that their population is somewhat inclined to masculinity. Although to those who view Arab society as an exceptionally male oriented this may come as a surprise, it needs to be noted that in almost half of the surveyed countries the populations tend to value masculinity more than is the case in the Arab world. Having said this, we may postulate that the Bedouins, who are mostly religious Muslims and conservative in their worldview, make a greater distinction between male and female gender roles than the average person in the Arab world does. Israel ranked 29, which is slightly below the world average, showing that its population is inclined to masculinity only little less than the population in the Arab countries. The Netherlands ranked 51, and is among the countries with lowest tendency to masculinity, with only Norway and Sweden ranking lower (See Figure 9: Masculinity scores, based on Hofstede (2001)).

Figure 9: Masculinity scores, based on Hofstede (2001)

Differences in value orientation as regarding masculinity and femininity express themselves also in friendship. Previously told stories of friendship included gender issues, but these were not discussed. Here I will relate specifically to the segregation between the sexes and then to the issue of gender, focusing mainly on men. Afterwards I will expand on the notion of the survival of the fittest, the idea that one needs to fight to be a man.

8.1   Segregation between the sexes

In Dutch society, there is no segregation between girls and boys, or men and women. In the secular Israeli community, in which I live, there is no segregation either. In contrast, among orthodox Jews in Israel, there is sex-segregation from an early age; the intensity of which depends on the particular form of orthodoxy. In Bedouin society, men and women are worlds apart, even more than among the orthodox Jews. I will first relate to separation between the sexes among the Bedouins and its impact on the friendship in the conversational realm, and then to separation in the physical realm.

Stories of friendship: Wives; don't ask, don't tell…

Jerusalem, April 2008. Bashar, Dahud and I were sitting in my living room. I mentioned Bashar's wife, and he became furious. I was very confused. What did I do wrong?

Anata, January 2011. Bashar and I were sitting in the garage office. I asked something about his wife, and he instantly became angry. I had not noticed that another person came in. This time I understood. I wished I had bitten off my tongue; the question passed my lips, before I could stop it.

Near Anata, June 2011. In the car with Bashar and the new mechanic, Moustafa, Bashar asked me to tell Moustafa whether his wife is strong (tough). I responded in surprise and asked if he is sure that he wants me to talk about his wife with Moustafa. He replied: "only about her toughness". So, I told Moustafa that Bashar's wife is tough like Bashar, and could not resist adding that I think Bashar had married her because of that". Bashar expressed his agreement.

<u>Conversational separation</u>

As Bashar once commented "you don't talk with others about things at home, like family problems, and certainly not about your wife". In theory, this idea is simple; one does not mention in the presence of other – Bedouin or Palestinian - males any female of the family. Not obeying this rule – even by accident - is a major mistake. Nevertheless, this practice is so deviant from Western norms, that one is doomed to fail occasionally. In the illustration above, I showed the process of my learning experience in this regard. At the first instance, I was taken by surprise but I learned the rule. At the second instance, I knew immediately that I broke the rule. At the third instance, I was surprised by Bashar breaking the rule. Actually, in that situation I took a risk, while both comparing Bashar with his wife and

adding information on his personal choices, things that would not necessarily be appreciated by Bashar. However, he was fine with it.

At some point Bashar explained that another reason for being strict in not discussing with me in public his family life stems from the fact that I am a Jewish Israeli. He expects that the idea that a Jewish Israeli knows intimate details about his family, and about his wife in specific, will be frowned upon in his environment.

In fact, it is possible for Bedouin men to talk about women. The men may refer to women they would like to marry, joke about women in general, or mention women that are not part of the family. Still, my experience is that among Bedouin men women are mentioned less than among Israeli or Dutch men.

Physical separation

The separation between women and men among the Jahalin Bedouins is an issue not just in the conversational realm, but first of all in the physical realm. The physical separation between the sexes, which starts in childhood, continues for the grownups. Women and men live separate lives, and there is a clear role division. The women will take care of the home, while the men go out to work. Women are not tolerated, even in those jobs in which in other cultures with severe gender inequality one would expect to see women, like cashiers, waitresses or cleaning ladies. In general, Bedouin women are kept out of the public realm. Exposing women is seen as dishonorable, whether in person or in a picture. Consequently, also making photographs of Bedouin women is not done. In recent years, there are changes in this respect, with gradually more exposure of Bedouin women, like Bedouin girls finishing secondary school and enrolling in university. Nonetheless, the attitude at home usually remains traditional, with the men taking a highly protective – and rather possessive - stance over the women in the family.

When a man comes to visit a Jahalin Bedouin family, the women will disappear from the scene immediately and retreat to the inner quarters of the home. Moreover, as Bashar once explained, when he visits a Bedouin friend he will sit down in the living room in such a way that he cannot see the women in the house, because seeing them is forbidden. When serving drinks or food, it is customary that the wife knocks on the door of the living room, at which point the husband will go out to bring in whatever she had to offer, so that she will remain out of sight. Occasionally, drinks are brought in by the children, while the host remains with the guests. In case one needs to use the bathroom, a Bedouin host will go first and check to make sure that the guest will not meet his wife. Thus, although I visited Abu Omar through the years many times at his home, I only once saw one of his wives, which was when he showed me around in his newly build house. Exceptions are made for close family members, who may meet one's whole family, including the women. My friendship with Bashar became to the point I was considered like a family member. This put me in the happy opportunity to meet all the members of his nuclear family at their home, but… only in the presence of a chaperone, usually Bashar and sometimes his mother. This situation required behavioral modification on my behalf. For example, in order to take Bashar's children for a ride or bring something to the home in his absence, I had to take care not to encounter his wife so that neither she nor I would get into conflict with the broader family.

It seems that the segregation between the sexes within the village is more rigorous than outside and among the Bedouins stricter than in Palestinian life in general. In Palestinian towns and in modern hangouts there may be some intermingling between men and women. However, Bedouin men will have their own pastimes, separately from the women and one hardly sees Bedouin couples together. Not obeying the basic rule of separation between the sexes can lead to severe punishment, as will be discussed later (See 10.1 Hofstede's four dimensions - Stories of friendship: Moustafa's wife has a sister). One considers traveling

by car as an exception, for example when going to a celebration. However, also in the car there is separation, with the women usually in the back of the car and the men in the front. After arrival at such an occasion, men and women will have separate parties as depicted before. So, when I had my birthday party with my Palestinian – mostly Bedouin - friends in the desert (See 6.3 - Meals and other celebrations), it was an issue whether I could invite a certain couple. The difficulty was not so much in the fact that the couple was Israeli and Jewish, but in the fact that a woman would attend. Eventually, I did invite both parts of the couple and we all had a great time.

Ward et al. (2001) referred to the notion that a visit of someone from a male dominant society in gender equal society influences mutual perception, and this was certainly true for us. On our visits to the Netherlands and even in Israel, it was hard for Bashar to grasp the freedom of women. Dancing of male-female couples in public places, like in a discotheque or a social event, is unheard of in Bedouin circles. Moreover, he was not accustomed to the idea that unmarried men and women can touch or kiss each other in public. These behaviors – that are common in the West - are not done in public even among married Bedouin couples. He was shocked when he heard that a married couple of friends of mine considered the option of an open relationship. His response was: "How could a man let his wife sleep with someone else?"

My experience of "segregation between the sexes"

As regarding the separation between women and men, the required adjustment was primarily in the cognitive realm. I have many female friends and colleagues, probably even the majority of the people around me are women. The invisibility of women was something I had heard of, but meeting the Bedouins also gave me the experience. It initially felt strange to be only among men. Time passed and I started to enjoy the more masculine or instrumental attitude of being together among Palestinian Bedouin men; it

seemed to be more about being or doing, and less about talking or sharing of emotions. After having learned the fundamental idea in this respect, behavioral adaption to the situation in which there are no women around was relatively simple.

8.2   Gender

The Global Gender Gap Index is an index introduced by the World Economic Forum, capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities (Hausmann et al., 2010). It examines the gap between women and men in four categories: economic participation and opportunities, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. In the index for 2010, the Netherlands appeared 17 and Israel 52, out of 134 countries. This indicates that in the Netherlands there are overall relatively few gender-based disparities. In Israel, disparities between women and men are greater. The report does not mention the Palestinian Authority, but all (Arab) countries in the Middle East and North Africa were ranked 103 or lower. This gives some indication of the great gender disparities to be expected in the Palestinian Authority. I will continue with discussing the notion of manhood as it became relevant within the realm of the friendship, and give special attention to the issue of physical appearance. The issue of "honor", which for the Palestinian Bedouins is intrinsically related to "being a man" I will discuss in the chapter on power distance.

Stories of friendship: Be a man!

Anata, September, 2010. I had been looking forward to a day-trip to a well in the desert with Bashar and another Palestinian friend, Dahud. It would be the first time in months that we would do something nice, out of the ordinary, and have some leisure time together. Things turned out differently. Our departure was delayed, and delayed… it took hours

before we left. Instead of the original plan, we went to the woods on a hill close by. Bashar and Dahud arranged a barbecue. Men – many unknown to me – were coming and going. The scenery was fantastic and I love barbecuing, but all were talking in Arabic and I did not understand a word. I became more and more disappointed and angry but felt helpless about the situation. At some point, I left the group, sat down on the slope of the hill and started to cry. After a few minutes, Bashar came to check on me and made me return. Back with the others, and seeing my upset face, he raised his voice and commanded: "Be a man! You can do it!" I was perplexed. My initial reaction was of hurt, and I wanted to get up and leave. It was only after Dahud explained that Bashar - in his way - tried to help me that I calmed down.

Jerusalem, Saturday morning, June 2009. It was on my weekly walk in the woods with one of my Israeli Jewish friends. I told her that Bashar had returned from a trip to Yemen, where he had studied the origins of the Bedouins, and had brought me a ring as a present. It was a large ring with a stone. I showed her a picture of it in my cellular phone. Her immediate reaction was "I hope you do not intend to wear it". I felt disappointed and hurt.

Manhood

It seems that the Dutch, relative to other nations, have few norms pertaining to the distinctive behavior, tasks and roles of women and men. You can find masculine women and feminine men and in the dominant Dutch culture, this is not so much perceived as a problem. One expects both women and men to be highly self-controlled and considerate of others. For the Bedouins a man is supposed to behave like a man; this primarily means to be strong and assertive, "macho"; possibly impulsive and aggressive. Manhood requires social proof. When manhood is threatened, physically aggressive thoughts may be activated (Vandello et al., 2008) and in Bedouin life often also expressed. Although there certainly are Bedouin men who are less masculine or aggressive, feminine behavior among

men is unacceptable in Bedouin views. This norm is engrained in Bedouin thought and I have not encountered any deviancy regarding the norm as such. Although my behavior usually is not very feminine according to Western norms, it may be perceived as feminine – or at least as non-masculine - both in Israel and in the Palestinian Authority, as in the first story above. The expectation of masculinity is something of which I am constantly aware.

For Bashar being a man means being masculine and this idea is central in his identity. It was complicated for him to grasp my different way of being a man. Once I asked Bashar what he found the most difficult in me, and he answered "your sensitivity". When asked what he liked most in me, he replied "your sensitivity as well". It is obvious that he meant two sides of being sensitive. The difficulties he referred to stemmed from his perception of me as unmanly, vulnerable, and fearful, whereas what he enjoyed in me was my awareness of the feelings and attitudes of others. Bashar explained that in his view it is not appropriate for men to cry; moreover, he believes that men need to be ashamed for crying, unless it is about something major such as the loss of someone close. It seems that in most situations when a man cries he is considered to lose face. He added that there is a Bedouin saying referring to the gravity of a situation if a man cries. In the incident described above with the Palestinians, I felt helpless and alone to such extent that it made me cry. Bashar did not consider the incident to be of a dramatic nature – something with which I could agree - and therefore perceived my crying as out of place – something with which I would disagree.

It appears that the mode of living for both Palestinian Bedouins and Israelis, though with rather different backgrounds and in rather different forms, tends to be based on the notion of survival. When one struggles for survival there is no place for vulnerability. In contrast, vulnerability - if not exaggerated - may be perceived as a virtue in other cultures, as well

as in my profession as psychologist. As for fearfulness, this as well is a question of perspective. Bashar perceived my actions and me as fearful, and therefore unmanly. In contrast, my Israeli friends questioned my ostensible lack of fear in my contacts with Palestinians and they consider me not cautious enough in my actions.

The communication of emotions is another cultural issue in which we differ. I tend to express when I feel sad or hurt and do so in a direct way, verbally or nonverbally, sometimes with crying. In case Bashar is hurt, he will rarely express this directly. He considers the sharing of most "negative" emotions a thing for women. When he does opt for communicating his bad feelings, he tends to do so by expressing anger. Over the years, I have seen substantial changes in Bashar as regarding the expression of his feelings and emotions within the realm of our friendship. Although he still does not share how he experiences things between us, he does tell me how he feels altogether or as regarding certain developments in his life.

It needs to be noted that there are cultural differences in what is considered manly behavior also when it comes to physical contact. For instance, Bedouin men, like men in many other Arab cultures, may go arm in arm in the street, touch, hold hands, hug or kiss. This kind of behavior would be common in most Western cultures among women, but it would usually be considered inappropriate or interpreted as "gay" among men. In this respect my position was extraordinary. Although I was more physical with my Bedouin friends than with other friends, I kept a physical distance greater than common among Bedouins men. The reason for doing so was that I believed that as an outsider it would be deemed less appropriate for me to express physical contact with Bedouin men.

Appearance

In the Netherlands, men and women dress in a modern way, which for daily life tends to be unisex. Men may wear all colors and their hairstyle is usually short but longer hair is acceptable as well. At the same time, there are strict dress codes for all kinds of events. I was brought up in this way. As a teenager, my father would comment if more than the upper button in my shirt was left open, or on the fact that I appeared unshaven for breakfast. Dress codes in secular Israel are less formal than in the Netherlands, but colors for men's clothing are usually more sober than common in the Netherlands. In Jewish orthodox surroundings, like in Jerusalem, the dress code is more stringent, whereas in ultra-orthodox surroundings men are dressed highly similar, virtually only in black and white. The dress code for (ultra)orthodox women is somewhat more lenient than for the men, but no trousers are allowed. Orthodox men and married women have their heads covered. I remember that in my first years in Israel I more than once bought clothes during vacations in the Netherlands. Only on arrival in Israel, I realized that I would not be able to wear these comfortably because of their colorfulness.

Bedouin men of senior age tend to dress in traditional clothing with a white or grey jallabiya (long robe) and possibly a kaffiya (a white or red shawl which covers the head). Younger Bedouin men tend to dress in modern clothes. They go mostly in blue jeans or sometimes in dark trousers, and a t-shirt or polo shirt. They tend to refrain from wearing bright or "girly" colors and rarely wear shorts. Some younger Palestinians who are not of Bedouin origin may nowadays wear for example a pink shirt, but this is more the exception than the rule and highly uncommon among Bedouins. Bedouin men may wear a ring – a wedding ring or another kind of ring – often rather large by Western measures. A necklace is uncommon and no earrings or piercings are allowed. All have short or very short black hair. Older Bedouin women wear traditional garments, while younger women

may wear modern clothing, also trousers. Still, all will have their head covered with a shawl.

Masculine appearance of Bedouins is easily recognized by Westerners, but there may be points of confusion. For instance, Bedouin (or Palestinian) men may wear large rings, often with one big stone. This would be less common in the dominant male populations in either Israel or the Netherlands. In both countries that kind of jewelry would be associated with the gay community or in Israel possibly with Jews of Eastern origin. In the illustration above, Bashar gave me the ring out of plain friendship, while my Israeli friend's negative remark about the ring was related to her finding it inappropriate that I would associate ostensibly with either gays or Jews of Eastern origin.

I usually do not care so much about appearance, but before meeting Bashar and his friends I would always check to make certain that I am dressed "manly" enough. I did not realize that he was aware of my lesser need for looking manly until a day at his place, when I asked to borrow a shirt and he gave me a canary yellow one, something I doubt he would wear himself.

My experience of "gender"

The differences in the perception of gender obliged me to accustom cognitively, behaviorally and emotionally as well. I am not as rough or tough as many of the men I met around Bashar. I tend to smile a lot and speak softly and this is not considered manly. I also found myself more easily hurt by jokes or comments that were not intended negatively. The contrast between me and Bedouin and Palestinian men was sharp. At the same time I experienced less freedom in this field than I would have liked and greater social pressure - usually in an indirect and subtle way. I felt I had to live up to "being a man", which was not easy, and now and then created internal conflict, since I was unsure

whether to go along with the expectation or resist it. Despite the hardships in this field, there was something attractive in all this masculinity. I believe that to some extent, my life with the Bedouins did make me tougher. It needs to be said that Bashar was somewhat ambivalent about my masculinity. He wanted me to be tough, but not towards him. It therefore was easier for me and created less tension in the relationship when I took a more submissive stance.

8.3   Survival of the fittest

The Dutch proverb says: "if you're not strong, you need to be clever". Among the Bedouins, you better be strong. After another story of friendship, I will discuss the notion of the "right of the strongest" and aggression. These concepts, which I had considered foreign in my Dutch culture, are central in the daily life of Bedouin men. This section could easily be put in the next chapter on power distance, but since it is so much related to "being a man" I decided to place it in the present chapter on masculinity versus femininity.

Stories of friendship: Hit me!

Jerusalem, February 2009. It was in the period that Bashar was still able to cross the border and visit me relatively freely. While I was taking something out of the refrigerator, he suddenly turned to me and asked to hit him. Though quite astonished, I gave him a soft punch on the chest. We then sat down and he explained that he believes I need to learn how to beat up people. When he found out that I never physically attacked anyone in my whole life, he was surprised. He said that I would not necessarily have to use my force, but that I must know how to use it in case of need. Although I was initially appalled by the idea, I had a strong feeling that he was right. He had touched a sensitive spot concerning my lack of self-protection, which is not that obvious because of my usually rather self-

confident appearance. On several occasions in my life, I had paid a price for my tendency to withdraw when attacked. Actually, forty years before, at age five, my father had instructed me similarly to hit him. He had done so in order to teach me, since other children had bullied me and instead of negating them, I withdrew.

The right of the strongest

During my youth in the Netherlands, and as an adult in Israel, I never attached much importance to physical strength. It was not something I felt I needed in life (apart from those occasions in which I had to change a car tire). In contrast, strength is important for Palestinian Bedouins, and required not only in everyday life but also as part of one's manliness. Bashar explained: "In the desert, if you're not tough, you won't have a chance. You simply won't survive." Although I do some sports and there were years in which I frequented a gym, I found it hard to change my physique. I am less muscular than Bashar and many of those around him. Once I was waiting to have my hair cut by my Bedouin friend Fouad, the hairdresser, and one of the rather hunky men present looked at me and said: "You don't have biceps". I responded with "it seems you have four of them" after which he replied "and Fouad eight". It was not said in a negative way, but still it was an indication of me being not just different but also inferior, at least in this respect. In contrast with me, Bashar is known for his strength. His physical strength came in handy and at times astonished me. If needed, he would lift me with one hand, as on the occasion where we climbed a mountain. On another occasion, when my car was stuck against a wall, he simply lifted and moved it with his bare hands.

It is not only the strength of the individual that counts, but also the strength of the family. Bashar explained that this is one of the reasons for which Bedouin families tend to have many children; eight or more children – possibly from different wives – are not an exception. It is not the state, but the family that gives security; therefore, more children

provide more security. Bashar recalled an incident in which his one but oldest brother Abu Ya'akub (later named Abu Ya'akub after his oldest son) hit his brothers. Their father then told Abu Ya'akub not to use his physical strength on his brothers, but - according to the lines of a Bedouin saying – "show his strength by keeping the family together and bringing water". The saying refers to the idea that in previous generations water was scarcer than now and an asset. Families turning up at the well in greater numbers and with more strength returned with more water. Even at the present time there is fierce competitiveness over resources among the Bedouins.

Bashar explained that one could figure the Bedouin family as an army. Its members are trained to be tough and they will always assist one another. In Bedouin life, if there is disagreement among men, one brings along one's family and friends to strengthens one's position. Under such circumstances people may bring along firearms, or basically anything that can function as a club. (They usually remain unused.) I was involved in two of these occasions in which a group of family and friends came to strengthen someone's position. On the first occasion, a small group of people with clubs came to put pressure on someone who had done wrong to one of Bashar's brothers. On the second occasion, a group of about ten unarmed people came to put pressure on a garage owner who had delivered less than optimal work and had charged a high price. Both situations were solved without actual violence. In this kind of situations, there is often an issue of honor involved, as will be described later on. In some cases the situation escalates, in which it will end with a sulha.

Aggression

Dutch dominant culture is avoidant of overt aggression, whether physical or verbal. Whereas assertiveness is usually appreciated, not disturbing others is the norm in almost any situation. Children are taught that one may protect oneself against aggression, but one

does not initiate aggressive actions or even raise one's voice. It actually would be common for children to be told to lower their voice and be quiet. According to the Dutch dominant culture, physical aggression is perceived as unacceptable in almost any situation. There is a Dutch saying, with negative connotation, for someone who tends to become physically aggressive: "He has loose hands". Israeli culture is more open to aggression, which is mainly verbal. Raising one's voice and calling names are acceptable in many situations and coercion is not a rare phenomenon.

The Bedouins are mostly welcoming and tend to embrace other people heartily. Nevertheless, bullying and aggression are an overt part of Palestinian Bedouin life. Palestinian Bedouin men may express verbally their superiority, shout at each other or physically assault someone – usually in a playful way, but not always. Many times I was in aggressive situations. For example, I was in the garage, sitting with Ra'ed. Suddenly there were screams. I saw Bashar physically attacking one of the clients (possibly a friend). They wrestled for a few moments, and then Bashar released him. A few minutes later, I saw them laughing together. For an outsider like me, it is often unclear clear what is happening in this kind of situations. In this incident, I was not able to grasp what had happened without further information from Bashar.

It is clear that also within the family there is at times aggression. Wife (or wives) and children are expected to obey the husband, or father, and disobedience may result in aggressive reactions.

When Bashar is angry, he raises his voice substantially; he does so with anyone, including his wife and children. The casual aggression in daily living among the Palestinian Bedouins was in sharp contrast with that with which I was accustomed in the Netherlands. I found it both disturbing and intriguing. When I once asked Bashar about his shouting, he replied that "one needs to know how to shout in respect; when you shout in order to show

another person his mistake, he has to understand that you love him". On another occasion, he told me about a Bedouin saying that if you hit your wife, you need to do so as if you hold a book under your armpit. The saying thus refers to the need to reduce force in using one's power within the family.

 I will give one more example of a violent incident, of which I still find it difficult to believe that I was really there. Bashar and I were calmly driving through his village, Anata, when he received a phone call. He suddenly asked me to stop, left the car, grabbed one of several young men hanging out in the street, pushed him against the car and talked to him sternly. The person had a knife in one hand and a pistol in the other. All youngsters disappeared moments later from the scene and Bashar got back into the car as if nothing had happened. There obviously had been some issue to settle, but it was not quite clear to me about what the issue was. I asked Bashar why he was not frightened, at which he replied that they would not dare harming him, because that would "put on fire the whole village". He meant to say that if someone harmed him, this would create a fight between the families. This is something that I will explain in the next chapter.

Physical aggression was never used against me, but in a few incidents I was bullied, which stopped with Bashar's appearance at the scene. Anger, bullying and aggression played a role in our relationship as well. His bursts of anger toward others at times frightened me and therefore I tried not to aggravate him. Bashar would try not to shout at me, because he knew that instead of shouting back at him I would take offense. Still, infrequently he would express his anger at me. On a few occasions, I begged him to reduce the force, and – well aware of the different context - reminded him of the Bedouin saying about keeping a book under your armpit. Actually, Bashar claimed to be calmer in my company than with most others; something that makes me feel good. When I was angry with him, I would at times mention it to him; as much as possible in a calm way. On other occasions, I would

accuse him of not being okay with me, to which he would react badly. However, more often I would "swallow" my anger, as not to create an escalation of the conflict. Sometimes I shared my anguish with mutual Palestinian friends, in the hope that my discontent with Bashar's actions would somehow reach him, and once I brought along a water pistol in order to demonstrate that I was angry.

My experience of "the survival of the fittest"

The required adaptation in this field was mainly cognitive and emotional. For me the harsh and every now and then violent environment was both adventurous and threatening; it provided a thrill but frightened me as well. Furthermore, I often found it difficult to interpret whether some aggressive incident was playful or not. This ambiguity was stressful. It was a huge change from the protected environment I had lived in. Sometimes I had the feeling of being looked down upon for not being stern enough, but in other instances I felt that I am highly estimated. Furthermore, I looked up to Bashar for his physical strength, but was also afraid that the time would come and he would use it against me. In those cases when I became the subject of some form of aggression I found it difficult to take it easy and forget about it, and kept sulking about what happened for days or more; unlike my Palestinian friends for whom aggression is something casual. Many of my Israeli friends considered me naïve, and warned that I risk becoming the target of direct physical violence. The danger did bother me, but not highly, and because of these admonitions I only slightly adapted my actions.

8.4   Conclusion: Masculinity and femininity

As concerning the dimension of masculinity/femininity, the differences between us were large, and greater than expected from Hofstede's findings. Hofstede found that the Dutch

differences between men and women are among the lowest in the world. The preference for masculinity in Israel and in the Arab world is about world average, with Arabs tending just a little more to masculinity than Israelis. My experience through Bashar is that among the Palestinian Bedouins the tendency to masculinity is much stronger; any resemblance of femininity in a man is frowned upon, perceived as blame, and lowers his status. Possibly, the importance of manhood altogether is more important among the Palestinian Bedouins than in the Arab world at large.

As with the other dimensions, there are cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of adaptation within an intercultural friendship with the respect to the dimension of masculinity versus femininity. As regarding the cognitive aspects, the cultural differences were not particularly difficult to grasp. The difficult issue was the question what do I think about all this: the strict gender-based behavioral norms, the segregation between the sexes, and the aggression in daily life. I remained ambivalent. Coming from a human rights background, I found it difficult to accept that men and women are supposed to behave according to certain gender-based rules. I found the notion that men are seen as superior to women, and especially the oppression of women, problematic. I also found it cumbersome that there is so much aggression and coercion in daily life. However, the situation is complicated. The task of the women in running the household is considered highly important. Moreover, it is not that the men have it all and the women are helpless. Bedouin men, fighting for survival, do not have a choice other than a rough way of living (cf. Inglehart, 2006). Bedouin women have less freedom and they are excluded from men's activities, but likewise Bedouin men are not free to participate in women's activities.

My perceptions changed throughout the years, in the sense that I became more understanding. In Western dominant - or white - cultures, we are so much accustomed to the idea that police and justice are part of the protective processes in our nation, that it is

hard to believe that life can be lived differently. I learned that in the absence of an effective governmental legal system, life among the Bedouins is lived according to family law. For the Bedouins, life outside the family is seen as dangerous. The Bedouin way of dealing with this seems closer to nature; life is in a group, in which the dominant male protects the females. Men take care of their families. They take a highly protective stance toward "their" women, more than common in the West. In a harsh environment, this is not necessarily a negative thing, and perhaps even something to be admired. Another example of this we can find in the story about Suleiman, the brother of my Sudanese friend (6.1 Perceptions of friendship - Stories of friendship: The netstick), in which his behavior toward one of the women of the Bedouin family almost led to his death. More on family law and on power differences will be presented in the next chapter.

The emotional hardships related to the intercultural differences on this dimension were complex. Seeing myself through the eyes of my Bedouin friends, I at times found myself not being considered a man. I was too vulnerable, not loud enough, not aggressive enough and perhaps not seen as fit to survive. Moreover, the intensive contact with Palestinian and Bedouin men in specific had an impact on my own perception of myself, in the sense that at some points it made me doubt my manhood, something that created internal turmoil. Paradoxically, also Bedouin men are in some sense vulnerable, since they cannot afford to appear unmanly.

Some of the behavioral aspects of adjustment were relatively simple to cope with; others were just too hard. Since the sex-segregation in Bedouin life is so strict, I rarely encountered Bedouin women. There also was no place for me as an individual to create perceptual changes among Bedouin men. Therefore, when I did encounter unequal situations between men and women, or between more powerful (aggressive) and less powerful men, I found that there was not much that I could do except for accepting the

situation as it is. As regarding my masculinity, I believe that I became tougher in character and more daring in my behavior, but continued to refrain from aggression, whether physically or verbally. In those aggressive situations in which I became involved, I – rightfully or not - considered myself mostly a passive observer.

Finally, it needs to be noted that this chapter was most difficult to write because it required that I culturally censor my own writings more than was needed in the other chapters. For Bashar much that is related to gender, sexuality and the family has to be kept in the private realm; bringing these things in the open would not be respectful. There is more to say regarding intercultural challenges and opportunities in the friendship on the dimension of masculinity versus femininity. Nevertheless, since this dissertation eventually will become public, I had to be particularly selective in the choice of my topics and the disclosure of stories and information on this dimension. One more story that will illustrate the delicacy and explosiveness of the aforementioned themes will be provided in the chapter with the conclusions of this study (See 10.1 Hofstede's four dimensions - Stories of friendship: Moustafa's wife has a sister).

9.   Power Distance

This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people. People in societies exhibiting a large degree of power distance accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. In societies with low power distance, people strive to equalise the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power (Hofstede, n.d. b).

On the scale for power distance a higher score indicates greater power distance. The Arab countries ranked 7 on the Power Distance Index out of 53 countries and regions, thus being among those countries with greatest power distance. Only Malaysia, the Philippines, Guatemala, Venezuela, Panama and Mexico ranked higher. This means that in Arab countries those with less power tend to accept more that others have the power[26]. We may postulate that the Bedouins, who stick to a traditional and hierarchical family structure, have even higher power distance than the average person in the Arab world. The Netherlands ranked 40, which is far below the world average. Israel ranked 52, with only Austria ranking lower. This means that in Israel, those with less power tend not to accept their lack of power (Hofstede, 2001). Note that on this scale the difference between the Arab countries and Israel is enormous (See Figure 10: Power distance scores, based on Hofstede (2001)).

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[26]   It could be that recent uprisings in several Arab countries indicate a change of attitude as regarding power distance.
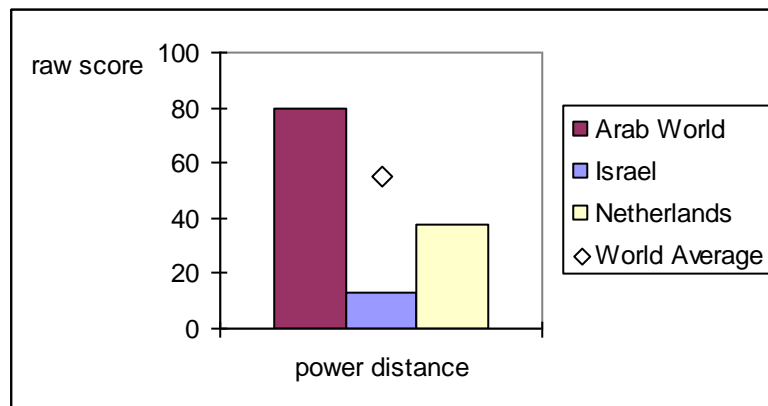
Figure 10: Power distance scores, based on Hofstede (2001)

I will build on the concept of "power distance" to exemplify issues of power and inequality in general as they affected the friendship. Following, I will describe two of those aspects of power that influence friendship, namely honor and authority. This will be followed by a section on how power issues in the realm of the Israeli occupation affected the friendship. Issues of gender inequality, which are closely related to the concept of power distance, were described in the previous chapter, as far as they affected the friendship.

9.1   Honor and dignity

Honor does not seem an essential part in Dutch life, while dignity is self-evident. For the Bedouins honor is central, and for men often considered as crucial. Honors are part of all relationships and if honor is at stake, beware…

Stories of friendship: No "no" for an answer

The Palestinian town of Abu Dis, March 2011. One day I took my Dutch uncle and his Chinese girlfriend to the AlQuds University, at which we intended to visit the highly interesting Prisoners Movement Museum. When we arrived at the gate, it turned out that

the museum was closed. Bashar, who happened to be there, invited us to come and have a drink at the university, but the guard did not let us in. We immediately suggested having a drink somewhere else. Nevertheless, for Bashar the idea that we could not respond to his invitation became an issue of honor. He went through great pains to make us enter the university. He contacted influential people and tried to get us through any possible entrance. My relatives were more bothered by the loss of time by this incident and did not care about where to have our coffee. I felt caught in the middle and - understanding both cultural perspectives – I tried to accommodate to both parties.

Honor and the family

The story above is one of many stories I could share about honor. The honoring of guests is valued highly in Bedouin culture. In this case, the fact that someone prevented Bashar from getting what he wanted was an issue of honor. He experienced the affront even greater, because it involved the invitation of his guests. Interestingly, my uncle's girlfriend – raised in a Chinese environment - immediately grasped that Bashar's "face" is at stake, thus providing an indication about the similarity between the Asian idea of "face" and the Arab idea of "honor". Further on I will provide some more stories concerning honor.

Honor is central in Palestinian Bedouin culture, with status and respect being highly related to the concept of honor; the more honor, the more status and the more respect. Among the Jahalin Bedouins honor is perceived primarily as an attribute of one's family. When one's family is honored, this will give honor to the individuals in the family. However, honor is also affected by one's individual merits and especially one's masculinity as expressed in one's power over others, physically, financially, mentally or otherwise. This is something to be aware of constantly, but especially around incidents in which the families are involved. The initial idea behind many of the honor-related disputes

seems to be something like "How dare you? I am a man and you will not offend me or my family."

Honor is a matter of trade off. Thus, honor disputes can be settled when the two sides of the conflict are even. For Bashar - and many Palestinian Bedouins - if honor is at stake, it is as if the world around stops. He will use all his power to settle the situation. He will abruptly stop a conversation, a meeting, or his work, or get out of his car in the middle of a street, to regain honor for himself or for his family. To family and friends this is self-evident. If needed, they will leave whatever they are doing and come to assist. Even if initially the honor-related incident occurred between two individuals, soon the individual loses importance and it becomes an issue between families. Thus, a conflict between two individuals can easily escalate and something rather minor can turn into a big feud between clans. As Bashar explained, "the family is holy". If somehow women are involved, the situation may become extremely volatile. Individuals and clans will take revenge for things that were done to them and perceived as insulting. They may do so through destroying property or by physical assaults, possibly on family members that were not directly involved in the conflict. In grave situations it may get to killings, to which they will feel obliged. Reactions are often immediate, but it is not rare to wait for years until the time is ripe. In Palestinian Bedouin society regulating misbehavior by individuals and settling issues of honor through the use of family, friends and power is not only accepted, but also expected and - at least in this context - rather efficient.

I will provide two more friendship stories, in which honor was involved. In one incident, someone stole a jerry can of liquid soap from a gas station. Dahud, a friend I became acquainted with through Bashar, a Palestinian but not a Bedouin, was the worker at the station the night before, when this happened. He told me the story and asked to use my cellular phone to make some calls about the incident to his family. Later, he informed me

that on the following day hundreds of men came to the station and went to the family of the thief to settle the issue. (Probably the "hundreds of men" was his way of saying that many people had come to his help.) Eventually, things were settled without violence. The perception of this situation and the way it was handled seem highly different from the expected interpretation and response in the dominant culture in North America or Western Europe. In Palestinian life, the issues of collectivism and power converge. Both the worker and the soap lost their importance; instead, family honor became central. In contrast, a Westerner in a similar situation would likely be concerned primarily with the soap, either giving up on it or filing a complaint with the police.

On another occasion that I followed closely via Bashar and his friends, it all started around the matter of giving right of way. Although I had been present in situations in which two drivers got into verbal fights over their right of way, this event took things much further. The story went as follows. In the town of AlEizariya, a driver from one Bedouin clan from outside town did not give right of way to a driver from a local clan. In revenge, the second one drove his car into the first man's car. They got into a verbal fight, at which point families were called in. It turned into a physical fight in which several body parts were broken and one person was stabbed. A few days later this was followed by a car chase, succeeded by a gunfight between the clans. In the end, the issue was brought to a solution through a sulha between representatives of both families. At least, that is what I thought. In the process of writing this dissertation, I found out that the reconciliation did not hold. The tensions between the clans continued to simmer and about half a year after the initial incident the situation escalated to another fight, in which many were involved and three men were killed. While the original event occurred in a Palestinian authorities controlled area, the killings were in an area controlled by Israel. This last development, which was unusual even for Bedouins, reached the news in Israel. Obviously, this was not the end of the story, because then justice was being sought on two levels. The families looked for

justice on grounds of the pre-modern practice of blood vengeance, while both the

Palestinian and the Israeli police tried to enforce modern legal practices. It took another

few months until a close relative of Bashar was killed by one of the families involved, and

Bashar was threatened at gunpoint. The story that began as a minor and rather distant event

now became frighteningly nearby and encouraged us to be more careful.

Issues related to honor are emotionally laden and relevant to the friendship in various

ways. First, I needed to be particularly aware not to damage Bashar's honor, for example

by putting him on the spot or potentially shaming him. Actually, in the presence of others

– from whatever cultural origin - each of us would tend to compliment the other in attempt

to enhance the other's honor. Second, in some cases - such as in the incident at the

university described above - I needed to find an elegant solution out of a situation in which

he was not able to deliver what he intended. Third, incidents in which the honor of Bashar,

his family or the entire Jahalin tribe was at stake and how they were dealt with were topics

of our conversations. Fourth, I had to ascertain that my own behavior is honorable and

does not harm my public image – and thus indirectly Bashar's image - in any sense. Fifth, I

took part in settling issues of honor in a few situations. I participated in two such incidents

in which a group of family members and friends organized together to put pressure on

someone who allegedly had misbehaved vis-à-vis Bashar's family. Both incidents meant to

restore honor were of minor gravity.

Honor has complex dynamics. My position as foreigner and not being protected by my

family, made me especially vulnerable to dishonor (cf. Kamir, 2002). Occasionally,

Palestinians with whom I had little prior acquaintance would act in a rude or degrading

way toward me. However, since honor is at least partially transferable, my known

friendship with Bashar and his family - who are of high standing - to some extent covered

for my lack of family protection and honor. In Bashar's environment people generally

behaved kindly to me, and it was clear that this was not only for who I am, but also because of our relationship. Since he is well respected, they will respect me too, as will be indicated in the story of friendship described in the next section as well. As Bashar mentioned, he would take care of it in case someone did not honor me. I consider that he would do so not only to protect me, but also since dishonoring me would be an indirect attack on his own honor. I had to be careful not to harm the honor of Bashar's family. Thus, when I once got into conflict with someone from another family, Bashar advised me not to take measures that were more drastic, since this could bring his whole extended family in fight with the other family.

Dignity, respect and emotions

In honor cultures one is entitled to a certain attitude based on social or personal merits, whereas in dignity cultures one has innate rights to respectful and ethical treatment. Western cultures tend to be oriented toward dignity (or respect) (cf. Kamir, 2002; Weisstub, 2002). I was raised in the Netherlands with the idea that people are to be treated with dignity, whatever their socio-economic status or personal characteristics. Furthermore, I was brought up expecting to be treated fairly, and in a way respecting my time, money, possessions and wants. For me dignity was a truism, for which I fought as a human rights activist; not something to be questioned. Through the discussion with Bashar of my writings on honor, I became aware that not just honor plays an important part in our friendship, but the related concept of dignity plays a great part as well. Dignity is in some extent in conflict with honor, since honor refers to some rightfully getting a more favorable attitude than others do, whereas dignity assumes equality. We may regard the example above at the university as a conflict between dignity and honor. While Bashar tried to honor his guests, the guests were more concerned about his respect for their time.

In all cultures, there are distinctions between individuals or groups of different social status, but in Palestinian Bedouin day-to-day life social hierarchy is more evident than in many Western countries. Among the Palestinian Bedouins people are honored, but people are not considered equal. It is expected that those with more power be taken into account more, and those who are weaker receive less. This can be seen in all parts of life. They pay tribute to dignity, but honor is considered key. In many incidents within the friendship I experienced the unpleasant feeling of not being taken into account, and thus of being disrespected. This happened in widely different situations: plans were changed without my consent, my investment of substantial amounts of time was considered self-evident or my ideas were overruled without discussion. Bashar experienced me as a guest in his environment, and therefore regarded it as obvious that he could decide for me. Giving me a feeling of disrespect was never the intention of Bashar (or the others involved), as he made clear on those occasions in which I confronted him. He expected that I would confront him in those cases in which I did not want to go along, as he would have done.

Both Bashar and I were acutely aware of situations in which people were victimized – though in different circumstances. I learned about the cultural difference in emotional reactions toward the use of – what I would consider - excessive power and found that in various power-related situations in Bedouin culture conduct will be guided by the inclination to avoid shame. A situation revealing lack of power, ability or other weakness would be perceived by many a Bedouin as shameful and in need of concealment. By contrast, it seems that in dominant Western cultures conduct tends to be motivated more by the inclination to avoid guilt than by concern over the disclosure of weaknesses. In a situation in which there is use of force to subordinate another, many a Westerner is prone to feel uncomfortable or guilty, as opposed to the Bedouin who considers inequality and the use of power inherent in the social hierarchy, as long as it is considered fair and appropriate. Thus, once at the garage one junior worker had beaten another. Although the

former was a family member, Bashar had decided to send him home. I then made the mistake at dinner of uttering a remark of interest about the wounded face of the worker who had been beaten. The young man walked out and returned only after being reminded by others that I am a foreigner and convinced that he should not take my words badly. Concurrently, Bashar got angry with me for embarrassing his protégée. Although my intent was empathetic, I understood from the reaction that I had done something wrong and felt guilty. Bashar's response intensified this feeling of guilt, but when he saw me sulking over the situation, he said that the whole situation would be forgotten the next day, an example of how situations in Bedouin life can easily escalate and as easily cool down.

My experience of "honor and dignity"

The notion of honor was new to me and it took time and effort to grasp it. Eventually, I mostly understood and managed to cope with the pitfalls around honor, while erring only infrequently. If I wanted to be a good friend, I was supposed to be there in support of my friends' honor. I had to take care not to embarrass or shame him, more than I do with friends of European background. In those situations in which honor needed to be settled Bashar mostly let me off the hook and probably would not have been insulted if I had not joined him. When he did take me along, I was intrigued about this way of dealing with conflict and I experienced it as a kind of test of my friendship. Restoring honor was for Bashar routine and for me rather stressful. The stress was not so much because of what happened in the events themselves; it was more because the events made me grapple with my own value system, in which one neither threatens people nor takes the law in one's own hands. I recall that on one of these occasions it came to my mind that people enjoy this kind of things in a movie, but that I am actually not watching a movie but playing a highly realistic part. In most circumstances I felt honored, but still in many occasions I felt that I was entitled to honor and dignity primarily as a friend of Bashar.

As regarding conflict on these issues between the two of us, in contrast with Bashar's experience, I often found it difficult to create a confrontation. For Bashar, confrontations are part of daily life and he moves in and out of confrontational situations without much effort. By contrast, I experience confrontations as unpleasant and emotionally exhausting. Particularly in my friendships they are exceptional, since in that field I mostly prefer their circumvention or their solution in calmer ways.

9.2   Authority

Expectations concerning authority and leadership among Bedouins are quite different from those common in Western societies. Here I will discuss the topics of leadership in general, the place of the oldest son and the concepts of law and order, and their relevance within the realm of the friendship.

Stories of friendship: Who is the boss?

Anata, June 2011. One night at the garage Montasser came in. Montasser is a member of Bashar's extended family; he is heavily built and not the most gentle person. Bashar and Montasser sat down with Fawaz, one of the mechanics. There had been troubles with Fawaz all along since he has a good name in his profession, but is highly unorganized and somehow costs more than he brings in. Already several times there had been talks with Fawaz about his problematic way of handling things. This time the discussion took about three hours, in which there was a lot of shouting and at one point Montasser hit Fawaz on the head with a telephone. I was shocked by this burst of aggression toward the mechanic, but Fawaz did not seem bothered. From the few words I understood, it appeared that despite the hardships, they were going to make Fawaz responsible over the other workers. At some point they called in all other workers and explained the new situation. Although I

thought it was a mistake to make a person responsible over others if he until now had not proven much responsibility in his own work, I was more upset about the sudden involvement of Montasser in the garage. In fact, it was not clear to me how Montasser became involved. There seemed to be a major thing going on and I as friend and partner in the business was uninformed. I asked Bashar, who responded that he will tell me another day.

The next day I confronted Bashar. He then informed me that a few days before there had been an incident in which a notorious man, rich from drug dealing, had refused to pay his debts to the garage. Moreover, the guy had offered Fawaz a job. The incident had escalated almost to the point of gunfire. Montasser had interfered and things had cooled down. Since Fawaz feared Montasser, Bashar had decided to involve Montasser in the garage and put things in order. When asked, Bashar said he had not seen it as important to inform me, although I am his partner in the business. At that point I suddenly realized that actually no one knows I am a partner. I asked Bashar why this is the case. Bashar replied that he does not see the need for people to know that I am involved, that would weaken his position and give the impression that he is not able to cope financially on his own. He made it clear that he wants to keep it like that. He added that if this does not suit me, he would give me back the money I invested.

Then Bashar tried to understand the source of my concern. He wondered whether I was concerned that because of the workers' unawareness of my status as part owner I am honored less, and asked if I feel that people do not give me enough honor. He said that he had spoken with the workers about the fact that I am a good friend of his, and that as such they will have to honor me. I replied that I do feel honored, after which he added that if I have any concern in this regard, I need to inform him, so that he can take care of it.

Leadership

Although not every Bedouin leader will be like Montasser or Bashar in the story above, this event does provide an indication of what is acceptable in a Bedouin environment. Also in the work place there is relatively little planning, high power distance, and use of aggression. People are not considered equal and do not receive equal chances. These ideas seem to be generally accepted in Bedouin society and can be exemplified in the work situation. The boss decides. As regarding people on the job, family members are of higher status, and often preferred on the job over others. The reasons for this preference are that family members are expected to be more loyal and that employing family is a way of keeping the resources in the family. Seniority provides status as well. Workers do not have contracts, not necessarily fixed salaries and no social benefits. A worker can and will be fired on the spot, in case there is disagreement between him and the boss; as I have seen in the garage more than once. However, this same person may get a second or a third chance a few weeks later. In the Bedouin environment, paid workers are solely men.

Aware that this is a generalization, my personal experience is that Israeli leaders – somewhat like the Bedouins - tend to be relatively authoritarian and that they have a way of making quick decisions. In contrast with the Bedouin leader, the Israeli leader does not receive much respect and his or her authority is contested continuously. People will tell him or her in his face what they think and everyone wants to have a say. Women can be seen in most leading positions, including the army. Aggression and coercion seem to be common among Israeli leaders, but not as much as in Bedouin society, where their use is an inherent part of leadership and perceived as appropriate management by both leaders and subordinates.

For the Dutch, the person in charge is the one elected or appointed, which typically is not for reasons of descendance. He or she is accepted to be the boss and is supposed to behave

in a polite manner without using overt aggression. Generalizing, my experience is that the Dutch will tend to agree placidly and submit to the person in charge. For example, it was on our visit to Amsterdam, after 3 AM, that Bashar and I came back from a party by night bus. It was surprisingly clear that the bus driver - "the one in charge" - did not know his way, but no one seemed to direct him. (We did not know the right way.) At some point the bus got stuck in a dead-end alley, and could not turn. While the driver called for assistance from the bus company, the passengers remained in their seats. They kept silent for at least half an hour, although there were a few whispers. This time, Bashar could hardly believe what he saw. A similar situation was highly unlikely to happen in either Israel or the Palestinian Authority. It would have taken not more than minutes until many people would be involved. They probably would shout angrily at the driver for his "stupidity" and give him directions or simply take over the steering wheel.

Bashar and I are relatively independent persons as compared to other people in our respective environments. We strongly prefer to make our decisions alone, do not easily rely on friends and are relatively resistant to social pressures. We both have a clear sense of direction and a strong feeling of justice, but may have divergent views on what is the right direction or on what constitutes justice. We tend to fulfill leadership roles, but have different perceptions of how a leader should behave. For both of us our perception of leaderships corresponds with what is expected in our respective environment. Thus, I tend to take a democratic stance in my leadership roles, with more input from those less powerful, which is common in Western cultures. Bashar opts for "paternalistic authority" (Sennett, 1980), which is more common in the Arab world. Bashar, in general and more specifically in his function of Sheikh, is both police officer and judge and he may use his personal charms, superior intelligence, higher education and good human insight as well as his physical strength, in order to get things done his way. He feels entitled to decide for others and receive a favorable attitude. He acts like a father towards those who are not his

children in order to promote their wellbeing or protect them from harm. The risk in this form of leadership is in the possible abuse of power, which needs to be prevented by checks and balances (Kets de Vries, 2003). His self-insight and openness to criticism, as well as family scrutiny are ways to keep the balance. Bashar stressed that not all Bedouins are like him and explained his attitude and behavior by the fact that he was raised in a family of Sheikhs, and therefore he is expected to tell people what to do.

Bashar's paternalistic attitude was clearly present also in our relationship. In many situations he was inclined to tell me what to do, expecting me to adapt to his way. Likewise, Bashar occasionally felt that I am imposing my Western ideas on him. From time to time, I would do things his way, while experiencing cognitive dissonance. The discrepancies between the expectations from me, my experiences and my thoughts created substantial internal conflict and stress for me on this dimension. I am in "his" world, so do I go along with his values? Alternatively, should I stick to my own beliefs? A submissive stance on my behalf made our dealings easier. Sometimes, I would do it my way, often paying a price, since when I spoke up, Bashar would often initially draw aback or get angry. Neither solution was satisfying, but eventually we would work things out.

The oldest son

Bashar's oldest son, Nimmer, is an adorable boy; both he and I much enjoy meeting. Nimmer and Bashar are highly attached. They do a lot of rough and tumble play and it is obvious that Nimmer – with his four years - tries to imitate his father's behavior. I had noticed on several occasions that Nimmer often behaves roughly with his younger brothers and sometimes hits them. At some point I suggested to Bashar that perhaps he should do something about that. Bashar replied that also his wife had told him about this behavior of Nimmer, but he does not see a need to make Nimmer change his behavior; he actually is quite happy about it. He explained that Nimmer does not beat his brothers when he is

around; only when he is absent. Some days later, when I confronted Bashar with this to me striking response of satisfaction with his son's aggressive conduct, he gave a slightly different view. He then stated that he actually does not think that Nimmer should hit his brothers, but in his absence he does want Nimmer to be respected as the oldest man at home. Bashar expects Nimmer to behave like him, assert his authority and be responsible for the family. According to Bashar, a Bedouin father will teach his children to respect the oldest son, so that the eldest will be able to take over his place when he leaves this world.

When Bashar's father died, it was the one but oldest, Abu Ya'akub, the most responsible and resembling their father, who took the responsibility over the family. Abu Ya'akub fulfills this role until these days, though all children are married and Bashar, the youngest is already in his mid thirties. Once at the garage I happened to meet Abu Ya'akub. Abu Ya'akub had heard about our friendship, but only vaguely. At this encounter he told me that the family's honor is something very important. In this respect, he takes care not only of his own ten children, but also of his brothers. Earlier Bashar had told me about his brother that he is tough and later he told me that only since recent years they have a good relationship. I wondered how this fits with the two of them putting so much emphasis on the notion of family. Bashar did not see any contradiction, and explained that even when they did not get along, they would be there for each other in case of need. Abu Ya'akub is aware of his toughness and added that he knows that his brothers will not tell him things about their lives that could make him angry. Concerning Bashar, Abu Ya'akub worried mostly that Bashar might go with other women or get into drinking. I assured him that Bashar is "on the right path". Scrutiny is one of his tools to monitor the behavior of family members and before leaving, he asked me to watch over Bashar.

Bashar noted that in my family the oldest son (me) does not receive respect as such, which is true. When still living at home I did have the responsibility of looking after my brothers

when my parents were away, and I did experience somewhat higher expectations from me as the oldest. Nevertheless, I experienced neither the responsibility nor a protected and more respectful position as the oldest. One may argue that this is related to the fact that at age 17 I left the Netherlands for Israel. Still, I doubt if my brothers after reaching adulthood would have seen me in any way responsible either for them or for the honor of the family, in case I had stayed in the Netherlands.

Law and order

In the dominant cultures in Western Europe and the United States, one expects that law and order be enforced through a national judicial system and police. For a Westerner it may look as if among the Palestinian Bedouins life goes along unorganized, without law or order. The Bedouins do not seem to care about such things as traffic directions (See 7.5 Taking risks - Stories of friendship: The traffic jam). Moreover, if a Bedouin is angry, he may physically threaten or assault the person who is the object of his anger, as in the story above.

One of the reasons for this seemingly lawless situation is that the Jahalin Bedouins in the last hundred years have been under continually changing national rule, respectively Turkish, British, Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian rule. With little law enforcement, the various systems of law did not obtain grip on much of the Palestinian population outside the major towns. The Palestinian legal system – the official legal environment of the Palestinian Bedouins - is weak and centralized (Frisch & Hofnung, 2007). It also is politically manipulated, leaving many Palestinian without adequate access to justice (Kelly, 2005).

However, the Bedouins follow their own legal system, which dates from pre-modern times. Bedouin law is an institutional system, but it operates differently from modern legal

systems common in the West. It highly emphasizes relationships, functions through the families and receives its power from Bedouin tradition, as well as from the ineffectiveness of the national legal system. In Bedouin life there is heavy family pressure to behave according to accepted norms as prescribed by Bedouin law. In rural places in the Palestinian Authority, Bedouin law is followed also by non-Bedouins. However, among the non-Bedouins family ties are less strong and as a result, Bedouin law is less effective.

Bedouin law is central in Bashar's life and in his academic studies too, while presently writing his Master's thesis on this subject. Here I will briefly relate to the matter, since it sideways affects the friendship as well. For example, if someone commits a felony, his or her whole family will be requested to pay the price, which is not just in honor, but often also financially to the family of the victim. Bedouin law refers to the notion of "money for blood". More specific, in a situation that a crime is committed, the penalty is on the whole family of the perpetrator; all male family members of 16 years and older will have to contribute. The more severe the felony, the larger the family circle involved. Fairness is fundamental in this respect, though what is considered fair may be different in Bedouin culture from what would be considered fair in many Western cultures. Crucial in this system are the role of honor and the sulha ceremony, which I described previously (See 5.3 Bedouin leadership - Stories of friendship: Settling a theft).

Our different perceptions on law and order are blatant both in situations that occur between us, as well as in our dealings with others. I was raised with the belief that the authorities are on your side and with the understanding that one does not break the law. Thus, I would feel highly uncomfortable about breaking the national law (of whatever country). Bashar would commit himself to Bedouin law more than to national law. He explained that he was raised with the understanding that the national authorities – whether Israeli or Palestinian - are not on his side. In his view, the authorities are not there to protect you; they are out to

get you. In practice, on many occasions Bashar would use his power to get what he wanted. This was even more so when things seemed unfair to him. For instance, on our visit to Rome we had bought tickets for the archeological park, but did not realize that they were valid only on the day of issuance. Therefore, after unsuccessfully trying to convince the cashier and the door attendant to let us in anyway, he jumped the three-meter tall wall and I bought a second ticket for myself. With my Dutch upbringing, in which one learns to respect the rules highly, written or not, I did not even consider joining him. On other occasions, I did break rules with him, but often with heavy heart. For example, at the Vatican, we simply passed the hours-long line of people waiting to get into the St. Peters Church and entered in an instant.

My experience of "authority"

There was something attractive in the idea of being entitled to decide for others, and there were moments in which I felt jealous over the – for me – extraordinary respect that the oldest son receives in a Bedouin family. I also found it at times astonishing how effectively things are handled in a so different way than the one I was used to. Nonetheless, occasionally I had strong feelings of unfairness as the result of power differentials, including but not limited to those between Bashar and myself. I found the less egalitarian attitude toward authority difficult to accept; especially when I was the person affected, but also when others were concerned and felt uncomfortable in those situations in which force was used – from my point of view – in an excessive way. Thus, throughout the friendship I observed other forms of authority, but remained with my own understanding that authority is to be practiced in a democratic way and that laws are to be obeyed even if no one is around to reinforce them. Our different views in this field regularly led to tensions.

9.3   The occupation

The impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the friendship was discussed previously through the perspective of individualism/collectivism (See 6.5 - Friendship and politics). We will now do so from the perspective of power distance; describing the topics of wealth, land and freedom.

Stories of friendship: Dancing with the drug dealer

Palestinian Authority, after midnight, June 2011. We were on our way to have a barbecue - some of the workers in our garage, Bashar and I. After quite some driving around and not being content with two earlier picnic places, we finally settled down at a gas station. There were already several reasons for me being not in such a good mood. Among others, Akram – the same person from the story of the netstick and for whom my dislike had grown since – had joined. I had made a fuss out of this. Bashar had reacted angrily to my behavior, to which in turn I had responded badly. In addition, both our cars were stopped by the Israeli police. They wanted to search my car for drugs, though eventually I succeeded to convince them not to do so. With three young Palestinians in my car, I had been frightened, not knowing how the police would treat us.

At the gas station, we encountered Hamuda. Bashar and Hamuda had not seen each other for about 14 years. They told me –in Hebrew - that Hamuda had been a good friend of Bashar's cousin who was killed by the police in his teens. I got a detailed description of the qualities of the youngster – specifically about his many girlfriends and his manliness - and about the four shot wounds in his shoulder and head. Bashar told a story in which his cousin had been seen with a girl. This had enraged 15 to 20 men, who then came after him .Bashar had fought the men in order to protect his cousin. I understood that Hamuda was rather rich. He said that he used to spend about NIS 30.000 (about $8.600) a day. When I

asked how he became so rich, Hamuda replied that I had better not ask. From the conversation between Bashar and Hamuda – in Arabic – I caught the word "cocaine". Bashar and Hamuda continued to enjoy themselves at the barbecue and Hamuda became the center of the happening, while making jokes and dancing. In the meantime I became more and more upset. It went through my head that this friend of Bashar became rich through ruining others' lives. Bashar encouraged me to join Hamuda in dancing. With the others standing around and clapping, I experienced some group pressure. Although in other situations I possibly would have enjoyed dancing to Arabic music, this was different when it was with a drug dealer. I made a few dancing steps, and then withdrew.

The party was ending. Although Bashar had said earlier that we would have time to sit apart and talk through some issues that we needed to discuss, this did not happen. After doing the cleaning up, Bashar told me to "take the kids home", meaning that I bring the young workers back to the garage. He said that he would remain with Hamuda. I was angry and told Bashar that I consider leaving me alone as inappropriate. My thinking was that the whole evening I had hardly understood a word and had had a highly difficult time. Now he wants to use me as a taxi-driver and runs off with a drug dealer. Bashar did not appreciate my reaction. I did not want to make too big of a scene in front of the others and eventually I accepted. I took the workers back to the garage and got home at about 3.30 A.M.. I had to get up at 8 A.M., but was not able to fall asleep. I was too upset.

We can find many instances of inequality in power within the story above, based on language, knowledge, nationality, gender, social status and more. I will relate here only to the issues of wealth and freedom in the realm of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and only as far as they became relevant for the friendship.

Wealth

The next day I confronted Bashar. He was very surprised. How did I get to the understanding that Hamuda is a drug dealer? This was not the case. Yes, in his younger years he had made good money in stolen cars, but he was never into drugs. Now he is working as an electrician. I found the size of my error in interpreting this ambiguous situation hard to grasp. I had filled the gaps of info according to what made sense for me and then believed my own creation. This was a recurring process in those situations in the friendship, in which my understanding of the situation was limited. This time, being aware of my previous misinterpretations, I was prepared for the possibility that Bashar's version of what had happened the night before would be rather different from mine.

I was not fond of the idea of someone being a thief, but this was not something out of the ordinary. Around Jerusalem, many of the Palestinians are refugees who live in relative poverty and have a hard time making a living. Some people find alternative ways to grow their resources, and in this environment stealing from Israelis is hardly considered a crime. Later that day Bashar provided some additional information on Hamuda and their acquaintance. It was in the early nineteen-nineties, when they were youngsters in the first Intifada. At that time, the political organizations encouraged stealing from Israelis, since that was a kind of returning what was taken from them. According to Bashar, until these days political organizations as Hamas and Islamic Jihad promote stealing from Israelis, but less so than in the past. Actually, with resources highly limited, stealing in general is not a rare phenomenon among rural Palestinians. Although we may find those who are substantially more affluent, even within Bashar's family, the Bedouins are the most deprived ethnic group in the Palestinian Authority (United Nations, 2011b). Still, Bashar believes that stealing between Bedouins is rare, because of the power of the families and their strong adherence to Bedouin law.

My financial situation is relatively fine. I own a 79 square meter (850 square foot) apartment, in which I live and work. The apartment is in a relatively inexpensive neighborhood on the outskirts of Israel's capital. I also own a small second hand car. I try to limit unnecessary expenses, but can afford spending money occasionally in order to have a good time. Most of my Israeli friends live in a similar socio-economic environment, but several of my Israeli friends are considerably worse off, despite their academic education, and struggling to make a living. Most of my European and American friends and family seem to be in a better financial situation, whereas most of my Palestinian friends are in a much worse situation. Many Palestinians are out of work, and do not have the money to pay for outgoing phone calls, local travelling or even basic food. Their housing may be as comfortable as mine is.

In Jerusalem – mainly on the border - and even more frequently in the Palestinian Authority one encounters small Palestinian boys and men trying to sell water, gum, or other merchandise. Some may become rather aggressive when one refuses to buy and many times I had to be stern in order to get rid of someone. Once, driving Bashar's family to their home, and passing the refugee camp Kalandia, a boy of perhaps 10 years old stopped us in a traffic jam and tried to make me buy water from him. I did not want to buy anything, but the boy insisted and eventually I agreed to buy a small bottle. Then, he threw into my car through the window two more bottles and wanted me to pay for them. Angrily I threw them back, at which the boy started to shout. With his terrible screams, giving the impression that I had taken his bottles without paying, he attracted the attention of others on the road. I was afraid that people would come after me, and did not expect much good when they would realize that I am Israeli. Eventually, we got out of the traffic jam and left him behind. This highly unpleasant experience made me feel both angry at and sorry for the boy. It also taught me some more about the desperate financial situation these people

live in, which is in striking contrast with the relative wealth of the Israelis – including me - living nearby.

Land

The Jahalin Bedouins are dispersed in the Judean desert to the East of Jerusalem in many small villages (See

Figure 4: West Bank Bedouin - Jerusalem Area (United Nations, 2007)). Another example showing the complexity of the impact of the occupation on the friendship concerns the issue of land. The Israeli authorities have plans to evacuate the Jahalin Bedouins in order to make place for Israeli housing and industry. They occasionally destroy buildings belonging to the tribe, claiming that these buildings are illegal. Although I realize the importance of adhering to national law, in the present circumstances I identify with Bashar and the Jahalin Bedouins as regarding these unjust events. Amnesty International, the organization in which I volunteer, and several other human rights organizations, campaign to protect the Jahalin Bedouins from being evacuated.

The organizations focus particularly on one particular school that the Israeli authorities plan to demolish. The school is in the Bedouin village Khan AlAkhmar, where Bashar's extended family lives. The inhabitants of Khan AlAkhmar do not have legal ownership of the land. (The school is built from car tires so that it is not considered a permanent construction, making it more difficult legally for the authorities to get an order of destruction.) Khan AlAkhmar is one of the places of interest to which Bashar I take friends so that they can get an impression of Bedouin life with all its hardships.

Khan AlAkhmar is in conflict with the neighboring Israeli settlement Kfar Adummim over the use of land. Kfar Adummim was established only in 1979, decades after the Bedouins were moved to these surroundings. The conflict is mostly in the legal field, but through the

years there have been several incidents of violence. Also in Kfar Adummim I have good friends, whom I enjoy visiting. Bashar, who is well acquainted with these same friends, would have liked to visit there as well, but he is not allowed to pass the gate of the settlement. This puts me in a highly awkward position. To complicate things further, I have friends who tell me that by visiting Kfar Adummim I support the occupation and hold me accountable for going there. This conflictual situation raises many delicate questions about my position vis-à-vis the different friends involved; something that I experience as an emotional burden.

Freedom

As could be seen from the incident in which we were detained (See 6.1 - Stories of friendship: Crossing the border), there is a large difference between my Palestinian friends and many of my Jewish friends in their attitude toward the institutes enforcing the Israeli law. Israelis tend to justify discrimination and harsh or degrading attitudes and toward Palestinians and the limitation of their freedom on grounds of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the danger of terrorism, while Palestinians see the Israeli police and soldiers mainly as the arm of the "Jewish" occupation force. (Actually, it is common for Palestinians to refer to the Israeli forces as "the Jews", notwithstanding the fact that they include people from other religious and ethnic groups as well, including Druze and Bedouins, albeit in small numbers.) For Palestinians, in a minority position, on the occasion where we were detained as well as in the story above in which we were stopped on the way, we were treated unfairly. In their eyes, this was another unacceptable deed by Israeli authorities, interfering in their freedom. Israelis, in a dominant social position, and identifying with the need for protection against terrorists, would perceive the attitude by the police as legitimate and justified. The disparity in attitude between my Palestinian and Israeli friends toward limitation of freedom could also be explained by a different attitude to the police and to authorities in general. Legitimacy has a strong influence on the

public's reactions to the police, and furthermore, the key antecedent of legitimacy is the fairness of the procedures used by the police (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). The development of national institutes and national law enforcement started later in the Palestinian Authority than in Israel and is in rural areas still in a stage of acquiring recognition. Furthermore, whether justified or not, Israeli law enforcement may be perceived by Israelis as more fair than Palestinian law enforcement by Palestinians.

Physical freedom used to be something rather self-evident for me; a concept that I was accustomed to so much that I would not consider it. Only since I became acquainted with Palestinians I became aware of my physical freedom. This contrasts sharply with Bashar's experience. As a consequence of the vast Israeli security measures meant to prevent terrorism, he feels highly limited in his freedom. In practice, Bashar's freedom is limited by Israeli police, soldiers and border police. I will relate here to the three bodies as a whole, since for the friendship the distinction is virtually irrelevant. Bashar cannot go freely to Jerusalem, the town that is only minutes driving from his home and which until the construction of the separation wall was the place where he worked, socialized and spent most of his time. In addition, he is limited because of the checkpoints all-over the West Bank and since soldiers may stop him anywhere for any reason. He would be happy to go abroad, but it is extremely difficult for him or for other Palestinians to obtain an entry permit to Western countries. (Visiting an Arab, an African or an Asian country is somewhat easier.) Bashar's limited freedom was a burden on the friendship, both emotionally and practically; not just for him but also for me.

I once asked Bashar why he so much wants to go to the United States. He replied because of the freedom there; you can go wherever you want and relate to whomever you want. I responded that I am not at all sure that he would like it in the United States. I considered that in the United States, as in Europe, there might be other kinds of limitations, to which

Bashar is not used in the Palestinian Authority. Freedom in Western Europe and Northern America is controlled through enforcement of national laws and institutional rules, much more than in the Palestinian Authority. He answered that I may be right, but the idea that in Palestine he is not free to move is too bothersome for him.

An incident illustrating the complex interaction between the aspects of freedom, wealth and friendship within the realm of the occupation, concerned my Bedouin hairdresser Fouad, whom I became acquainted with through Bashar. Fouad has a salon in the refugee camp Shu'afat, just behind one of the checkpoints, which I can pass, but he cannot. Once I came to his place to have my hair done, and found him distraught. He told me that he was arrested by Israeli soldiers in Ram, the Palestinian village in which he lives. He was detained for ten days in an Israeli prison. According to his story, the reason for the detention was that they found on him a small barber's knife. This was exactly during the time of the Arab holiday of Eid AlAdha, a time at which he would have made relatively much money. The netsticks mentioned before (See 6.1 Perceptions of friendship - Stories of friendship: The netstick), I rent from an Israeli phone company for Bashar, for his brother Abu Omar, and also for Fouad. They cannot obtain a cellular internet subscription by themselves, since they are not in a position to open Israeli bank accounts. As a result of the many days away from work, Fouad, who usually pays the rent for his netstick in a timely fashion, now found it difficult to pay.

The painful situation in the hairdresser's salon put both Fouad and me in an unpleasant position and required some psychological adjustment. Just a little later in this same incident I was asked by one of the other clients present whether I am Jewish, to which I responded that I am Dutch but live in Ram. To which Fouad added that I have a Dutch mother and a Bedouin father. In response to the unbelieving face of the client, I informed him that I am from the Abu Sahra (Bashar's) family. I usually do not have difficulty saying

that I am Jewish when among Palestinian acquaintances and later tried to understand what had happened to me in this case, that I disguised my religious background. I presume that our practical joke was born mainly out of my difficulty in coping emotionally with my different identities. In this situation, shortly after Fouad told his story about the unfair treatment by Israelis and his lack of freedom and money because of the occupation, I found it too uncomfortable to admit to being a relatively wealthy Israeli Jew who is free to go - almost - wherever he wants and takes part in the oppression of Palestinians. I believe that Fouad, who considers me like his brother, felt similar dissonance about my identity and made up part of the story in order to prevent embarrassment to either of us.

Occasionally I received requests to assist Palestinians less privileged, based on the perception of my greater freedom. These people would often erroneously expect that solving their problem would be easy for me. Examples of the latter are assistance in obtaining an entrance permit to Israel or a visa to a foreign country.

My experience of "the occupation"

I found myself in a peculiar and rather confusing socio-political situation, about which I started to write in the chapter on Individualism versus Collectivism, and on which I will expand now. I was raised in reform Jewish Zionist tradition, and taught about the oppression of Jews all through the ages. I subscribe to the right of existence of Israel and to the right of its population to live in safety. Furthermore, I am an officer in the Israeli army (in reserve duty) and as such take part in Israel's defense, which in recent years is mostly directed against possible Palestinian terrorist attacks. Nonetheless, I oppose Israel's policy of occupation of Palestinian territories, though I can understand its background and justification.

As in some sense part of the occupation force, I had recurrent feelings of guilt throughout the friendship about what "we" are doing to Bashar, the Bedouins, and the Palestinians; like the economic deprivation, travel restrictions and other human rights issues. The feeling of guilt intensified the more I became aware of the variety of hardships my Palestinian friends endure. Correspondingly, I became painfully aware of my privileged position, in freedom, financially and in life opportunities (e.g. making trips abroad). This made me more accepting of behaviors by Bashar and other Palestinians that were considered as unfriendly toward me. (This may be comparable to the experience of the Jewish psychoanalyst (Altman, 2000), who in response to his feelings of guilt over society's racism was less confrontational than could be expected with a black client who did not pay.)

I am actually not an Israeli citizen, but a permanent resident. With this in mind, I much preferred to look at myself as Dutch in nationality and as a peace activist. As such I felt bad about what "they" (the Israelis) are doing to the Bedouins and the Palestinians at large. I wanted to share with my Palestinian friends life on the Israeli side of the fence; life that has much to offer. I found it highly annoying that my friends could not come and visit me - as I could visit them - and regard the lack of possibility for mutual hosting as complicating my friendships. This perspective, although it saved me from feeling overly guilty, generated in me anger and frustration. My objection to the occupation may be acceptable within the international human rights community, but is far from mainstream thought in Israeli society, in which the human rights scene is tiny. Thus, my familiarity with Palestinians mostly made me feel like an outsider in Israeli society – one looked down upon.

Also among Palestinians I at times felt that it is me who is in the inferior position, the person who does not know the language, often does not fully grasp the context and clumsy

in his actions. I feared being objectified as an easy prey for those wanting to (ab)use me because I am an Israeli, and because of my freedom and relative wealth, which I could presumably share with those less privileged (cf. Gruenfeld et al., 2008)). Simultaneously, I worried that somehow either Bashar or I would get into trouble with the Israeli authorities because of the friendship. I feared for Bashar's safety.

Whatever way I looked at the situation, the power differential caused by the occupation, as it became part of the friendship, made me feel uncomfortable. The situation also made me face loneliness as regarding my position in the conflict and helplessness concerning my inability to change much.

9.4   Conclusion: Power distance

Differences in the friendship on the dimension of power distance were very large and along a similar pattern as Hofstede's findings on Dutch, Israeli and Arab cultures. According to Hofstede, the Arabs are accustomed to high power distance, whereas Israelis are among those with lowest power distance and the Dutch somewhere in between. My impression was that the acceptance of large power differentials is a dominant factor within Palestinian Bedouin society, perhaps even more than in the Arab world as a whole. (The Palestinian Bedouins do not accept the power differential vis-à-vis Israel.) We could compare this cultural difference with the distinction postulated by (Schwartz, 2006), regarding cultures favoring hierarchy versus those favoring egalitarianism.

As on the other dimensions, on the dimension of power distance there was a need for me to grasp and adjust cognitively. Cognitive adjustment was mainly to the extent of learning that in Bedouin culture things function differently from what I am accustomed to as regarding power distance and the use of power in general. In both the fields of

individualism versus collectivism and masculinity versus femininity Bashar and I have a different value orientations, but I often experienced them as complementary more than as conflicting. In the field of uncertainty avoidance, the difference in value orientation created more dissonance. In the field of power distance Bashar's value orientation did at times collide with some of my basic values. I was raised in a relatively egalitarian society. I believe that humans are equal in their fundamental worth. Within the realm of the friendship, I encountered various situations in which I felt that rights that I considered as basic human rights were not fully taken into account. I was well aware that individualistic cultures tend to be more concerned with human rights than collectivistic cultures (Hofstede, 2001) and that human rights possibly conflict with culture and religion (cf. Antonius, 1997; Vera, 2009). Nonetheless, on this dimension more than on the others I found it effortful not to be judgmental, and to see the Palestinian Bedouin outlook legitimate like my views in this field.

On the behavioral level, I needed to adapt greatly. I learned to act according to a different set of rules in a great variety of circumstances. I had to participate in different ways of decision-making, accept that issues of honor interfere with any activity and allow for challenge of basic behavioral rules, such as stopping at a red traffic light. I continually had to remind myself of these different rules, found acting accordingly difficult and erred repeatedly.

Dealing emotionally with the power differential between the two of us was most complicated. Perhaps in the present socio-political context, the expected situation was that I as Israeli would feel powerful, while Bashar would feel powerless. However, the situation was paradoxical, with Bashar often expressing force, while showing lack of fear, and me feeling powerless and fearful for a variety of reasons. At times I felt all those characteristics described by (Keltner et al., 2003) and associated with reduced power, such

as "(a) negative affect; (b) attention to threat, punishment, others' interests, and those features of the self that are relevant to others' goals; (c) controlled information processing; and (d) inhibited social behavior" (p. 265).

In the previous chapter, on masculinity and femininity, I had to censor my writings so they would be more or less in line with what is culturally acceptable. In this chapter I had to censor my texts not just from a cultural perspective, but from a political perspective as well. It was important for me to be respectful of Bashar's views and feelings about the themes on this dimension, which not always coincided with mine. Furthermore, I had to take into account that neither his environment nor mine is very accepting of crossing social, cultural or political lines. I did not want to complicate either his or my life more than – I considered – necessary by passing these lines. Already, several readers of previous drafts suggested that the openness that I (we) demonstrate on this dimension could endanger us both.

PART IV: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

In the previous parts of this study I have described the scope of the research, the professional literature on interculturality and friendship, and the findings as concerning my friendship with a Palestinian Bedouin on four cultural dimensions. In this last part, I will start with providing the conclusions from my findings and from the interactive work on the dissertation in general. In the subsequent chapter, I will set out some ideas on personal, professional and social change and offer recommendations.

10. Conclusions

In summarizing a case study one risks losing its richness and complexity. Moreover, generalization may often be highly difficult, if not impossible (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Therefore, this chapter starts with a story that by itself could be seen as an overview of the challenges and opportunities in the friendship. Despite the risk in deducting, an attempt will made to summarize some of the main issues as seen from the perspective of the value dimensions proposed by (Hofstede, 2001). The next section relates to the process of creating this dissertation and work with Bashar.

10.1 Hofstede's four dimensions

Here I will summarize the main challenges and opportunities in this friendship separately for each of the four dimensions: individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity and femininity, and power distance, but not before a story including a mixture of the many themes discussed in this study.

Stories of friendship: Moustafa's wife has a sister

The next story – that could be considered extreme, both in Bashar's culture and in mine - depicts the cultural differences as they became apparent in the friendship. In this story we meet again several of the characters and places described previously. I believe the themes are self-evident, and – not as previously - will leave their interpretation fully up to the reader.

Israel & the Palestinian Authority, November 2011; 8.00 AM   I am at home, not yet dressed. Bashar calls me; something highly unusual at this time of the day, and even more

so since he calls from an unknown number. He asks me to immediately contact the cellular phone company and shut down his phone since it was stolen. He adds that he will explain later what had happened. I am apprehensive. Shortly after, I receive a call from his wife, Um Nimmer, who tells me that Bashar has killed someone. She asks me to come and pick her up in the Palestinian town of AlEizariya. Killings are not rare in this environment, but I had not expected Bashar to kill someone. Never before did I need to ask myself whether I was willing to remain friends with a killer. Moreover, would I be considered an accomplice if I go along with Um Nimmer's intention to bring Bashar his passport so that he will be able to escape to Jordan?

9.15 AM   Despite some earlier misdirections I find Um Nimmer and their youngest, Kassem (by now 10 months old). She asks me to drive them first to their new home in the town of Ramallah in order to get her own passport, so that she can come with me to Jerusalem. On the way she explains that Bashar had sex with the sister of the wife of Moustafa, the mechanic. She is furious and uses my phone to call all over and find out more. I hear her on the phone suggesting to Bashar that he will take this other woman as a second wife. Clearly, she is less concerned about the killing than I am.

10.00 AM   There is a lot of traffic on the way to Ramallah. In the meantime, no one provided me with any clear explanation and I am trying to figure out what happened. The best I can make of it is that Bashar had sex with another woman. When her husband detected them, they got into a fight, in which Bashar killed him.

11.00 AM   We drive to Um Nimmer's mother and take the passport, continue to fetch Um Nimmer's daughter from her school, so that she can take care of the kids while Um Nimmer is away, and then take the oldest son Nimmer from Kindergarten. Surprisingly, with his four years Nimmer knows to direct me in the car to their home. Um Nimmer

changes Kassem's diapers, and then the three of us drive back to Jerusalem, where Bashar is supposed to be. (It is unclear to me how Bashar got by the wall and where exactly he is.)

12.00 AM   In order to enter Jerusalem (Israel) one has to go through a checkpoint. At the checkpoint we're stopped and I do not succeed in getting them through. I had expected that with their U.S. passports it wouldn't be such a problem, but I was mistaken. They do not have an entry permit to Israel. Um Nimmer does not give up easily. She asks me to try again at the checkpoint near Anata, the village where they lived before. I refuse; assuming that there is communication between the checkpoints, I am afraid that another trial will get us into serious trouble. I suggest that I drop them off in the village near the checkpoint and continue into Jerusalem on my own.

12.30 AM   Without my Palestinian friends, it is easy to get through the checkpoint. At the other side, I suddenly notice Um Nimmer with Kassem on her arm. I had expected that they will wait for me in the village, but instead they crawled through the barbed wire. I realize that they could be arrested for doing what they did. I feel that I cannot leave them standing there, and take them with me to Jerusalem.

1.00 PM   Um Nimmer, who had been in contact with Bashar, tells me that he is supposed to come to my place. We wait for him there. This is the first time Um Nimmer came to my home, and I would have preferred better circumstances for this occasion. Both Um Nimmer and I are anxious.

2.00 PM   Bashar has not appeared and his phone is turned off. I try to find out through friends where he could be, but without success. On her request, I take Um Nimmer to the Old City of Jerusalem.

3.20 PM   Bashar calls me to tell that he is on his way to me. This looks to me as one of the worst possible scenarios. Um Nimmer had already gone into town (with the passport). Furthermore, I freed the whole morning, but in ten minutes I have a client and three more clients afterwards. Bashar asks how I am doing and I reply that I am going crazy. He killed someone and he does not even explain what happened. He answers: "I what? What are you talking about?" I explain what I heard about the killing, and he replied that there was no killing at all and that I should not listen to stories. I tell him that I will talk to him after I finish with the client.

4.20 PM   My client left and I try to call Bashar, but again his phone is turned off.

5.00 PM   I am sitting with the next client, a 12-year old, when suddenly there is a ring at the door and someone enters the house. My client is surprised by the noise and tries to understand what is going on in the house. I had imagined that this could happen and I had therefore left the door open, but feel quite uncomfortable. I somehow manage to convince the boy that things are ok.

5.20 PM   After the boy left, I do not have time to tell Bashar that I am upset with the way he entered, because he precedes with telling that Um Nimmer and Kassem are on their way to me as well. Having in my mind that the next client tends to paranoia and may react gravely to any unexpected people, I reply with a "not possible". We agree that they will be waiting in my car.

6.20 PM   Client number three leaves and I go down to the parking lot to say hello and see if things are alright. They are actually sitting in my car. I have one more client to go.

7.18 PM   Another ring at the door; my client is still inside. There they all are! I shuffle Bashar and family into the kitchen, beg them to stay quiet for another few minutes, and get out the client. We then have dinner and Bashar finally tells me the story. Last night, the sister of Moustafa's wife needed to go somewhere and asked him for a ride. Bashar took her on his way, but then he was surrounded by cars with men from her village who tried to stop him. He somehow escaped with the car, after bumping slightly into a car that crossed his way. No killings and no sex, but yes, giving an unaccompanied woman a ride at night was considered a breach of honor.[27]

Info kept coming to me in pieces. Later that night I asked how the story was blown that much out of proportion – at least from my perspective. It turned out that Um Nimmer had heard about the girl and that there was an issue of "blood"[28]*. She had interpreted this as that a person was killed. I also learned that at some point in the race Bashar had escaped by foot, crossing several valleys, while leaving behind his car, phone and netstick. Many people had become involved and a sulha was arranged between Bashar, the family of the woman and the villagers. Bashar's main argument was that according to Bedouin law he did not do anything wrong. Although it may be questionable whether the woman would be allowed to address an unknown male in the circumstance, Bashar had not approached her in any way and his sole intention was to offer help.*

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[27] Transportation between and within Palestinian villages is scarce. One afternoon a few weeks after this incident we were driving in my car in Bashar's village, when stopped by two women with two infants who asked for a ride. We took them to their home. Still under the impression of the previous incident, I asked Bashar why he had agreed taking them. He replied that he had considered the older woman as the mother of the other one, and therefore considered it safe to take them in the car.

[28] Like in English, the Arabic word for "blood" has several meanings, including "kinship", "temper" and "the taking of life".

Bashar's brothers were furious about his behavior that allegedly put blame on the Ward family. Their discontent could possibly lead to a physical attack on him or even to his expulsion from the family. Thus, Bashar sat down with several of his brothers to explain the situation. Initially, he thought that things were settled, but he had not spoken with the two oldest, who were still annoyed with him. For reasons of honor, he did not want to talk with Abu Ya'akub, the head of the family. Instead, he turned to Abu Youssouf, his uncle and thus a more senior member of the extended family. Bashar expected that Abu Youssouf could and would arrange things with Abu Ya'akub. We went to visit and have tea with Abu Youssouf in his tent in the desert. Although Abu Youssouf was favorable, things did not work out as planned and the tension between Bashar and his brothers remained.

I then decided to interfere, in the hope that as a good friend of Bashar I may be in the position to mediate between him and his brothers, but highly wary that this could be a critically wrong decision. I arranged a meeting with his brother Abu Ya'akub. I did not inform Bashar in advance about this initiative, in order to prevent any uncomfortable position for him vis-à-vis his brother. Abu Ya'akub invited me to his second villa, on the Mount of Olives (Jerusalem), and honored me with the traditional sheep dish, mansaf. I was delighted since this was an indication that my visit was appreciated. Abu Ya'akub spoke during our meeting about the family honor, claiming that even if Bashar is more modern than he is, he should have known that his actions do not correspond with Bedouin tradition. I tried as much as I could to explain Bashar's situation, in the hope that this would temper Abu Ya'akub's anger. Subsequently, there were some more talks between the brothers and gradually things calmed down within the family.

This was not the end... The day after the incident, Bashar's car was towed away by the Israeli police. Later, we discovered that it was severely damaged - unclear by whom. My

car, which had been heavily used by both Bashar and me throughout these last days, broke down as well. As a result, we remained without private transportation for over a month, which was most inconvenient. With tremendous efforts by both of us, and by others, we first got back his car and then had the two cars repaired. In spite of the great costs involved, Bashar refrained from complaining about the damage to the car as not to complicate his life even more. In the meantime, the woman - with whom the event started - went to the Palestinian police and filed a complaint - probably as a means to protect her honor - in which she stated that Bashar had kidnapped her. In addition, the owner of the car that Bashar had hit complained with the Palestinian police. Subsequently, while on his way to meet me, Bashar was arrested. While in arrest, he was not allowed to make any calls, and neither his friends nor his family knew about this latest development. Um Nimmer and I – both highly concerned - searched for him everywhere until he reappeared a day and a half later as if nothing had happened.

The saga described above ended after about a month and a half, when eventually the sister of Moustafa's wife was married to a well-to-do Palestinian. It had been nerve-wracking for all involved, but for me it was a learning and empowering experience as well. The events confronted me with the understanding that I am not anymore a curious outsider, or a passive bystander, as I had experienced myself previously. Through the friendship I became an active participant in Palestinian – and particularly, in Bedouin - life and culture, assisting where I could. Moreover, I now felt acquainted enough with this culture to make independent decisions and intervene in and influence micro-scale social processes.

Challenges and opportunities

In this autoethnographic study I looked at the differences between cultures as found by Hofstede (2001) through the perspective of intercultural friendship. The focus was on one

specific friendship, between me, a Jewish Israeli man of Western-European origin, and my Muslim Palestinian friend of Bedouin descent. I analyzed a series of "stories of friendship" according to four cultural dimensions: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity/femininity. In the friendship, dissimilarities on all four cultural dimensions were great and easily discernible. The large cultural distance between our respective cultures and the lack of social support from my environment, highly increased the difficulties, in the cognitive, emotional and behavioral realms. This finding is in line with a series of quantitative studies in this field (see Ward et al., 2001).

Hofstede's findings are being used extensively in a range of academic fields, but primarily in quantitative studies. This study strongly supports the use of Hofstede's value dimensions as base for qualitative - and more specifically, autoethnographic - research. The use of Hofstede's framework with its four cultural dimensions facilitated categorization of the cultural differences between the two friends in this study, and of the challenges and opportunities stemming from the friendship. The framework thus provided a clearer view of the various fields of intercultural difference than would have been possible without categorization. While doing so it also shed light on findings in the field of uncertainty avoidance that did not fit well with the theory, as will be described later. No situation stands alone and on many occasions there were challenges simultaneously on more than one cultural dimension. In order to provide a clearer picture, I will summarize the challenges and opportunities separately for each dimension.

Individualism/collectivism

"Individualism, can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. Its opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group

to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, n.d. b). Differences between my friend and me on the dimension of individualism/collectivism displayed a similar pattern to findings by Hofstede (2001) regarding Dutch, Israeli and Arab cultures. Bedouin life is highly collectivistic, oriented toward the family, the clan, the tribe. In most situations, my friend tended to a collective stance, while I tended to an individualistic stance. It took me time to understand and appreciate, but eventually I became accustomed to and to value a collectivistic attitude to life. I started to enjoy collective ways of doing things and now occasionally prefer it to a more individualistic approach. Moreover, in a variety of settings I attempt to integrate both individualistic and collectivistic perspectives. In contrast, my friend remained rather ambivalent about individualism. It needs to be noted that the political context highly influenced the friendship and made it a hazardous endeavor. At times I felt "caught" in between two collectives, Jewish Israeli friends and Palestinian friends, and pressure – both from the environment and intra-psychic - to choose for one of these groups.

Uncertainty avoidance

"The uncertainty avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. […] Countries exhibiting strong UAI [Uncertainty Avoidance Index] maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. Weak UAI societies maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles" (Hofstede, n.d. b). Hofstede found Israelis to be relatively avoidant of uncertainty, the Dutch relatively non-avoidant and Arabs around the world average. Findings from the friendship did not fit well with the theory. The discrepancy between the findings from this study and those from Hofstede's studies may be related to the fact that I referred to uncertainty avoidance at large in daily life, whereas Hofstede based the Uncertainty Avoidance Index on three questions only, which were distinctively work-related. Hofstede's index may be highly relevant in some

fields, but may not necessarily explain uncertainty avoidance at large. It needs to be noted that Hofstede (2001) himself suggested that his IBM-based instrument may not be the most appropriate for any cultural comparison, that his theory is not finished, and that his findings are a step in an ongoing exploration.

Moreover, I have pointed at the hardships in using the concept "uncertainty avoidance" and suggested to divide this field into two separate cultural dimensions, namely "tradition" and "discipline". The dimension "tradition" is comparable to the basic value of tradition suggested by (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). The dimension "discipline" is partly overlapping with the basic value of conformity suggested by (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995), and matches the dimension of polychronic versus monochronic time suggested by Hall & Hall (1990). More research is required to verify this idea.

If we relate to uncertainty avoidance in the sense of "adherence to tradition", than impressions from the friendship seem to be in line with Hofstede's theory, with Bedouins valuing tradition more than Western cultures. However, the difference between us on this cultural dimension was not essential in the friendship. If we relate to uncertainty avoidance in the sense of "adherence to discipline" impressions from the friendship display the reverse of what Hofstede proposed.

My understanding is that my Dutch, "organized" upbringing made me highly value discipline, while emphasizing verbal communication, rules and planning. In this sense I am wary of any uncertainty. In contrast, my friend was not raised on discipline. He feels comfortable with high levels of uncertainty, indirect communication, rules or plans. The friendship taught me to live with much less discipline/more uncertainty than I had been used to previously and taught my friend about the advantages of planning. However, despite the fact that both of us invested substantial efforts to make things work also in this

field, the dimension of discipline created ongoing and substantial difficulties and tensions between the two of us.

Masculinity/femininity

"The masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success. […] Its opposite, femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life" (Hofstede, n.d. b). As concerning the dimension of masculinity/femininity, the differences between us were large; perhaps larger than would be expected from Hofstede's findings. Hofstede found that among the Dutch differences between men and women are among the lowest in the world, whereas these difference for Israelis and in the Arab world are about world average, with Arabs tending just a little more to masculinity. My experience through my friend is that among the Palestinian Bedouins any resemblance of femininity in a man is frowned upon, perceived as blame, and lowers his status. Possibly, the importance of manhood is more important among the Palestinian Bedouins than in the Arab world at large. Within the friendship, both my friend and I had to adjust to the other's different perception of being a man. Although I insisted on revealing now and then my vulnerabilities, if I wanted to fit in his circle of friends, I had to take care that my public image is masculine enough. The friendship was an opportunity to learn to become more masculine, which at the same time was also quite a challenge.

Power distance

"People in societies exhibiting a large degree of power distance accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. In societies with low power distance, people strive to equalize the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power" (Hofstede, n.d. b). Differences in the friendship on

the dimension of power distance were great, and along a similar pattern as found by Hofstede regarding Dutch, Israeli and Arab cultures. According to Hofstede, the Arabs are accustomed to high power distance, whereas Israelis are among those with lowest power distance and the Dutch somewhere in between. My impression was that power is a dominant factor in Palestinian Bedouin life, perhaps even more than in the Arab world at large. Differences between us in the perception of the intertwined values of power, honor, and authority, called for delicate and occasionally explosive situations within the friendship. In many instances, my friend was inclined to tell me (and others) what to do, expecting me to accept. In contrast, I would have chosen a more democratic approach. A submissive stance on my behalf made our dealings easier. Power issues on the political level influenced the friendship as well. The situation for Israelis is much more favorable than for the Palestinians as far as it concerns economic resources and freedom, but paradoxically, it was often I, and not he, who felt in an inferior position both within Israeli society and among Palestinians.

10.2 Studying my friendship with Bashar

The study of my friendship with Bashar was a challenge by itself, as well as an excellent opportunity to learn more about the cultural differences between us. The following story of friendship will exemplify how this dissertation fits in Bedouin life, and how its creation was influenced by the same four cultural dimensions on which we differ so much: individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity. Afterward I will expand more on the interaction between us around the dissertation. This will be followed by a discussion of some of the challenges I encountered in using the friendship itself as a research tool. This section will end with two dilemmas regarding the representativeness of my impressions that were of major concern to me throughout the process of writing this dissertation.

Stories of friendship: Bashar and my dissertation

Palestinian Authority, April 2011. The other day Bashar had heard some strange noises from my car, and had suggested that I bring it to the garage. At half past ten in the morning I called him to let him know that I am coming. Since some of the workers were still sleeping – they pass the nights at the garage - he suggested coming an hour later. At half past eleven his cellular phone was turned off, but I decided to go anyway. I took my laptop with me. Who knows? Perhaps today I manage to discuss with him some of what I wrote. On my way, I dropped by at Abu Omar's gas station in Anata. This morning Omar (his son) was working. Omar asked about his uncle, Bashar, and begged me to stay, but I wanted to move on.

At the garage in Anata, one of the workers looked at my car. Subsequently, Bashar took the driver's seat, told me to get into the car and drove out of the garage. Surprised, I asked where we were going. He told me that we would need to check the car's electricity. I assumed that this would be in a local garage, where he had done this before, but Bashar continued in the direction of the Palestinian town, Ramallah. Luckily, I had my European passport with me, since without that I cannot enter; Israelis are not allowed. I told Bashar that I really wanted us to go over things I had written for my dissertation, and Bashar replied that we can do that later. We had my car checked and did some other errands. We spoke in English when strangers were around with the purpose of disguising my identity and as a measure of reducing possible security risks. On our way back we gave a ride to the former owner of the garage. (Only later I found out that this had been planned in advance.) Back in the garage, the workers took care of my car.

In the meantime, I made coffee and tea for all present, something usually done by one of the junior men in the garage. At some point, when Bashar was away, Aziz, one of the

workers came up to me and said "now you're the boss". He clarified that this means that I will need to give them money to buy food. This time, I decided to make a call to Bashar and ask him what to do. Bashar responded that the workers receive from him enough money, which is also for food. At about 4 PM we had lunch prepared by the workers, eggs with tuna, hummus, white cheese and pita bread. Everyone was invited. Since it was Passover, I had brought some matzo bread. The lunch break took less than half an hour, but during lunch, two Israeli clients, who had not wanted to join the meal, walked out. Bashar got terribly angry with the workers for losing these clients. He shouted at them, but they did not look bothered by his behavior.

After lunch I finally had the opportunity to share with Bashar one of the stories of friendship I had put in writing. It was one that included a comment on being satisfied with myself for not crying. Bashar was astonished. To him this comment was highly inappropriate, because one could infer from it that I cry. He would never have written such a thing and he considered that I too better skip this part. We discussed the described incident, in which he had become angry at me for raising a topic for discussion. He explained that I am not sensitive enough to circumstances. I tend to ask straightforward whether we can discuss something (which I considered an "improvement" as compared to the Israeli style of simply raising the issue for discussion). However, according to him, I need to understand from the situation, and possibly, from indirect questions, whether it is appropriate to raise a certain subject. Bashar then walked out of the garage office.

I called him, when after a quarter of an hour he had not yet returned. He informed me that he had left the garage in order to take care of some urgent issues and that he will not return soon. It was 7 PM and I went home. I needed to prepare for the Skype-call later that night with one of the supervisors of my dissertation. I was quite content with my day.

The dissertation

Collaboration with a Bedouin on a text is not like writing a paper together with a Western academic. In Western cultures, it could have been possible to either communicate about a text by email, or simply fix a date and time to discuss it. Here this was vastly different. Bashar's input in this dissertation was crucial, but often circumstantial. Written communication was out of the question and we could never make definite plans to meet. It habitually would take hours to get his attention. Even when he had intended to go with me over my writings, it was hard for him to get to the job. It became usual to travel around together half a day or more, considering that eventually we will get to discuss my writings and in the meantime collecting more stories, as can be seen in the "story of friendship" described above. Most often I came to visit him in the hope to talk about my work, but alas.

When I did succeed in obtaining his focused attention, I would read the texts from my laptop, in bits and pieces, while translating them to Hebrew, to help him understand. We usually agreed on the general terms, but he would now and then provide additional relevant and enriching information or a different viewpoint that I had not considered. It needs to be noted that Bashar was well acquainted with the discussion of general ideas and metaphors, going at times through pains to make me understand his ideas. He was less experienced with the kind of academic discourse needed for the dissertation and the need for getting the facts right. Usually there were other people around, and noise from the garage or a television, and in this kind of circumstances I was mostly unable to get into nuances of the text. Workers, clients, friends, suppliers and people who needed advice would walk in or call. Repeatedly, such an interruption would be the end of our discussion. Working with Bashar on my dissertation was thus highly interesting, but sometimes frustrating as well.

On occasion, the discussion of the things I wrote created tension. For example, I told Bashar that I had written that it looks as if for the Bedouins "planning" is something unheard of. He got upset (angry) and replied that the Dutch are like machines, about which I got upset (hurt). We got into a small quarrel after which he explained that what I wrote damages his honor, and that things are not as I had described. He added that – as I should have known – he does have plans, but they are long term and much more general. Actually, he was right. I was well aware of his plans, but to me they seemed terribly vague. Ignoring his plans was a form of stereotyping from my side. He stereotyped as well. I reflected on his comments describing me – and the Dutch - as "cold" and "like a machine" and tried to make clear that his words were painful to me. Eventually, we agreed that we both have plans, but that mine are stricter than his, and that I may be relatively cold and inflexible as compared to Bedouins, but not as compared to other Dutch people. He then suggested including this particular conversational incident in the dissertation.

Observing the relationship in action was at times stressful; in particular for the dimensions of masculinity/femininity and power distance. The differences on these dimensions are sensitive and my thinking conflictual, so that pondering over the various incidents and turning these into comprehensible stories caused anxiety. Another source of anxiety and an additional burden was the need to be careful about what I could or could not write, because this could be too delicate to disclose. At the same time, writing my experiences was a form of catharsis, a way to vent my frustration with Bashar's actions (or non-actions). Discussing with him the stories of friendship was a recap of our experiences; a way of integrating both our views on what had happened and a way of psychologically working through the often complicated and heavily loaded events. Thus, many of our serious conversations (and some of our arguments) originated from the dissertation, while discussing with him its ideas, its texts or the comments I received from others.

The dissertation itself came to play a significant part in the friendship and it is hard to imagine in hindsight the friendship without the understanding that we would write about it. Through the work on the dissertation, I came to know him, his lifestyle and Bedouin culture much more than before. I would not have asked him for so many clarifications if it were not for this research. There were periods in which I almost gave up on Bashar's input, since it seemed he had lost interest. Nevertheless, the more the dissertation developed, the more he became actively involved. He told me what he believes is still lacking and occasionally initiated some form of contribution for the dissertation; a story or details he wanted me to add in the text. In addition, he started pushing me to publish our story in book form for the general public. Although at times this made me fear losing the required focus of a research study, I typically experienced his attitude as highly encouraging. Unlike the dissertation, the friendship is an ongoing venture.

The dissertation received attention also from other directions, like the Dutch media (Laparliere, 2011; Thooft, 2011); thus interviews of Bashar and me became part of our friendship. These interviews provided the opportunity to look at our friendship through foreign eyes, and strengthened the idea that our friendship may be significant for others.

Friendship as method

This dissertation is about "friendship as research method", as described by (Ellis, 2007; Tillmann-Healy, 2001, 2003), since the main tool of this study was the friendship itself. This kind of research is a collaborative effort, offering an intense and intimate look at a friendship, which is probably in many ways closer than what would have been possible if the friendship was investigated by an outsider. It provides the opportunity to use first hand tales about the friendship as data for the study. This study adds knowledge to the friendship literature by investigating an exceptional friendship between two men of highly different cultures within the context of ongoing political conflict.

Friendship as method is a complicated matter and I will share now a few of the complications I encountered. Though it would be possible to use friendship as a method from the perspective of the researcher only, making the friend an active partner in the research – as I did - can be enlightening in many ways. The friend may point out issues that otherwise could be overlooked. Moreover, his or her perspective will probably add more context and possibly put events and processes in a different light. However, the friend's way of relating may not necessarily be in line with common standards of research. This may be especially so, when the friend is not acquainted with academic ways of doing research. Consequently, one of the difficulties in friendship as method is related to making the friend an active partner in the research while remaining focused on the intent and goals of the dissertation. For example, Bashar had clear ideas about what is important to take account of in my study and told me tales that he wanted me to include in the text of the dissertation. Although these stories were often highly interesting, not always did I agree with him about their importance for this study. Thus, he gave me a detailed and painful account of the arduous lives of his parents and grandparents, but – with the risk of insulting Bashar - I decided not to incorporate this knowledge in the dissertation, since I found it too distant from the topic of this study, which is the friendship itself.

Selectivity of information, an issue to which I referred already in the chapter on methodology (See 2.4 - Notes of caution) was a major concern in the dissertation in various ways. Throughout the writing of the dissertation, the question of what to include and what not to include remained. On the practical level, I could have used more or other examples and could have made extensive use of linkage between the stories of friendship, the topical discussions, and the literature. In an attempt not to burden the reader, I refrained from doing so. In addition, the events behind the stories of friendships were often much more complex than described. Only in a few instances – as in the story of the

netstick – did I provide a detailed account. Even in the story described above, which is rather detailed, more relevant things happened. Although some would consider this selectivity a subjective bias, bias in case studies is not necessarily more than in other forms of research (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2004). I struggled with the question of what to make explicit. For example, the story about Bashar and my dissertation demonstrates a range of cultural behaviors and issues that would have been dealt with differently in Israeli or Dutch cultures. I hope that throughout this study I made the challenges and opportunities for me in this friendship comprehensible enough, even if in many instances they were left implicit. Generally, my hope is that I was explicit enough in my thinking, while leaving room for readers to interpret the stories by themselves and draw their own conclusions.

The relational level of the dilemma on what to disclose is more complicated. There are ethical aspects pertaining to the disclosure of information, and friendship research requires particular sensitivity to relational concerns in this respect (Ellis, 2007; Tillmann-Healy, 2003). I have before referred to the importance of confidentiality, especially because of the delicacy of this friendship and its context. Now I will address other relational aspects of disclosure. A friend is likely to expect that the study will portray a positive picture of her or his life and ways of thinking (cf. Baumeister & Newman, 1994). In contrast, the researcher will prefer to be as accurate as possible, while providing a balanced view and limiting distortions. These two perspectives at times may be in conflict. Bashar and I would have liked to be depicted only in a positive way. Nevertheless, we tried to be as open and truthful as possible and disclosed information, about which we feel uncomfortable or which could be perceived negatively by others. Not always did Bashar accept disclosure. Thus, there were texts and pieces of knowledge that I judged as important, that were vetoed by Bashar, not only because of their irrelevance in his eyes, but also because they could possibly be harmful to his honor.

For the abovementioned reasons, the question of what information to embrace in the text on friendship and what info to discard was found to be a delicate matter, which required repeated conversation in order to achieve mutual understanding and agreement. From this, it will be clear that my stance was that I will not include information against the wishes of Bashar or other people described. Ellis (2007) wrote publicly about caring for her elderly mother, but chose to be somewhat selective in sharing with her mother what she wrote. In contrast, I made a point of sharing all observations with Bashar. Like Ellis (2007), I found that while reading to Bashar my observations, there were words or lines that I felt unable to share, since I was afraid that he would consider them a blame of honor - either for himself personally or for his family - or otherwise inappropriate for publication. Unlike her, I opted for not disclosing in this study anything that I felt I could not share with him. The reason for doing so was that I considered it unethical to disclose and discuss with others information or ideas that I was emotionally unable to share with the person in question.

Bashar was well aware of the research and its intent from the start, and gave his written consent to my use of our stories. In contrast, friends and family of Bashar mentioned in this study were mostly unaware of the research. This situation required a completely different approach as regarding consent and confidentiality. Introducing this facet of my interest after – sometimes – years of acquaintance was uncomfortable. Sharing my texts with Palestinians other than Bashar and asking for written consent felt inappropriate, not only because we had no common written language, but also from a socio-cultural perspective. I did ask several of these friends and family members for their – oral - consent to write about them, but did not share with them everything I wrote about them. At the same time, I refrained from including in the final text any identifying information that I would have felt unable to share with them in person. In those cases in which I felt unable to share things that I had written, I fully disguised the identity of this person, adapted the

text or discarded it altogether. With Jewish friends this was different, since they were able to read through draft versions of the dissertation and comment if needed.

Another issue that is complicated in friendship research is the fact that a friendship – like mine – is an ongoing affair, whereas the research is not. Most ethnographic research has a distinct point at which the researcher enters the field and begins with the gathering of data, and a distinct ending, when the researcher leaves the situation. By contrast, in auto-ethnographic friendship research, much knowledge is gathered in an unofficial way before the start of the research and more knowledge is acquired after officially finishing the gathering of data. The incoming stream of knowledge is both an advantage and a challenge; an advantage because a mass of knowledge attained over a prolonged period is available, and a challenge because somewhere one needs to put a limit on what information to use. The number of our friendship stories continues to grow, while adding more understanding to the cultural differences. Therefore, it took effort to put an end to the collection and registration of these stories and decide that there is enough. My way of dealing with this situation, was by making use of all *essential* information available to me. I left out recent developments in part of the stories described in this study that could have provided new insight, as well as perhaps more poignant stories that appeared after early 2012. However, I did make use of knowledge about the friendship that was presented to me before the start of the research, and I also incorporated some information that seemed to me essential, but appeared after finishing writing down field-notes. This approach could be criticized, since it does not stick to a clearly marked research period. My reasoning was that the selected period for gathering field-notes was anyway arbitrary and since the friendship is ongoing, the inclusion of any relevant knowledge acquired before or after this period is legitimate.

Representativeness

Though one may consider that case studies do not necessarily have to be representative, I found myself throughout the process of writing the dissertation concerned with the representativeness of the friendship and my stories in particular. In this respect, I considered two great dilemmas that obviously affected the findings in this dissertation. One of the dilemmas involved the degree of my adaptation within the friendship and my value adjustment in particular; the other dilemma involved the difficulty in separating the cultural from the individual.

In one way we could look at the friendship as a continuing cultural conflict, with our two value systems squarely opposed to each other, and each of us representing a certain culture. Had I coped differently in this conflict, many of the stories and the friendship as a whole would have taken a different course. Both Bashar and I tried – sometimes rather forcefully - to make the other adapt to our respective value systems, and did so with only limited success. At times this felt like a boxing match over different outlooks on life.

One of the most striking examples of the culture fight between us was around situations in which Bashar had intended to come and visit me and things turned out differently. Every now and then Bashar would tell me that he would come to meet me at my place in Jerusalem. Occasionally, he would arrive some point after the time he had mentioned, but regularly something interfered in his way and he would change his direction. This could be someone else he encountered, some work to do, presence of soldiers near the separation wall or anything else. He would not care to inform me, and I would usually find out only the next day why he had not arrived. These situations made me angry and frustrated, because I had adapted my plans and had waited for him to come. I also would be highly worried, since on his way to meet me more than once he was arrested by Israeli soldiers and detained for hours. In such incidents I often experienced that he tied me down by not

informing me about his change of direction; something that I found unacceptable. Similarly, he felt that my expectation that he would inform me was a type of interference in his manner of living in flux and a - to him unacceptable - way of tying him down. In these situations we both felt not respected in our respective cultures. We had many fights about this kind of situations, which commonly left both of us hurt. Paradoxically, and as unpleasant as these fights were for both of us, they made our friendship more intense.

Regularly, other Jews - friends, family, and teachers – questioned my way of dealing with the value conflict in my relationship with Bashar. They raised the possibility or decided that I accommodate overly and they warned that I should not give up so much of my own values. My response is multi-layered. First, I find it complicated to look back ten years, evaluate my values at the start of this friendship in retrospect, and compare these with my present value appraisal. I will however provide in the next section a few examples of value changes that I perceive to have occurred. Second, it would be challenging to separate value changes over time because of the friendship from those resulting from other processes in my life. Throughout the last years, this friendship comprised a growing part of my life, but my life involved also other pastimes and events that had influence. Third, there is an assumption in this question about value conflict that – only – the original values constitute "me"; I see it differently. Additionally, there is an assumption that giving up on values is something negative; something that may be questioned as well. Culture is an ever-changing process. My view is that adhering less to certain values and more to others that previously were considered as less important could be a positive development. My new persona feels as much "me" as the one that existed before, and I experience myself as expanding, while being able to manage within a different value system.

To some extent, I gave up in the friendship on the values I used to adhere to and it is very well possible that I did so in a greater extent than others would have been willing to do in

similar situations. My understanding was that I either take the relationship as it is or leave it and that there would have been no way that I could become so much involved while sticking to my Dutch/Israeli value orientation. Furthermore, I participated in this friendship out of choice and could have ended it in case I had wanted to do so. If I had more insisted on Bashar's respect for my – especially "Dutch" – values, we had remained distant friends or - more likely - the friendship would have dissolved altogether long before. This was certainly frustrating and at times painful. I experienced the change as so massive and intense, that I was afraid to remain with stretch marks in my psyche. However, from a theoretical point of view, I used the approximation strategy of integration, accommodating to aspects of the other culture while retaining aspects of my original culture. This strategy is considered to be eventually the most psychologically healthy and adaptive (Pessate-Schubert, 2003).

A second dilemma in the course of writing the dissertation was related to the complexity in understanding what aspects in the friendship are culturally determined. This dilemma concerned the possibility of generalization from this friendship, and thus to the significance of this study. Although I have discussed the issue of interpretation and generalization of findings in the chapter on the methodology of this study, I would like to return to and exemplify it here. Several conflictual situations in our friendship made me wonder to what extent they are caused by the personal characteristics of Bashar and me and to what extent they have a cultural base. Clearly, we both have our unique personalities that affect the friendship, but as much as possible I wanted to dwell in the study on attitudes and behaviors that somehow seemed culturally representative. Now and then, I received cues about the (lack of) representativeness of Bashar's conduct through communications by other Bedouins. This was the case for Bashar's recklessness, which others considered as extreme. At the same time it needs to be noted that his behavior was not necessarily perceived as culturally inappropriate. Thus, also his brother Abu Omar

would at times get annoyed with Bashar for his behavior, mentioning that he takes things to the edge. I tried to make use of this extremity, considering that in qualitative research extreme cases are good to get a point across (cf. Flyvbjerg, 2004).

I will provide another example of an issue of which it was not clear to what extent it is determined culturally. This is the idea that in an encounter, any moment could be the last. I found it hard to believe that someone can simply "walk out" on one's friend without any verbal comment on a pending separation, as Bashar did occasionally with me. This felt so strange and inappropriate to me. I was certain that other Dutch or Israeli people - had they been in such an incident - would have similar reactions to mine. I wondered whether these "disappearances" (from my point of view) and "other immediate things to do" (from his point of view) were some individual characteristic of Bashar. Eventually, I realized that even if there may be some personal factors, it obviously is a subject of culture. For instance, during the incident described before, Abu Omar, who otherwise has a relatively considerate personality, came in and left in exactly the same way as Bashar did, before I even had a chance to talk with him. The workers in the garage are all Palestinian, but except for Bashar only one is Bedouin, Fawaz, who I mentioned before. He too would arrive and go without prior notice. No one seemed to be concerned about his behavior. This of course does not prove much; however, it does show that Bashar is not alone in this kind of behavior, which appears to be an accepted form of conduct.

11. As for change...

In this chapter, I will set out some thoughts stemming from this study about change. Specifically, I will relate to personal growth, psychology and social injustice.

11.1 Personal growth

In this section, I will dwell more on the notion of transformative learning and the changes I went through as a result of this friendship. I then will relate specifically to personal efficacy and the stress involved in changing. This will be followed by an expansion on the topic of value change, something crucial in this study. I will conclude with some indications about changes in Bashar.

Stories of friendship: Where is Christine?

Anata, at the garage, June 2011. Bashar and I had taken on a small tour of Bedouin life circumstances my friend and colleague Christine. Both Bashar and I had enjoyed Christine's company. Afterwards I posted on Facebook a picture of Christine with a camel. When Bashar saw the picture, he was enthusiastic and exclaimed "what a wonderful picture of the sunset with a camel!"

<u>Transformative learning</u>

It was suggested that the cross-cultural encounter could be both stressful and an opportunity for growth (Montuori & Fahim, 2004; Tesoriero, 2006; Ward et al., 2001). In addition, growth may result from close encounters with others and connectedness (Jordan, 2001; Kern et al., 2001). Thus, cross-cultural friendships, that enable close encounters and connectedness, are great ways to generate personal growth, but as well as stress.

Understanding one's experiences is another way to personal growth, while people's efforts to understand their experiences often take the form of constructing narratives out of their experiences (Armengol-Carrera, 2009). Creating narratives (stories) is exactly what I did here. Reading through the extensive literature, writing down and making sense of the stories of friendship, all contributed highly to my personal development. I never would have asked myself so many questions about my own outlook on life without this friendship and I never would have asked myself that many questions about our friendship and my position in it without the dissertation.

Mezirow (1997, 2000) referred to the concept of "transformative learning", the process of affecting change within a frame of reference, as key to adult education. "Transformations in frames of reference take place through critical reflection and transformation of a habit of mind, or they may result from an accretion of transformations in points of view" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 7). He exemplified transformative learning through the idea of ethnocentrism, and he claimed that when meeting people from other cultures, we learn taking various points of view and reflecting critically on our own misconceptions. If we do so with people from diverse cultural groups, it is likely to transform our ethnocentric habit of mind and make us more tolerant.

My experience and this study specifically teach that intercultural friendship can be an exceptional way to achieve transformative learning. I discovered about the life, language and customs of the Palestinian Bedouins, as well as about their socio-political situation. I escaped the cultural "psychic prison" in which I had been living (cf. Lowe, 2002; Morgan, 2007), and doing so I encountered aspects of my own cultures – both the Israeli and the Dutch – of which I had been unaware. I learned more about my Jewish friends and family, and about the immense reluctance of many of them to see the good things in my friendship

with Bashar. The friendship opened a new world for me, or - more accurately – it shook my worldview. At times, it felt as if the elements of life were taken like a pack of cards and reshuffled. It happened repeatedly that Bashar and I looked at the same thing or situation and saw something different. Moreover, he gave me the opportunity to enter situations that taught me new ways of looking at and interpreting the world and "forced" me to cope in ways foreign to me.

We could look at this also in terms of hybridity, a concept used by Bhabha (1998) "to describe the construction of cultural authority within conditions of political antagonism or inequity" […] "the hybrid strategy or discourse opens up a space of negotiation where power is unequal but its articulation may be equivocal" (p. 34). While moving from a position of cultural supremacy toward hybridity, matters that seemed self-evident to me lost their obviousness. Life did not become easier, but my horizons widened and consequently I became more humble as regarding the standing of my culture.

The acquired knowledge about Bedouin culture helped me taking new perspectives and broadened my outlook on life beyond Bedouin culture. It stirred the belief that my cultural way was the "right" way and taught me that numerous situations in life can be dealt with in different manners than those familiar to me. Nowadays I can accept more readily that my way of looking at the world is just one out of many. This made me less dependent on the common knowledge in my environment, and more flexible in taking various points of view and/or ways of action. My experience is thus comparable with the findings from an extensive review that general cross-cultural competencies contribute more to intercultural effectiveness than do more specific skills and knowledge regarding a particular culture (Abbe et al., 2007).

The story depicted above is an acute example of transformative learning. It was like one of these optical illusions in which one can see different things, depending on what one considers as the foreground and what appears to be the background. It had not occurred to me that one could see something other than I saw. Bashar was well aware of Christine's presence in the picture, but he was more attuned to the environment. In contrast, for me the person is central (in most situations), and I had not even noticed the sunset. One could see here the different relationship we have with nature (cf. Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, in Samovar et al., 2009). Bashar was about to write what he saw as a comment on the picture, but taking into account that Christine is European, I felt uncomfortable about him leaving her out. Therefore, I suggested that he would mention her as well, which he did. On hindsight, I realized that there was no reason for my interference since she is not the person who would be easily offended by such a thing.

Personal efficacy and the stress of change

I would agree with the understanding that "… the true impact of friendship, [which] is exerted not only by harmonic friendships, but also, or even more, by friends who fight their way through all the complications and contradictions that characterize different kinds of friendships in real peer life" (Krappmann, 1998, p. 36). Certainly, we fought through complications and contradictions. I needed to learn a new cultural language that was not similar to anything I had learned until then. From an interpersonal point of view as well as in physical reality, it sometimes felt as in a jungle, while no one taught me how to cope with its dangers. Had I read the literature for this study beforehand, I probably would have felt more prepared. However, I did not. Moreover, I believe that many – if not most - people who become involved in intercultural friendships do not invest ahead of time in preparation for such a friendship. Like me, they are prone to be caught by surprise repeatedly, through smaller or bigger events in which the other reacts or behaves in a – to

us - incomprehensible way. The conviction that eventually one will manage to conquer the hardships is crucial for maintaining the friendship.

Perceived personal efficacy (or self-efficacy) is the belief that one has the power to effect changes by one's actions. Self-efficacy is enhanced, among others, through mastering experiences, while "resilient efficacy requires experience in overcoming obstacles through perseverant effort" (Bandura, 2008, p. 169). Clearly, the friendship provided ample opportunity to enhance my self-efficacy through its many challenging experiences. Moreover, my experience is in line with the self-expansion model, which portrays the individual as looking for self-expansion in order to increase his self-efficacy potential. According to this model, self-efficacy is enhanced through the incorporation of material and social resources, perspectives, and identities that will facilitate the achievement of goals (Wright *et al.*, 2005).

It is not just through mastery of events that I increased my self-efficacy, but also through the relationship itself. Incorporating the other in the self, by ways of personal relations, like friendships, is one of the ways to create self-expansion. Thus, interpersonal closeness is to some extent motivated by the wish to include attributes of the other. People usually tend to choose their friends from within their in-groups. However, intergroup – such as, cross-cultural - friendships provide greater opportunities for self-expansion, because of the many different attributes the out-group member possesses. Consequently, intergroup friendships are considered attractive to some people (Davies, Wright & Aron, 2011; Wright *et al.*, 2005).

However, intergroup contact may also create feelings of disintegration and self-loss. "Self-expansion can be stressful, as a large number of new self-aspects are incorporated into the existing selfstructure and periods of rapid self-expansion may need to be followed by

periods of self-integration" (Wright *et al.*, 2005, p. 136). Moreover, acquiring self-efficacy concerns achieving control over potentially threatening situations. Since these situations are not always under one's personal control, they are anxiety provoking (Bandura, 1988).

If I look at my experience from a psychological point of view, I realize that in many occasions I have felt anxious, confused, helpless, lonely, scared, bewildered, angry, disappointed or sad. Every now and then, I found it hard to contain my own emotions and at times situations were disturbing to such an extent that I developed minor psychosomatic symptoms. Only a few years ago, I would have been totally upset by many of the incidents described in this study, helpless, and bewildered. Occasionally, I would have had sleepless nights and cried a bit, while unsuccessfully trying to make sense of the situation. Now - more experienced - I understand better Bedouin ways of action, or non-action. Generally, I feel more aware of the possibility that others may handle in ways that are unlike mine, and I cope better with unexpected circumstances, not just within the realm of the friendship.

At times, I wondered why I need a relationship that creates so much stress in my life. The answer remained the same: the friendship is also highly rewarding. This is not only because I appreciate Bashar's company or because he gave me the opportunity to look into a new world, but also because he caused me to look at my own world with different eyes. Often the same stressful situations in which he put me were eye opening. The friendship thus broadened my personal boundaries tremendously.

Changing my values

The main challenge in bridging cultural differences stems from different value orientations. We discussed these differences in value orientations and my behavioral, cognitive and emotional adjustments. Altogether, it seems that the process of value change was complex and differentiated depending on the specific value involved. Bardi &

Goodwin (2011) identified five facilitators of value change, which are priming, adaptation, identification, consistency maintenance, and direct persuasion. As will be described subsequently, all factors played a role for me. In order to understand better what happened to my values, let us now look at a couple of specific values and the ways in which they changed.

Bardi & Goodwin (2011) described the dual way to value change, with one automatic route and one effortful route, which may be combined. I walked both routes. If it were not for the dissertation, I would not have thought so much about the value changes I went through. Still, for most of the values the process of change was automatic and unconscious. It happened gradually, through the years, without me being much aware of it. Some values I relinquished easily, like "cleanliness". There is a great difference between the Dutch and Bedouin perception of cleanliness, but this was so little of an issue in the friendship that I did not care to discuss it until this point. In contrast, the related value of orderliness was an issue in the friendship, and – though Bashar and I are still far apart on this value – it did loose part of its importance to me; another automatic change that occurred as a result of my continuing confrontation with lack of order.

Value change can be a cognitive process based on choice (Roccas et al., 2002). Some values, such as "hospitality", I internalized readily, since I found it easy to see their quality. For other values, the change was effortful. I realized that there was no way that I could make Bashar or other Bedouins adapt to my understanding of time. Thus, being more or less "culturally forced" to do so, I consciously gave up on the importance of "punctuality". Bashar used his will-power and direct persuasion to make it clear that I am supposed to adapt since I am in his cultural environment. Also for values, like "daringness", I was highly aware of the process of change. I exposed myself to increasingly adventurous situations, while making cognitive decisions in that direction and

habituating to mounting levels of stress. This happened partly because of environmental stimuli and partly because of an internal desire to change.

Maintaining consistency between my values and my actions was sometimes tricky, especially when the friendship called for actions that were not in line with my values. Although I adapted to some extent in my behavior, I was ambivalent in my willingness to change certain values. Thus, I took a middle path for the value of "toughness", agreeing that at times one needs to exhibit one's vigor, but rejecting that one always needs to be tough and insisting on my right to expose vulnerability, occasionally. Some values with which I had not been so concerned before received more importance. Thus, I reluctantly began giving more importance to the value of "preserving public image". In addition, there were values, for which I adjusted only on a behavioral level, as for the value of "honesty". Within the context of the friendship, I had to give evasive answers or lie sporadically to other people involved in order not to create major problems for either Bashar or me. Still, I did not substantially change my perception of honesty as highly important for me. In these situations, the cognitive dissonance between my behavior and my beliefs resulted in internal turmoil.

Most of my value changes were not just in the realm of the friendship. Thus, for values such as "security", the change can be noticed in many aspects of my life. I began taking more risks outside the friendship as well, for example with time and money. I also started to take more risks that are physical. For other values, I created some kind of double standard, heightening or lowering the importance of certain values depending on the cultural context. This was the case for "punctuality"; though I did lower a bit the importance I gave to this value in my life, the change was mostly in the realm of the friendship. In this aspect, I became more lenient in my interactions with Bedouins than with Jewish Israeli or Western friends. This differentiation seems based on the notion of

priming (cf. Bardi & Goodwin, 2011). One culture primes a certain value orientation, whereas the other culture primes a different orientation. Bardi & Goodwin (2011) also differentiated between initial and temporary versus long-term and stable value change. The friendship exists for almost a decade, in which I changed my schemata on a wide scale of situations. Although I do not know what would happen to my values if the friendship dissolves, I believe much of the value change will remain.

Changing Bashar

This study looked at the friendship primarily from my point of view. While reading things that were written through my eyes, it may seem to a Westerner that I was extremely flexible, whereas Bashar hardly accommodated. Neither Bashar nor I see it that way. Bashar as well experienced accommodation and personal growth. However, one needs to bear in mind that he comes from a highly traditional culture, whereas I come from an environment that is more open to other cultures. In addition, I am personally more experienced than he is in meeting other cultures. Some of Bashar's adjustments I pointed out before. I will mention a few of his changes. He learned to be more considerate with me than with Palestinian men. In addition, he introduced me into his circle of friends, home, and family; especially the latter being uncommon with Bedouin or Palestinian friends. This is even more exceptional taken into account that I am a foreigner – and besides that a Jewish Israeli. Furthermore, he would share with me his personal thoughts, something uncustomary for him. According to him, he generally became more open toward others about his life because of our friendship.

Bashar's adjustment was partly driven by instrumental needs. Thus, he acknowledges that he learned from me about "the modern life" and in particular about the advantages of planning. I became for him a catalyst of change in the field of communications. With my assistance he started using a smart phone, and internet for email, Facebook and Skype. He

would enjoy these methods of communication, but with less availability of these facilities, he could remain days without a phone, or weeks without internet access, without experiencing much concern about this. It was clear that he remained less dependent on internet or a telephone than many academic Westerner or me.

Bashar finds it extremely difficult "to be both Bedouin and 'modern'", as he puts it, and succeeds only partially in combining both outlooks on life. He often has a hard time with me, feeling that I expect too much adjustment from him, but – unlike me - only infrequently complains. He once said "neither he nor other Bedouins can live up to Western expectations". Nevertheless, he hopes that his children will fare better, and would like to see them grow up while being able to be more flexible than him and manage well in both Bedouin culture and modern Western culture. Meanwhile, the cultural differences are barely bridgeable. This he sees as one more reason for Bedouins to keep distance both from Israelis and from Westerners. Close intercultural friendships are scarce; so much, that throughout the nine years of friendship and involvement in Palestinian Bedouin life I have met only one other Israeli Jew – a tour guide - who came close to my level of personal involvement with the Jahalin Bedouins[29]. We therefore can consider our friendship as both unique and paradigmatic.

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[29] Many organizations for human rights and/or social justice are active in the Palestinian Authority, and some of them are involved with the Bedouins as well. Through these organizations there are social contacts between Bedouins, Israeli Jews and foreigners, but they usually do not get to this level of personal involvement.

11.2 Psychology, personality and social injustice

The study of this friendship bears implications for the field of cultural psychology, for the notion of multicultural personality and for the combat against prejudice and social injustice. I will shortly discuss these three issues, which all have to do with being aware of cultural difference and our own tendency to be judgmental of other cultures.

Stories of friendship: Raising awareness

The following story is a portrayal of one of Bashar and my attempts in using the friendship as a means to create more awareness outside our respective communities to social injustice involving the Jahalin Bedouins. The trip described illustrates both the hardships and the complexity of Palestinian Bedouin life, but also tries to counter some cultural stereotypes (such as "all Bedouins live in tents").

Jerusalem & Palestinian Authority, Saturday, February 2011. I brought Miriam back to the bus. Miriam is a volunteer at an international human rights organization. Bashar and I had visited her last year in the Netherlands and today took her on a tour to the Bedouins. We visited the village of Arab AlJahalin, built from the compensation the Bedouins received when they were evacuated from the Ma'ale Adummim settlement. The village, with its many villas, is located near Jerusalem's garbage dump. We also visited the Prisoners Movement Museum at the AlQuds University, the same one we could not enter with my uncle[30], which displays both the horrific stories of Palestinian detainees and the beautiful works of art made in prison. On our way to the Jahalin primary school at Khan AlAkhmar, we drove down the road where we had the traffic jam with my teacher[31]. The

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[30] See 9.1 Honor - Stories of friendship: No "no" for an answer.

[31] See 7.5 Taking risks - Stories of friendship: The traffic jam.

school, built of car tires and cement, is planned to be demolished, and Miriam would like

to do an action for it, with Dutch and Bedouin children exchanging drawings.

Cultural psychology

Cultural psychology is a field that existed for many years, and numerous articles and books were published about cultural difference. For those in the helping professions, learning to cope with cultural difference is of utmost importance. Still, for many psychologists, and clinical psychologists in specific, the influence of cultural issues on the lives and development of their clients, is something that goes almost unnoticed.

Competent engagement in intercultural encounters was suggested as a way to personal as well as professional growth (cf. Tesoriero, 2006). My immersion in Bedouin culture made me more aware of cultural variations in general. I found this not only helpful in my personal life, but also in my work with clients of many cultural backgrounds. In my work as psychotherapist, with both individuals and groups, I try to empower people, make them more aware and enhance their personal growth. More than before I am able to see how my own cultural background may bias the way I perceive clients. I was taught extensively about how one's personal and family background affects her or his emotional world and behavior. Now, I am more able to reflect also on how a person's cultural background affects one's dealings with the social environments and one's perception of others' attitudes and behaviors.

I will give examples from my psychotherapy practice with three male Israeli clients:
- An older client of Western origin complained that people in Israel will not call you back despite promising to do so, and - as a consequence of this kind of behavior - referred to most Israelis as dishonest and liars. He therefore found it hard to make friends.

- A young Jewish client from Yemenite origin complained that at his place of work, one of the female Jewish employees became friendly with a male Arab employee. This upset him to such a degree, that he considered quitting his job.

- Another client in his twenties went for vacation to Thailand with two friends. When at some point they decided to separate, he got so anxious about being alone in the strange environment, that he felt he was not able to cope. He took the first possible flight home.

The first example demonstrates a misinterpretation of another culture. I could help this client see that his difficulty may be based on different cultural perspectives regarding uncertainty, or more specifically the use of language and the fluidity of life, and that not necessarily the people he encounters are "bad" people. The second example reveals a conflict between individualism and collectivism. Although I did try to show him other points of view, realizing his collectivistic view, I could understand how he took this friendship as a betrayal of the Jewish people. The third example is one of culture shock. The client called me from Thailand and I tried to comfort him while he was having a panic attack.

I also changed in my work with and within groups. Through my involvement with cultural challenges, I was inspired to create a workshop on the encounter with another culture. In this workshop participants looked at the growth enhancing aspects in their own cultures and in those cultures they encountered. As an organizational consultant, more than ever I try to highlight the organization's cultural setting and underlying assumptions, which go often unnoticed and thus cause counterproductive tensions.

The changes I went through are all signs of the culture-blindness I suffered from previously in my profession. It is expected that many psychologists like me have experienced similar deficits in their professional education. With increasing cultural

intermingling, the understanding of the socio-cultural environment of a client - or an organization and its members - becomes of greatest importance. Therefore, it seems that more emphasis on cultural aspects in the training of psychologists, especially clinical psychologists, is required.

In general, there is little professional literature on friendship in general and research on intercultural friendship is rare. Moreover, professional literature in the Social Sciences, and in Psychology, specifically, has had a tendency to be oriented toward Western cultures. Although over the last decades this situation is slowly changing, social research on the Arab world, on Palestinians and on Bedouins remains limited. More research in these fields is requested.

Multicultural personality

Being born in the Netherlands to Jewish parents and migrating to Israel had a major impact on my cultural identity. Dutch culture is ingrained in my personality, and Jewish customs are an integral part of my personal history. Migration and life in Israel forced me to adapt to new cultural ways of looking at things. I experienced many more cultural influences on my life and personality, because of the interaction with various social and professional groups in which I participated throughout the years.

In this friendship, I experienced gradually adding also Bedouin or Palestinian Arab elements to my life and identity. This happened in a variety of ways. For example, my experience is that acquiring a new language comes with the development of a new part in my identity. It is as if I am a little different when I think in different languages, experiencing distinct sets of mind. This is comparable to findings on multilingual adolescents who experience life differently and create various subjectivities based on their use of different languages (Kramsch, 2006). It is obviously not just the language making

the difference. I found myself in different environments acting in dissimilar ways, more in line with the value system of the environment. Actually, my personal experience coincides with the finding that people of dual nationality were found to keep distinct value systems, each of which may be primed in distinct situations (Stelzl & Seligman, 2009).

I think of myself as having a "multicultural personality". A multicultural personality was defined in diverse ways. Thus, (Adler, 1977) identified the individual with a multicultural personality as the one embodying three postulates: 1) Every culture or system has its own internal coherence, integrity, and logic; 2) No one culture is inherently better or worse than another; 3) All persons are, to some extent, culturally bound. In contrast, (Van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000) defined multicultural personality as a combination of the following traits: openness, emotional stability, social initiative, and flexibility. A series of publications related to the notion of the multicultural personality, defined as having certain personality traits, and its relevance for acculturation processes; see (Bakker et al., 2006; Dana, 2000; Van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000). Moreover, in most studies, biculturalism was found to be related to positive psychological indicators (Chae & Foley, 2010; Chen et al., 2008; Ward et al., 2001) as were multicultural personality traits (Brumett et al., 2007; Dewaelea & van Oudenhovenb, 2009; Downie et al., 2004; Groeneveld, 2007). Pontoretto (Ponterotto et al., 2007; Ponterotto et al., 2008; Ponterotto, 2010) even recommended actively promoting the development of multicultural personalities in order to enhance optimal psychological functioning in culturally heterogeneous societies.

The concept of "multicultural personality" is partly overlapping with the concept of "global identity" (Arrow & Sundberg, 2004; Shokef & Erez, 2006), which in turn overlaps partly with another related concept, namely "global citizenship" (Karlberg, 2008; Lindner,

2006; Pani, 1999). All three concepts, with which I can identify, deal with breaking societal boundaries, feeling social responsibility and creating some form of social oneness.

The research on multicultural identity, personalities and/or traits leaves room for study in many directions, among others in relationship to dealing with personal, social and political conflict. Furthermore, in line with the research on the multicultural personality, global identity and global citizenship and considering the increasing intermingling of cultures, I would highly encourage and recommend that people make friends with those from other cultures. It enriches one's outlook on life.

Prejudice and social injustice

I have been a social activist for many years and in a variety of settings. In line with other mental health professionals – cf. Burkard et al., 2006; Chen et al., 2006; Chirkov et al., 2005; Cushman, 2000; Tesoriero, 2006; Watts, 2004) - I see the acknowledgment of and combat against racism, prejudice and injustice as part of my profession. Bashar, whose fight for the rights of Palestinians has taken him to jail, may be considered a social activist as well. In fact, I consider the friendship between us as a form of social activism (cf. Joubran & Schwartz, 2007). As suggested by Chen (2002) I believe that presentation of a friendship in public not just enhances commitment to the relationship, but at the same time counters social stigma.

The friendship takes place in the midst of a longstanding socio-political controversy. The Arab-Israeli conflict is intense, and characterized by racism and oppression of Israeli Jews versus Palestinians (Herzog et al., 2008; Mizrachi & Herzog, 2011; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2004). Both our social environments are relatively ethnocentric. My environment is reluctant to accept Muslims and Arabs, and Bashar's environment is reluctant to accept Israelis and Jews. One could argue that friendships have little impact on this situation, but

we prefer Bandura's emphasis on optimism in order to overcome rejection, and produce change (Bandura, 2008). Therefore - and though this may seem naïve - we believe that friendships across Israeli-Arab boundaries could slightly counter the blatant antagonism between Jews and Arabs.

Friendship researchers pointed at the impact of society on the form and substance of friendships (Adams & Allan, 1998; Allan, 1998). In later years, Adams (2004) emphasized that the interaction between friendships and society is a two-way interplay, and claimed that:

> If the development of friendship is no longer dependent on proximity and face-to-face interaction, if people now maintain diverse networks with friends who live in circumstances very different from their own, and if friends continue to influence each other's lives, friendship may foster social change and decrease divisiveness rather than reproducing a social order in which distinctions among social groups are emphasized.

Bashar and I created a multitude of intercultural encounters in our respective environments. I joined him in many social settings in a Bedouin or Palestinian environment, whereas he joined me occasionally in an Israeli social environment and twice in Europe. In addition, I shared the stories about my friendship with many people, both orally and in writing, both in person and through the media. I learned from the responses, that I often astounded people not only with the cultural differences, but also with the hardships with which Bashar, many Bedouins, and other Palestinians have to cope. In addition, with the support of Bashar I initiated a range of projects concerning the Jahalin Bedouins, from a Jahalin Facebook page, to Jahalin Tours and a shop for Palestinian Bedouin embroidery (Weishut, n.d. a; b; c), none of which I would have done without this friendship. I thus created greater awareness and helped many in obtaining a better cultural understanding as regarding the issues discussed. Obviously, the intensity of my

involvement in this friendship and my attempts to make a change on a broader scale are exceptional. However, my expectation is that most close cross-cultural friendships enhance intergroup understanding between the partners in friendship. Better understanding is on the road to change of attitudes, which eventually could lead to change in behavior.

Since friendships develop in a social context, varieties of other people are likely to become acquainted with the intergroup friendship, and might even get involved. Israeli friends, among others, conquered their fears and joined me on my trips to the Palestinian Territories, either as part of the above-mentioned projects, or as part of a visit to Bashar. For several of them, this was a behavioral change, since in recent decades they had considered visits to the Palestinian Authority as inconceivable. Many studies found that actual encounters between people from other cultures reduce prejudice (Chirkov, 2008; Laar et al., 2005; Velasco Gonzalez et al., 2008; Wright *et al.*, 2005). This seems to be related to the comprehension that intergroup contact reduces intergroup anxiety (Page-Gould et al., 2008), as well as to the notion that intergroup relations offer opportunities for self-expansion (Davies *et al.*, 2011). Intergroup friendships were suggested as unique in their ability to promote positive attitudes between groups, by means of strong psychological mechanisms underlying friendship and group interactions. Actually, there are indications that the mere knowledge of a close intergroup relationship by a group member is sufficient to improve intergroup attitudes (Davies *et al.*, 2011).

Thus, friendships like ours could produce social change, even though this would be on a tiny scale. This study therefore supports - in an indirect way - the conception that intercultural friendships can improve interracial or intercultural attitudes and may play a fundamental role in promoting greater social equality (cf. Aberson et al., 2004; Christopher, 1999).

Epilogue

Looking back at some of the male friendships throughout my life, I can discern a clear pattern. In my best friendships, my role was that of some kind of nerd, a person behaving always according to the norms: kind, gentle, balanced, restrained and okay with those around me, sometimes to the point of disregarding my own needs. This was somewhat exceptional even in a Dutch environment, emphasizing rules. In contrast, my best friends were tough and independent; they would not necessarily go along with what is socially acceptable and would every now and then go to the extreme. Thus, for example, my best friend in primary school was the one who physically attacked our (female) schoolteacher and my best friend in grammar school was so critical of both our fellow classmates and our teachers that he made himself highly unpopular. I could expand here on my psychological needs and on the benefits of being perceived as the "nice guy", while having in my friend a "tough guy" alter ego, but will leave that for another occasion.

Although I made quite a few changes in my personal life, in my late thirties I still considered myself rather dull. In an attempt to change this, I decided on a life motto, a guide for decisions in my life, which was "living, loving and leading". (Having worked through eight years of psychoanalysis, I believe I was sufficiently aware of my unconscious to keep it from seriously interfering in the realization of my decisions.) The motto made me strive for both inner and outer changes in these directions. It encouraged me in decisions - among others - about becoming more curious and outgoing, expanding my circle of friends, and taking on several leadership functions. My new acquaintance with Bashar was part of the realization of this motto. After achieving the changes I had sought, I opted for another motto, according to which I now live. The present motto is "flowing, knowing and growing". Whenever I need to make a decision, I will consider if it is something that heightens my flexibility, enhances my knowledge and/or gives me a feeling of personal growth.

In fact, both the friendship and my Doctoral studies were part of the realization of this same motto "flowing, knowing and growing". Bashar asked me where I want to be in another five years, pushed me to start my Doctoral studies and remained a principal encouraging and motivating force throughout. At the time, neither of us realized that our friendship would become central in my writing. In the process of choosing a subject for the dissertation, it was obvious that I wanted to invest my time and energy in something related to those fields that were close to my heart, like social activism and personal growth. I also was interested in the "large group". I thus started out with the idea of writing a bundle of short essays, partly from an organizational perspective and partly from a clinical perspective, on "changing individuals through the large group". I did not feel satisfied with my proposal and then considered producing a research study on "personal growth through the encounter with a different culture". I intended to do this partly with quantitative and partly with qualitative measures. While investing more and more in the subject, I realized that my own encounters with different cultures, and in particular my friendship with Bashar, were worthwhile studying.

It was over a year after writing my first dissertation proposal that I decided to make another change and focus on our friendship. It was not an easy step deciding to write about myself. How will this be accepted by others? The first colleagues whom I told about my plans - outside my own cohort of students - reacted negatively. They considered my ideas as stemming from narcissistic needs. Perhaps there is some truth in this, but there are also other important reasons for choosing this subject, which are related to the advancement of my field of interest and the promotion of social justice. In spite of the objections, my plans crystallized, the dissertation expanded, and I am happy to conclude that eventually also the skeptics among my friends became supportive of the dissertation.

The situation was different as far as it concerned support for the friendship. My friendship with Bashar follows to some extent the same pattern as that of previous friendships in which I am the "nice guy" and he is the "tough guy", which can be observed in many of the stories described. Nevertheless, in this friendship it is apparent how – through my self-imposed life motto - I slowly incorporate aspects of his character and life-style. I become more daring, more challenging, and – as a result – more deviant from my original social environment. In the beginning of our friendship I was more inclined to focus on how we compensate each other and can combine our strengths to achieve something bigger (See Figure 1: Bashar & Daniel – Holding the world (June, 2009)). As the bond between Bashar and me became stronger, I became attuned to the need to defend Bashar and our friendship. Time after time I felt under attack, and tried to protect us from enemies and friends with good intentions (See Figure 11: Bashar & Daniel – The world against us (November, 2011)).

Figure 11: Bashar & Daniel – The world against us (November, 2011)

I was sad that quite a few of my friends did not understand my choices. They expressed difficulty in either looking beyond the group (cultural) level and seeing in Bashar the individual he is or oppositely, respecting his embeddedness in a culture so unlike mine.

Many primarily considered my behavior as incredibly risky, or as "not done". Some of my friends believed I am being overly used by Bashar and were concerned, which explains part of their anger at and pressure on me to choose a more acceptable social environment. Although I can understand their concern, my experience is obviously different. Apart from other reasons that keep friends together, also my hope that people eventually will understand that we're trying to do something positive gave me the drive to continue. Today, although at times frustrating, the friendship between Bashar and me is stronger than ever and enriches my life with a kind of mental freedom that had been previously unknown to me.

Before concluding, I would like to refer to the commentary on the ancient Hindu text Bhagavad Gita (Easwaran, 1979). Easwaran, a Hindu man, writes about his close friendship with a Muslim man in a period in which relations between Hindus and Muslims throughout India were particularly strained. Everyone knew that they were the best of friends, and they were being watched closely. People were highly critical and kept telling them that this is an extremely dangerous situation and that both of them will be hurt. At first they found themselves isolated, but despite their difference, the friendship remained strong and slowly people around them became closer. He explained that it is not differences of opinion that disrupt relationships but lack of faith. He referred to the concept of "jnana", as it appears in the Bhagavad Gita, a form of spiritual knowledge, with which one maintains complete trust in a relationship. For Easwaran this was a revelation for "how just two little people trying to practice the unity of life can change the direction of a whole community" (p. 33). This is what the Bhagavad Gita calls "vijnana, the skillful capacity to apply this awareness of unity to heal the deep divisions of people's hearts and minds and to bring them together in trust and harmony" (p. 30). Like Easwaran and his friend, I find that many people in my environment gradually habituate to our friendship and that the people in Bashar's environment are even more accepting. As Bashar's brother, Abu Omar,

once remarked: "When I see the two of you together, it makes me feel good". Both Bashar and I hope that our friendship, and this dissertation in particular, will be of some significance in bringing closer to each other not only Palestinians and Israelis, Jews and Muslims, Arabs and "Westerners", but culturally different people in general.

Throughout this study, Bashar's being was presented to the reader via the filter, which is me, since his presence was described through my experience. His voice was inserted in the text in bits and pieces -with the exception of his words in the prologue - while molding these for a Western reader in readily digestible form. One night, at an Israeli petrol station café on the way between the ancient towns of Jerusalem and Jericho, he responded to what I wrote in this epilogue. I will cite him literally and stick as close as possible to his spoken words, which I wholeheartedly support. They demonstrate our persisting optimism, despite the often-discouraging hardships. Although in transcription from Hebrew some of their flavor may have been lost, I believe you will still get the ideas.

> There are two colors in the world - black and white – and there is what one calls "good" and "not good", Satan and angel. There are people who work on this side and those who work on that side. There are people who love to live in the day, and those who love living at night… People live in groups. Everyone thinks that his group is the best, and that is an error. One needs to know who the other is. If every person would give a chance to those he does not like, there would be less hate… If each color would think it is able to go with another color, there will be different colors. It is possible to make different colors. That is good… If we would get out of our groups - that is like leaving our homes - we could come back with food. If we would think about peace and friendship more than about hate and war, we could break the wall and live better (Bahar Abu Sahra, personal communication, September 23, 2011).

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